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IPA+

Autism- training for inclusion

Module 7: Competences and professional profile

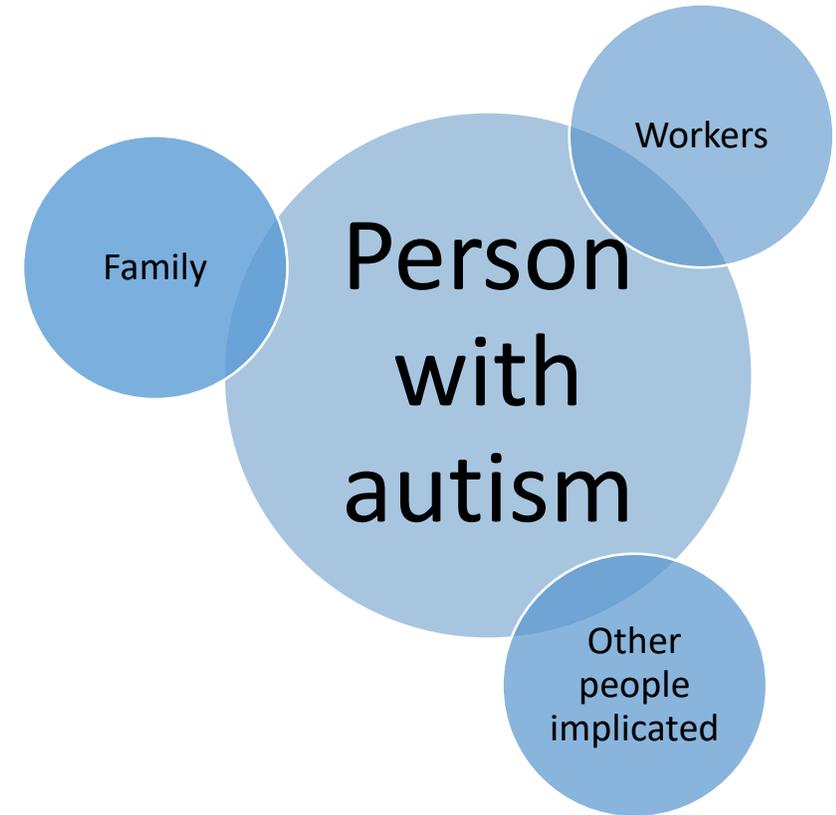


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1. New professional roles

- When working with people with autism, all the implicated workers must work well coordinated in order to reach the established goals in an efficient way.
- This coordination must also involve the family of the person with autism, so that the intervention can be carried out in natural contexts in all areas of the life of the person with ASD. Good communication generates greater impact and improvement..



Why is the professional profile important?

- The training initiatives should have a solid scientific, pedagogical and didactic basis, but it is also essential not to lose sight of the human and emotional dimension of professional practice in the field of autism intervention.
- These fundamentals can be basic contents of a training proposal. The contents are:

Knowledge about autism and scientific update

Evaluation of the specific training itself, as a base to develop and evaluate the intervention programs

