

Pet Peeves

By: Steven Nguyen



I'm sure we are all aware of how beneficial social media websites, like Facebook, keeps us connected with our family and friends. For many individuals with disabilities and their families, it is also a way to connect, and seek support, from other families and individuals that go through the same experiences as we do.

As I was on Facebook, I noticed a post that an adult with a disability wrote on her pet peeves of being an individual with a disability. As I kept scrolling down on her post, I noticed more and more adults sharing theirs in the comments. I began to think and jotted down my thoughts. A couple of days later, I reached out to a friend and asked her if she would be interested in sharing her thoughts, and she excitedly said yes! Together, we came up with a concise list of our biggest pet peeves.

Please Note: This was not written for anyone to take pity on us or our situation, it was simply written to share our experiences as adults with disabilities and to raise awareness.

- Trying to convince most potential employers that you can be a valuable asset to their team. There are no ifs, ands, or buts about it, finding employment can be difficult for anyone, especially for someone with a disability. This is where persistence pays off.
- When you have a “visible” disability, and you go out in public, you tend to garner a lot of unwanted stares and attention. It bothers me more when it's coming from adults than it does when it comes from little children. Anyone that knows me knows I am open to sharing my story, all you have to do is ask.



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- In the “services” industry: When you have to explain your medical history, your needs, and/or objectives over and over again, because there seems to be new staff members coming in every few months. Also, finding quality employees who are willing to work with you to meet your daily needs.
- When another person is with you, others automatically assume that they are your personal care attendant. Even though they are simply your significant other.
- Parking: People who think it is perfectly okay to park on the shaded blue area, meant for loading and unloading, when they are unable to find accessible parking. This makes it especially difficult for the person next to them, who uses a van with a lift to do so.
- Not being able to visit certain business establishments, with your group, because it was not wheelchair accessible.
- When someone pities you because they see that you have a disability and become your friend for all the wrong reasons and talks down on you.
- If you’re a woman with a disability, you’re three times more likely to be sexually assaulted than non-disabled women. And if you are abused and try to seek help, the majority of women’s shelters aren’t accessible.
- You can wear your favorite dress and feel confident and happy, but you’ll still be approached by strangers who say they feel sorry for you because of how your body looks.

Whether you’re a parent or an adult with a disability, I’m sure that you can relate to many, if not all of these.

What are some of your biggest pet peeves? Go to www.facebook.com/fhfjefferson and post this completed statement:

As an adult with a disability, my biggest pet peeve is _____.



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