

Notes for the Temporarily Able

earthquake1906*
[@gmail, on Twitter, etc]

“Good practice” for kinkifying with people who are disabled is good practice for all partners: **don’t assume, always ask**. Some challenges are readily apparent, others are not. Challenges interact with each other; each person is unique.

When someone feels safe enough to vent to you, it’s a compliment. Don’t try to fix them unless *they* ask. “I’m here if you need something. Just let me know.”

Upsides Of Play With Disabled Partners

- Experience in self-advocacy
- Often have less time / energy, so they (we) dive in and savor every moment
- Widen the range of partners to play with and learn from

Again, ask: some of us won’t play with people who fetishize our challenge. Others will. Pity and condescension are **turn-offs** (unless *those* are mutual fetishes).

Wish I Had Known Decades Ago

- When your lower body is injured, don’t change your gait. Compensating stresses the adjacent bits, which will lead to more issues in the long run.
- If a doctor tells you that X is caused by fat, ask what treatment is recommended for *people who are not obese* with the same condition, and then do that.
- Caretaker burnout is no joke; take it seriously and address it.
- In the face of scary medical news, see whether someone else can tell many of those who have to be told. This leaves “the patient” her energy for healing.
- Getting help for specific challenges may involve dealing with institutions that ask us to suppress our kink / poly / queer practices and identities.

From Vincent Van Gogh’s letter to his brother, July 1880:

One cannot always tell what it is that keeps us shut in, confines us, seems to bury us, but still one feels certain barriers, certain gates, certain walls. Is all this imagination, fantasy? I do not think so. And then one asks: My God! Is it for long, is it for ever, is it for eternity? Do you know what frees one from this captivity? It is very deep serious affection. Being friends, being brothers, love, that is what opens the prison by supreme power, by some magic force.

Some of my favorite books:

Kahneman, Daniel. *Thinking, Fast And Slow*.

Kaufman, Miriam, Cory Silverberg, and Fran Odette. *The Ultimate Guide to Sex and Disability: For All of Us Who Live With Disabilities, Chronic Pain, and Illness*.

Schnarch, David. *Intimacy and Desire*. "Desire fades when you stop growing."

@mumsthe word also recommends:

Eiseland, Nancy. *The Disabled God: Towards a Liberatory Theology of Disability*. [Christian.]

Halperin, David, and Valerie Traub. *Gay Shame*. [Includes a whole section on disability issues.]

Web resources:

"Spoon Theory" by Christine Miserandino

<http://www.butyoudontlooksick.com/wp/press/articles/written-by-christine/the-spoon-theory/>

Organizing a support team: <http://www.lotsahelpinghands.com/> & <http://www.sharethecare.org/>

Nerd Fitness: <http://www.nerdfitness.com/>

Chronic pain is a country.

Those of us outside of that country WILL NEVER KNOW what it's like to live there, imprisoned in it, unable to relocate.

We can lob things across the perimeter (sometimes we miss) and into your territory, understanding that they may land badly and cause further jabs and twinges of agony, so we always ask permission before launching.

We can mop up fluids that splash over the border, including tears and pus and vomit and blood.

(Just now I wiped up spattered drops of blood and how glad I was to find out it was the regular kind, menstrual blood, which was welcome news.)

We can sometimes even tow the whole country to a new location, after exhausting amounts of planning and research and testing of the costly equipment required for mobility.

There may be brief vacations, partly outside the worst of the pain, after which the ambassadors of the country of pain return 'home' with severe liver damage and have to take on extra pain in order to recover even a bit.

But we outside the country of chronic pain CAN NEVER KNOW.