Knowledge and adaptation to the real necessities of the person with autism

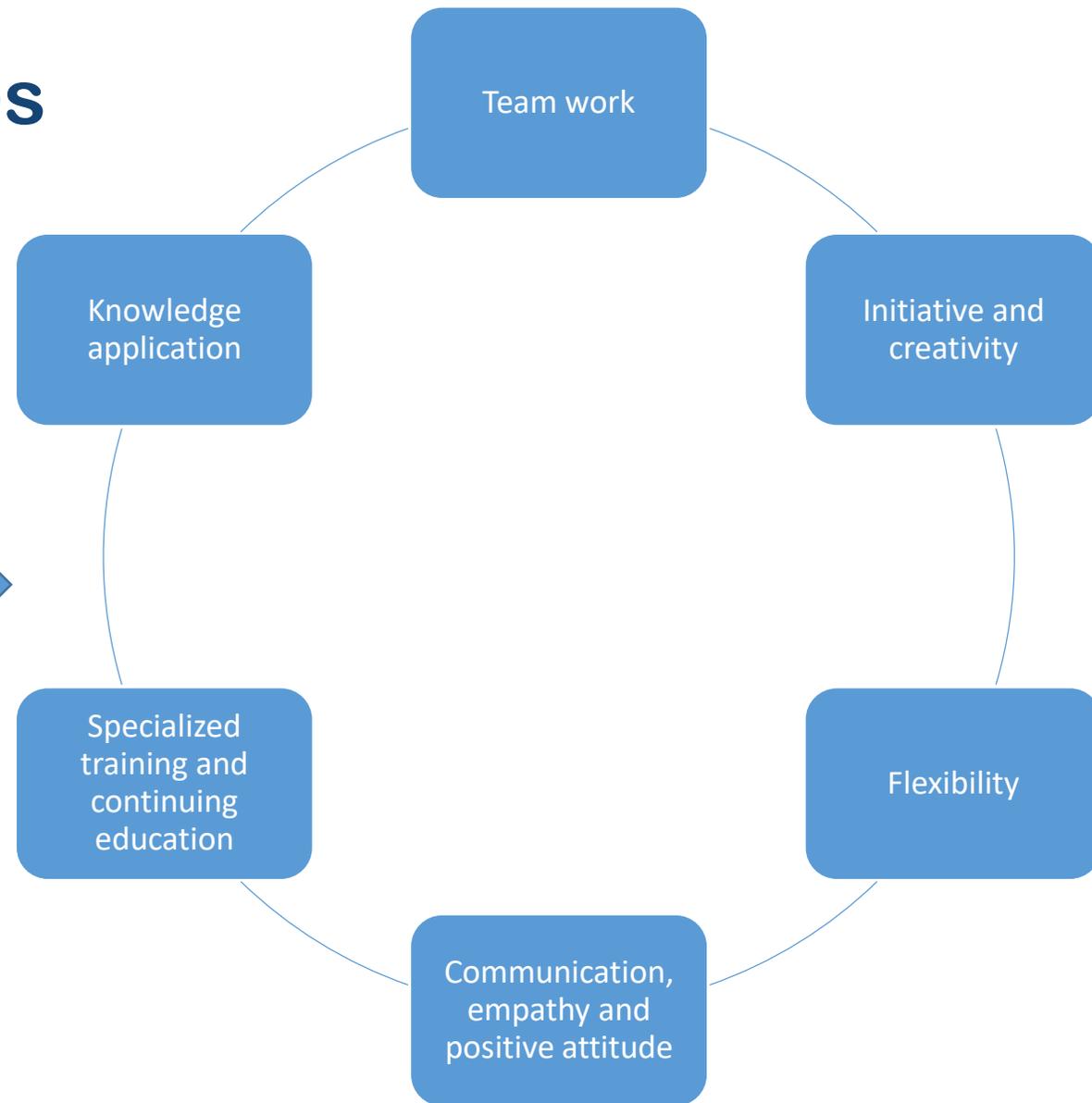
Learning techniques and development of functional intervention

Adaptation to the environment and individual circumstances

Knowledge and capacity to support to the families

2. Professional Competences

These professional competences, knowledge, personal skills and intervention techniques the worker must acquire must be put into practice when working with the person with autism.



Team work

- Maintains cordial relations and cooperation with the rest of the team
- Assumes the agreed decisions and intervention guidelines, and it is guided by the group wisdom rather than the individual
- Shows attitude of fellowship
- Has good sense of humor, shares hope, is supportive
- Participates actively
- Knows how to listen
- Is shown as assertive in conflicting situations
- The attitude towards suggestions and proposals is open and positive
- Shows openness and readiness for continuous improvement

Initiative and creativity

- Shows autonomy and initiative in the work place
- Enriches the organization with ideas and proposals, it is innovative
- Promotes prevention context to problematic behavior
- Utilizes the individualized supports and guidelines (alternative communication systems...)
- Understands the value and it facilitates the inclusion in the community
- Realizes proposals to improve or it proposes alternatives to incidences or problematic situations
- Provides intervention strategies to specific situations so that they are valued by the team
- Coordinates, motivates and implicates the personal supports (other professionals, family, friends...) that require the person with autism for their development
- Develops the activities based on the planning

