

# **My Ability Is Stronger Than My Disability**

By: Thalia Avgousti

# This Presentation is about ....

- Raising Awareness
- Raising Inclusion
- Raising Compassion

..... by sharing my story

# Introduction



- Hi, my name is Thalia Avgousti. You are probably wondering why I talk this way. I was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy. It affects the movement in my hands, legs and mainly my speech
- Even though I have a disability I find ways to work around my weakness. I keep a positive mindset and I don't run away from challenges

# Meeting someone who is Different than You

- Disability does not mean inability
- When you focus on someone's disability, you will overlook their abilities
- Don't judge a disability by its visibility



.... and sometimes Disabilities are Invisible



I may walk, talk, and move differently than you,  
but on the inside I'm no different than you



*The greatest barriers that persons with disabilities have to overcome are .....*

**EXPECTATIONS**

One of the greatest challenges faced by individuals with disabilities is limited expectations



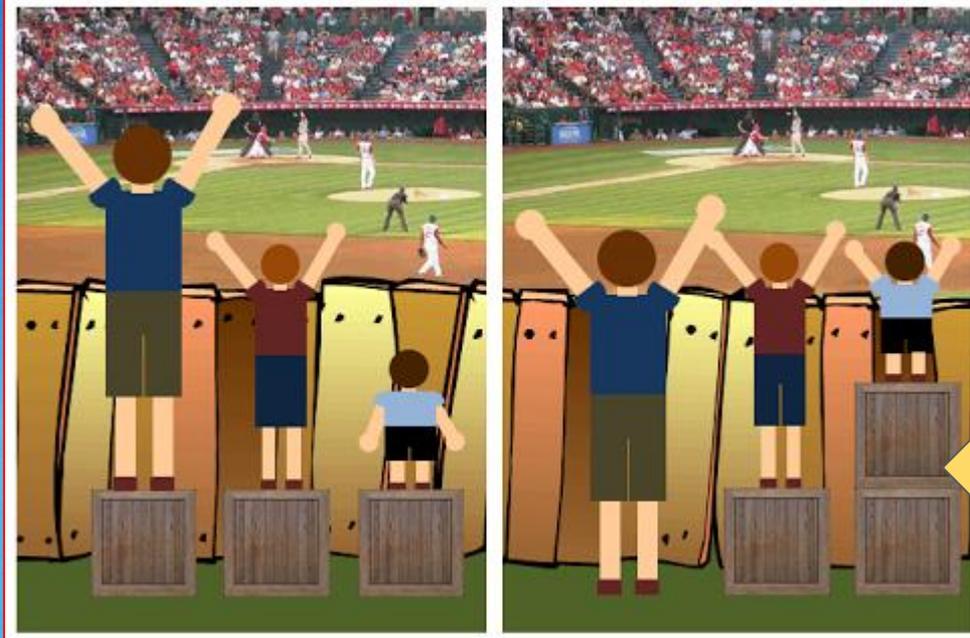
People often underestimate their capabilities, letting biases, judgments, and misconceptions shape their views of what individuals with disabilities can achieve

I want the same things as you



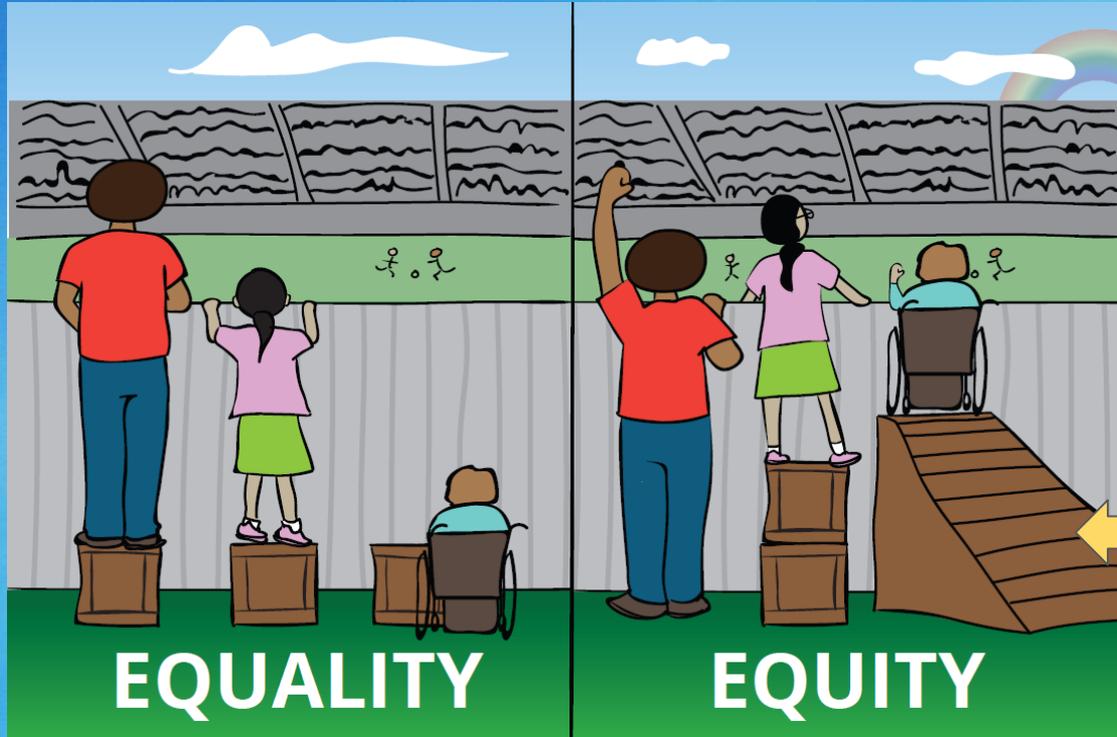
..... and to grow, learn and build skills to add value and contribute to society

