


Building inclusive communities for people with intellectual disabilities: Applying the concept of 'social space'.


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Building inclusive communities...



...is explained as, "strengthening communities so that people with a disability have the same opportunities as all other citizens of Victoria to participate in the life of the community – socially, economically, culturally, politically and spiritually" (DHS, 2002, p.9).




Aims



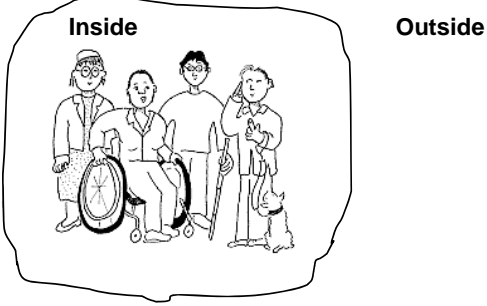
- To sketch some ideas about 'social space' that I think have interesting and useful applications for both theory and practice.
- To receive people's reactions and feedback.

How are people with intellectual disabilities socially excluded?



- In general, most people with intellectual disabilities are said to have:
- Small and highly restricted social networks.
- Organised around human services.
- Characterised by interactions with other people with intellectual disabilities, human service employees, and immediate family members.
- Contact that they have with non-disabled members of the public is likely to be mundane, impersonal, and fleeting.
- Some casual acquaintances.
- Sustained meaningful relationships with non-disabled people, characterised by intimacy and friendship, are typically lacking.
- Lives are often reported as being lonely.

Distinct social space

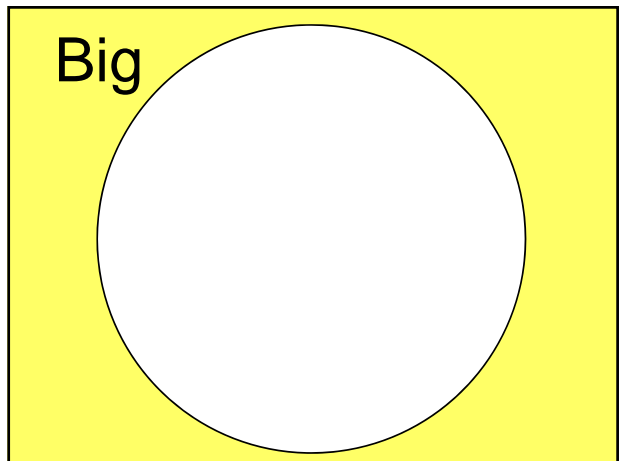
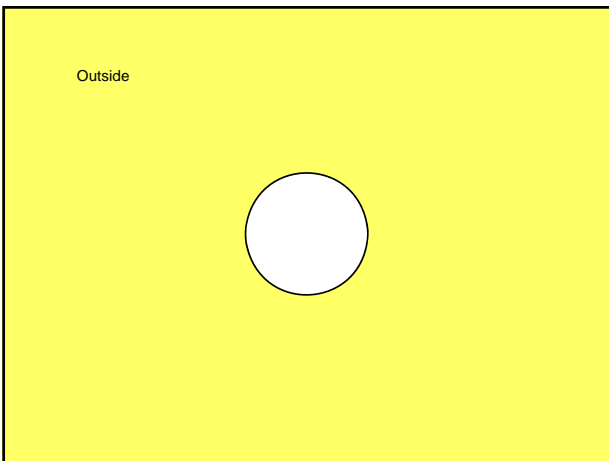
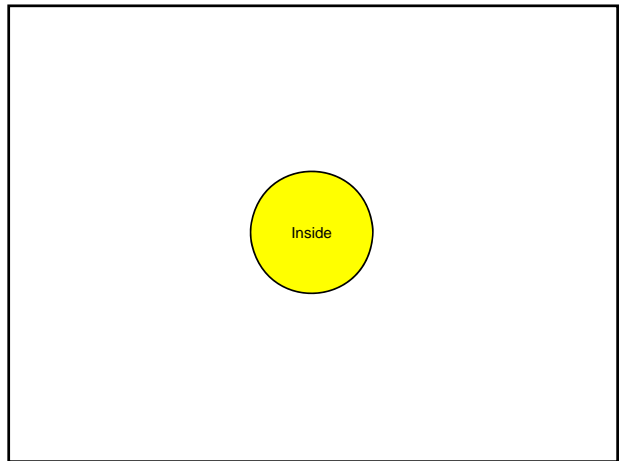
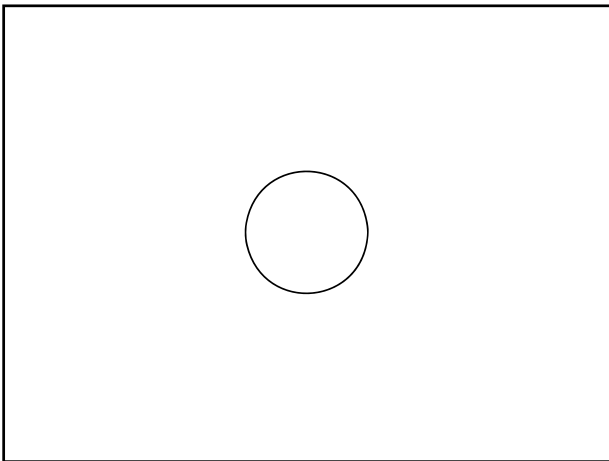
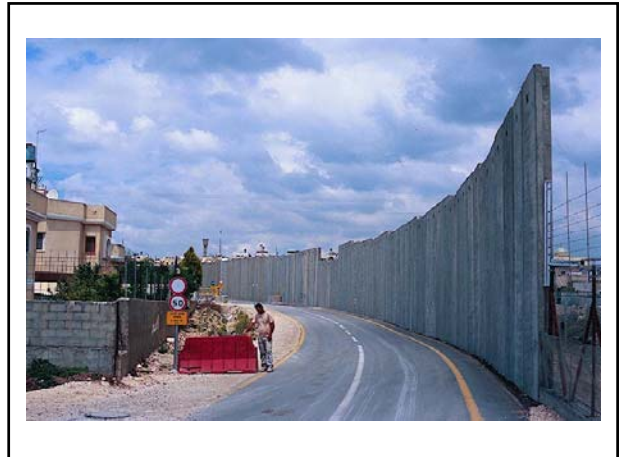