Initiative and creativity

- Reorganize the activity based on the necessities or unforeseen circumstances
- Shows imagination and disposition to change
- Perseverance and motivation even though the achievement of objectives may be slow or not achieved
- Plans preventing possible risks of the activities and surroundings
- Promotes the generalization of learning
- Promotes the search for new activities, contexts and supports that enrich them
- Adds new challenges and it enables the increase in autonomy in the developed activities

Flexibility

- Proposes election alternatives, activities...
- Shows the ability to rethink objectives and strategies in function of the changing needs
- Respects and/or negotiates the elections of the people
- Plans and develops activities putting themselves in the place of people with autism, adjusting their preferences, necessities...

Communication, empathy and positive attitude

- To show a warm and empathic attitude, trying to understand the person with autism and avoiding judgments or erroneous attributions about their behavior and / or intentions
- Generating trust and respecting the person, taking into account their individual characteristics and interests and their right to decide
- To know the person, not only the autism spectrum disorder
- Respecting the right to privacy and privacy, always complying with the regulations regarding data protection and avoiding talking about this person indiscreetly outside the workplace Assures the maximum physical and emotional well-being of the person with autism
- Ensuring the maximum physical and emotional well-being of the person with autism
- Promoting a good personal image and skills that facilitate a positive interaction with other people in their environment

Communication, empathy and positive attitude

- Being flexible and patient
- Working from a positive attitude based on the promotion of capabilities and strengths instead of putting the emphasis on their needs
- Generating safety, structure and stability, providing predictability to the environment
- Being consistent in the professional performance
- Having good ability to observe and analyze the person physical and/or emotional condition to respond to their needs as soon as possible
- Facilitating opportunities that allow expressing emotional states, physical needs ...
- Adapting communication to the needs of people (vocabulary, tone of voice ...)
- Collaborating with families facilitating their involvement in the intervention and decision making and taking into account their priorities and circumstances, being receptive to their proposals and requests without generating false expectations or guilt.

Knowledge application

- Develop the intervention based always on recognized parameters of good practice
- Plan and develop strategies creatively.
- Collaborate in the training of other professionals if you are qualified
- Share information
- Commit to innovation and progress
- Work development based on the values and principles of the organization
- Participate in the development and dissemination of good professional practices
- Propose new programs, strategies and materials for intervention and support
- Prepare registrations that provide information for the intervention
- Modify your intervention adapting to the evolution of the person and possible new guidelines
- Self-evaluate your own intervention continuously

Specialized training and continuing education

- To update training and knowledge continuously, since current research and theoretical and practical reformulations are constant in the framework of autism today
- To know a great range of intervention techniques, strategies and models so the professional will have the capacity to offer a comprehensive and individualized intervention
- To complement theoretical knowledge with daily practice
- To share doubts and professional concerns with the rest of the team to expand and enrich your point of view about the disorder in general and the person in particular
- To know the policies that regulate the general framework in the field of autism (referral process, dependency and disability issues, available services...)
- To know the specific policies and working methods of other Centers and Associations
- To show interest in other projects and services developed by the association
- To establish contacts with professionals from different organizations to exchange good practices

3. Emotional Regulation

Self-regulation is related to emotional intelligence and we all resort to it in our daily lives in any situation that causes discomfort. These mechanisms, conscious or unconscious, reduce our level of anguish and pain and restore our balance.

It is the ability to experience emotions (positive or negative) in a moderate and flexible way, as well as to handle them. It implies the person is aware of their own emotions, expressing them adequately and can control them when necessary.

What makes emotions overwhelming is not just the experience but the interpretation we make of them. This interpretation can magnify our feelings and reduce our confidence and ability to deal with them.

Importance of emotional self-regulation

Professionals who work with people who have intellectual disabilities are a high risk group more likely to develop work stress, so it is important to help them develop their self-regulation skills.