Sometimes persons with disabilities need ....



an extra boost to  
be successful

....through accommodation because equality sometimes is not enough



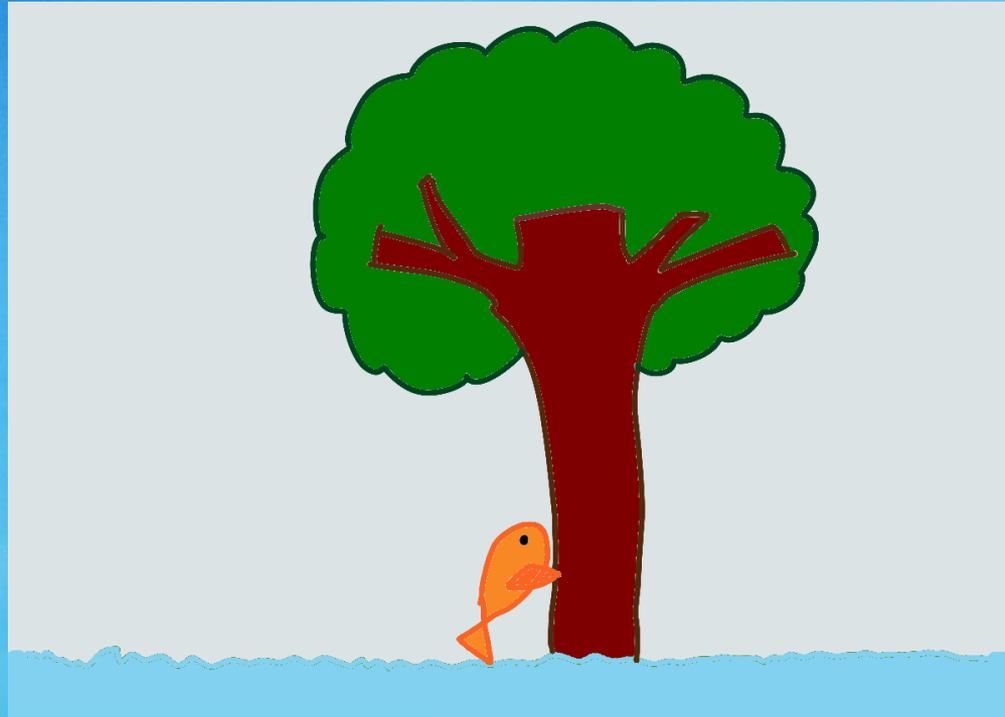
accommodation



It can be really hard  
and challenging to live  
with my disability ...



.... and sometimes in life I have to accept that you can't make a fish climb a tree.