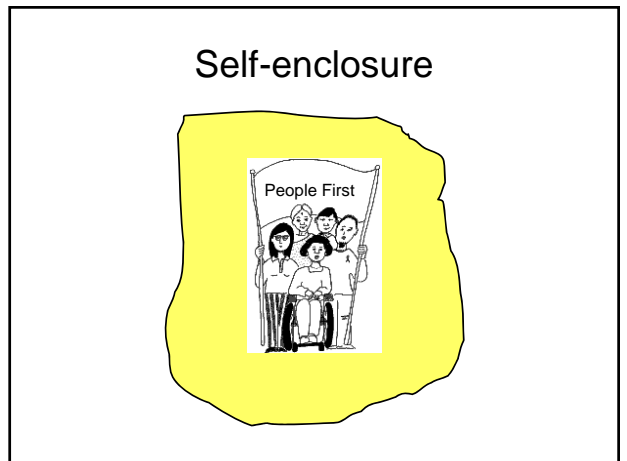
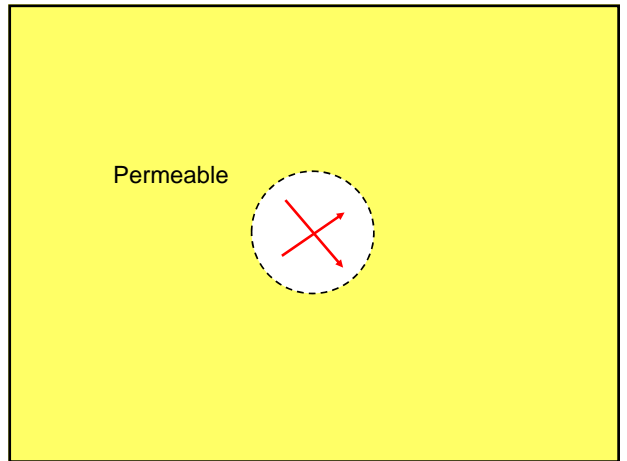
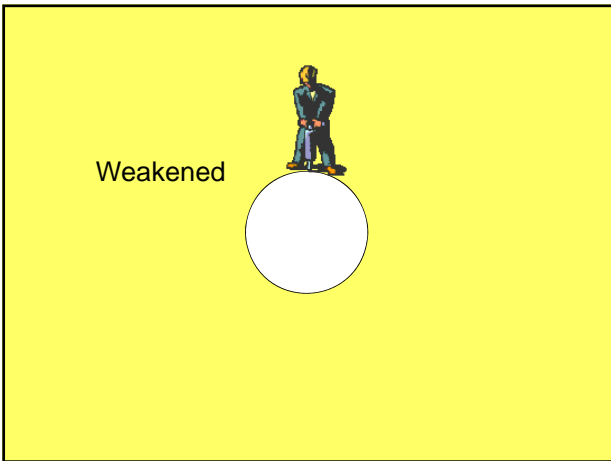
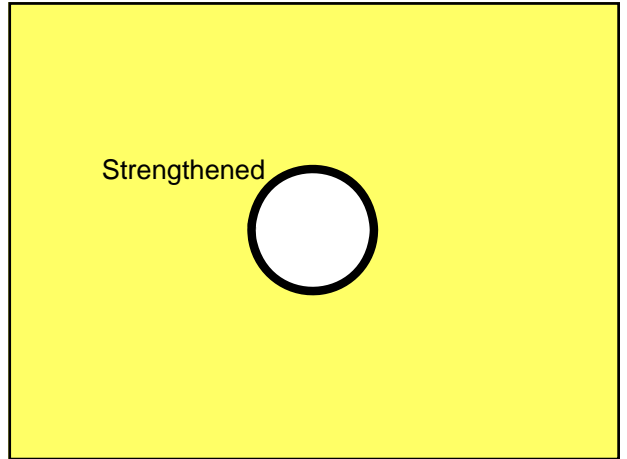
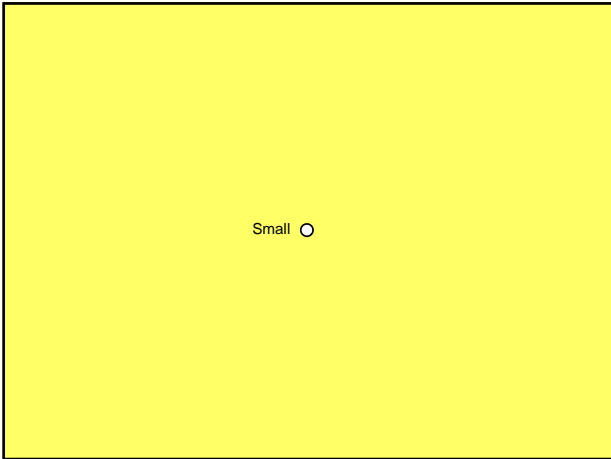
'Social space': A useful concept?