Many studies indicate which work conditions are most likely to generate a great stress. Some of them are present when working with people with ASD:

- The demands of the work activities themselves: high levels of emotional labor and conflict management: workers must regulate the expression of the emotions, establish and maintain empathy and handle numerous frustrations linked to the labor activity.
- Possible conflicts with the families of disabled people: hence the need to understand, support and take into account families
- Low participation in decision making: it is important to coordinate with the rest of the team and participate in decision making to avoid this.
- Ideals and professional expectations not met.
- Exposure to disruptive or challenging behaviors.

Occupational Burnout - Signs and Symphoms

- The Occupational Burnout is a response to chronic job stress that appears in professionals who work in contact with clients or users, and whose most characteristic symptoms are: loss of enthusiasm for work, physical exhaustion and emotional, negative attitudes towards the clients of the organization and, in certain cases, feelings of guilt (Gil-Monte, 2005).
- Chronic work stress contributes to the development of BOS, and negatively influences the levels of job satisfaction and psychological well-being of the worker, which will be detrimental to the treatment they give to the people they care for and, in general, to the quality of the service they offer. This is the reason why:

Self-regulation skills are essential for any professional working with people with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Occupational Burnout - Signs and Symphoms

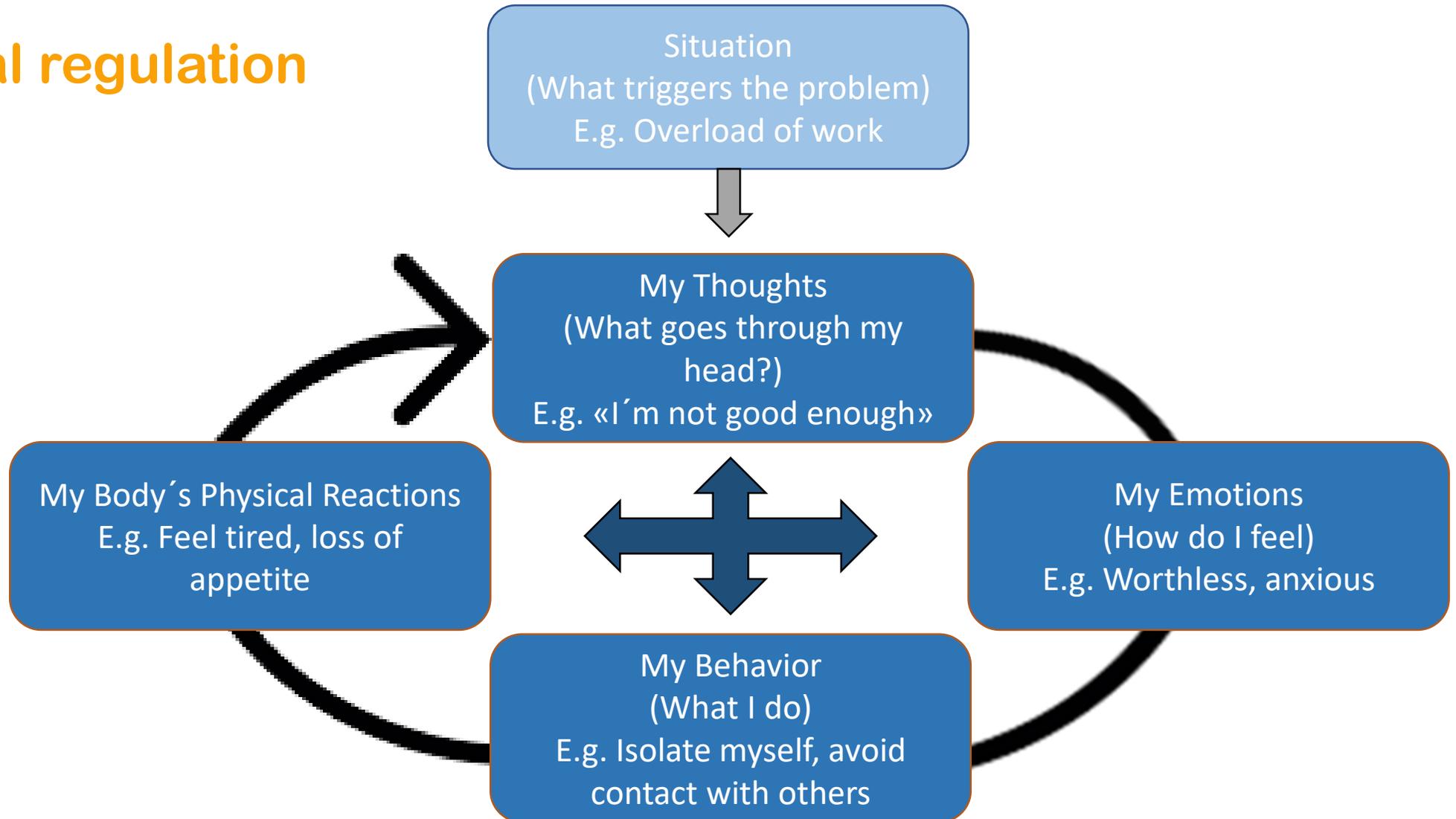
There are three main areas of symptoms in the Occupational Burnout (Maslach and Jackson, 1981):