.... but it won't stop me from trying to reach my goals by working hard to reach my full potential



# What does it mean to reach one's full Potential?

To become the best one can be with hard work  
and perseverance



.... which turned the impossible into **possible**



Allowing me to integrate into a mainstream program and pursue my passion and career in Early Childhood Education

# How I Stay Positive Living with a Disability

- I Surround myself with positive people
- I Look for the positive not the negative in life
- I Appreciate myself and Accept myself
- I Have an open mind and discover new possibilities
- I Believe in myself

**Staying Positive helps me to Accept  
me for who I am**



# Everyone should have a voice even if you have a disability

- Be your own Advocate
- Accepting help doesn't make you weak it makes you even stronger
- Have the confidence to express your ideas



# Accepting my Disability

- I Don't hide my disability and don't ignore it
- I Focus on self-acceptance first before self-improvement
- I Don't compare myself to others but focus on myself and my goals
- Focus on what I can do ... not what I can't do



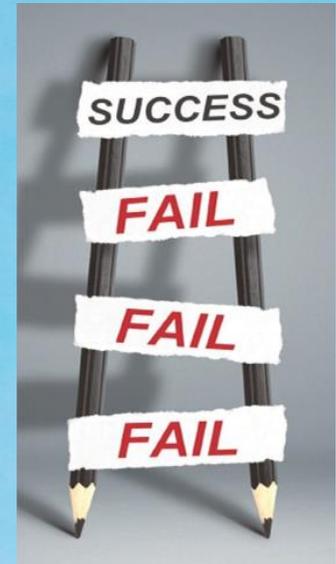
**NO LIMITS**



# I Don't Limit Myself by ....

- Finding ways to go outside my comfort zone to challenge myself
- Focusing on my abilities not my disabilities
- Working Hard to meet my potential
- Not measuring myself against anyone else but against my own goals
- Accepting failure to grow and learn from my mistakes to get better

.... and



# I Don't Limit Myself by ....



**Finding the right fit**



I couldn't make the rep team .... so I played house league:

- Hockey
- Soccer
- Basketball
- Baseball



..... and that's ok

I couldn't make the competitive team .... but I still participated in:

- Skiing
- Snowboarding
- Ballet
- Gymnastics



- Cross Country
- Track & Field
- Horse Back Riding
- Theatre

..... and that's ok

Then I found my **passion** and **strength** in swimming

- Joined the Highschool Competitive Para Swim Team
- Competed at OFSSA and came in 5th for Para 50m & 100m freestyle in Ontario



And I found my **passion** and **strength** in ...

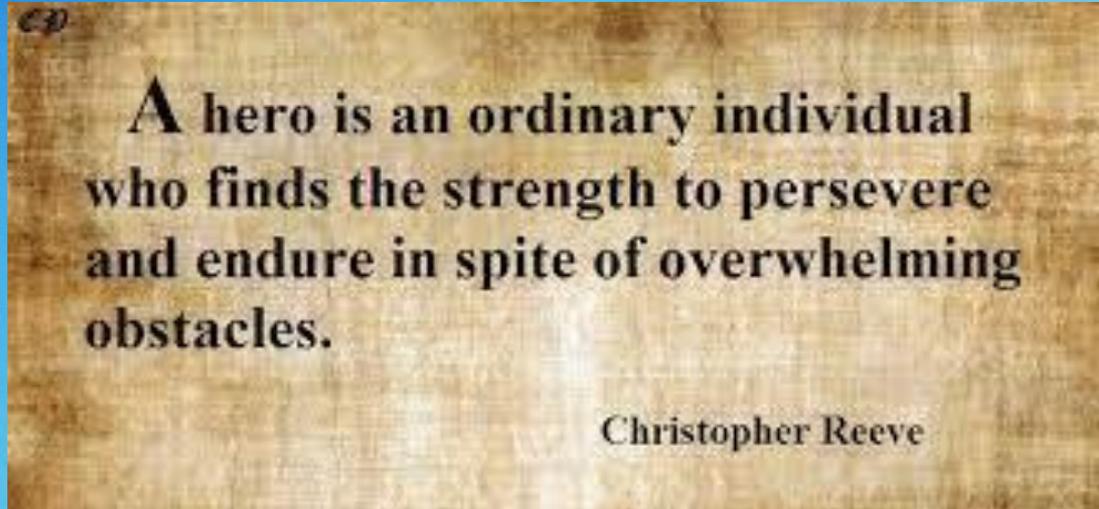




After attending therapies all my life .... I want to give back to the Community to be a role model and teach people that even though we have a disability, we can have a productive and happy life with goals to achieve like anyone else

We are all unique human beings with  
varying abilities

Everyone we meet is fighting  
an invisible battle



We can all be **Heroes**

# I hope through my presentation I have:

- Inspired you to believe in yourself to reach your full potential whether you have a disability or not
- Raised awareness and encouraged compassion and inclusivity to make our schools, college campuses, workplaces and communities a better place. |



# REFLECTION

“There is only **one way to see things,** until someone shows us how to look at them with **different eyes.**”

- Pablo Picasso