- Physical and emotional exhaustion: unable to cope, tired and depressed, lack of energy. Physical symptoms include pain and stomach or intestinal problems and worsen work performance.
- Low personal fulfillment at work: they find their jobs increasingly stressful and frustrating. Reduced feelings of work-related personal accomplishment
- Depersonalization: emotionally distant and indifferent about their work.

Gil-Monte, (2005) also adds:

- Negative attitudes towards the clients of the organization and, in certain cases,
- Feelings of guilt.

Emotional regulation



Emotional regulation – guidelines and protective factors

Maintain a healthy lifestyle

Satisfaction at work: ask yourself what is wrong and how you could solve it

Changing thoughts is easier than changing feelings

Personal and social support

Open communication: assertiveness helps avoid depersonalization

Improve your personal organization

Development of professional skills to achieve fulfillment

4. Practice based on rights, values and ethics

"Professional ethics refers to the set of norms and values that form and improve the development of professional activities. It determines the ethical guidelines of work development throughout universal values.
Ethics is relevant for the treatment and support of people with Autism, as well as for the development of research."

Ethics

Autism can raise numerous bioethical issues for individuals and society.

There are three groups of caregivers that have important ethical, legal, and social obligations to individuals with autism:

Families and advocates of individuals with autism

They must respect the rights of people with autism, taking into account their opinions, tastes and decisions

Health care and other professionals

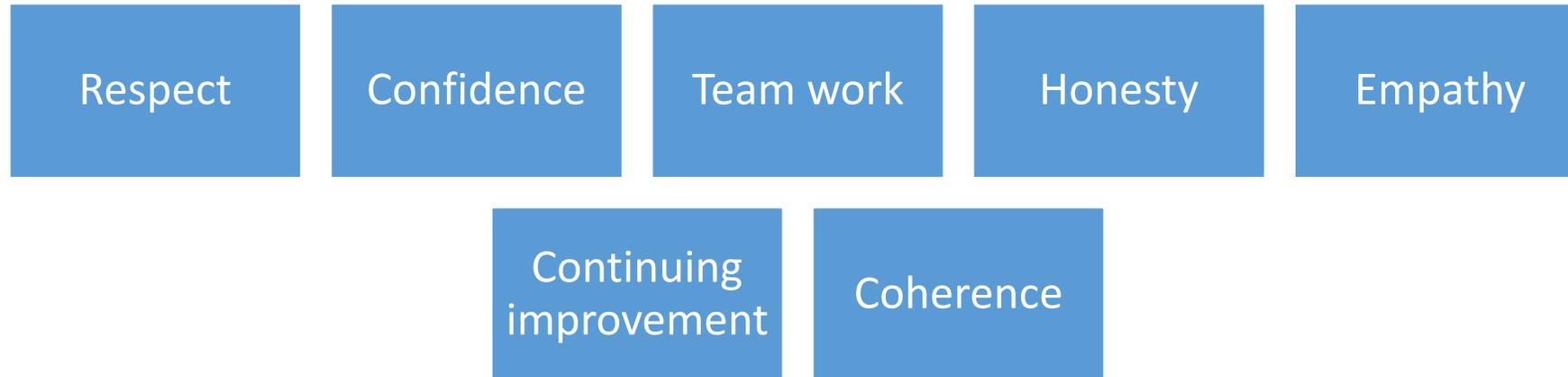
They should always base their work on good professional practices ensuring an ethical framework

Governments

They must develop laws and policies on autism from an ethical point of view

Ethics

In order to improve the quality of life of people with autism, there are important values that must be present in the work place:



Ethics and respect

- Respect implies valuing and accepting others with their differences and peculiarities. This facilitates a successful interaction and provides an environment of general well-being.
- It means accepting the fact that each person with autism, each family member and each colleague or professional from a different area with whom we will deal with, can have a way of being, seeing things and a different point of view that we must respect.
- All people have the right to privacy in the most intimate areas of their lives (health, sexuality, etc), the professional must pay special attention to this aspect so that this right is guaranteed.
- As professionals, we must ensure a respectful behaviour towards people with autism, their families and between different professionals and coworkers.

The medical vs the social model of disability

- In recent times there has been a gradual move away from the medical model of disability, towards a social model.
- One of the pivotal moments in this change was the creation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The medical vs the social model of disability

Supporting the Social Model of Disability

Medical Model	→	Social Model
Emphasis on disability (negative perspective)		Emphasis on potential (positive approach)
Disabled person as object of assistance (patient)		Disabled people as subjects with human rights and self-determination (Social Model: <i>Nothing about us, without us</i>)
Services tailored to impairments		Programmes tailored to individual needs

The medical model of disability

- The medical model of disability views disability as a 'problem' that belongs to the disabled individual. It is not seen as an issue to concern anyone other than the individual affected.
- For example, if a wheelchair using student is unable to get into a building because of some steps, the medical model would suggest that this is because of the wheelchair, rather than the steps.
- This medical model approach is based on a belief that the difficulties associated with the disability should be borne wholly by the disabled person, and that the disabled person should make extra effort (perhaps in time and/or money) to ensure that they do not inconvenience anyone else.

The social model of disability

- The social model of disability, in contrast, would see the steps as the disabling barrier. This model draws on the idea that it is society that disables people, through designing everything to meet the needs of the majority of people who are not disabled. There is a recognition within the social model that there is a great deal that society can do to reduce, and ultimately remove, some of these disabling barriers, and that this task is the responsibility of society, rather than the disabled person.
- The social model is more inclusive in approach. Pro-active thought is given to how disabled people can participate in activities on an equal footing with non-disabled people. Certain adjustments are made, even where this involves time or money, to ensure that disabled people are not excluded. The onus is on the organiser of the event or activity to make sure that their activity is accessible.

A rights-based approach to disability

What is the rights-based approach?

At the heart of the rights-based approach to disability is the recognition that persons with disabilities are active subjects with legal claims and not merely people in need and passive recipients of aid.

A rights-based approach to disability

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) entered into force in 2008.
- It is a legally-binding instrument which has been widely ratified (by all EU Member States except Ireland, and by the EU as a regional organization).
- The CRPD is based on the human rights-based approach to disability, moving away from the medical model. This change is profound and is therefore often defined as a paradigm shift.

A rights-based approach to disability

As states parties to the Convention, the EU and almost all of its Member States should be focusing their policy approaches around disability in accordance with this rights-based approach.

As stated in the Convention's preamble, State Parties (among other things) commit to:

(c) Reaffirming the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and the need for persons with disabilities to be guaranteed their full enjoyment without discrimination,

(h) Recognizing also that discrimination against any person on the basis of disability is a violation of the inherent dignity and worth of the human person,

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Other Links

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- <http://www.autismeurope.org/blog/category/report/>

The IPA + Partnership



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