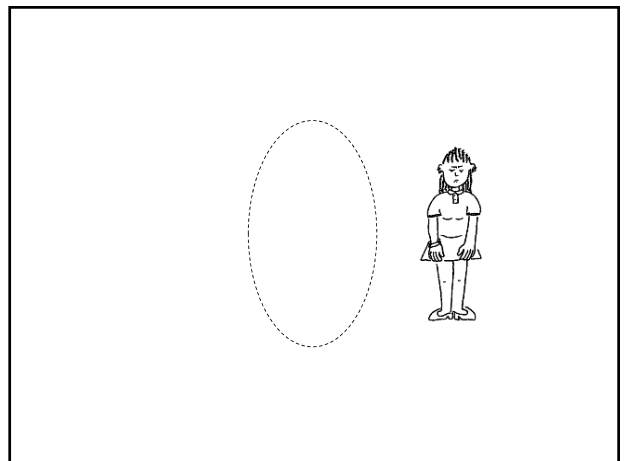
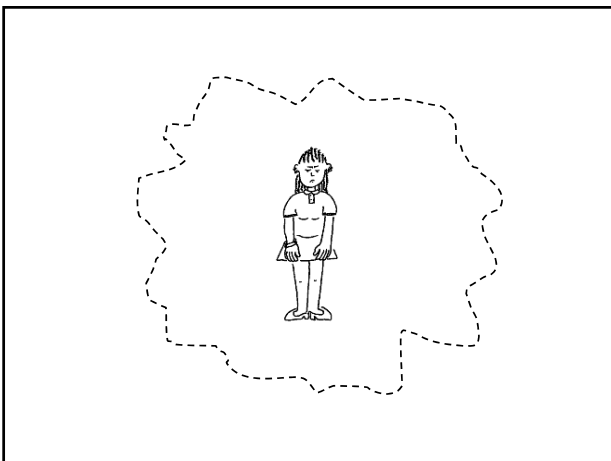
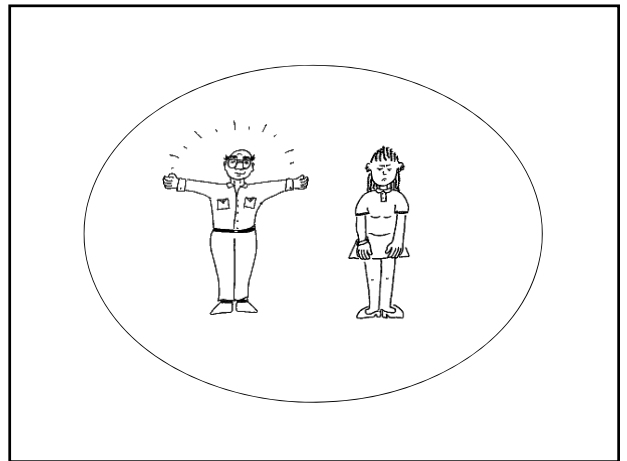
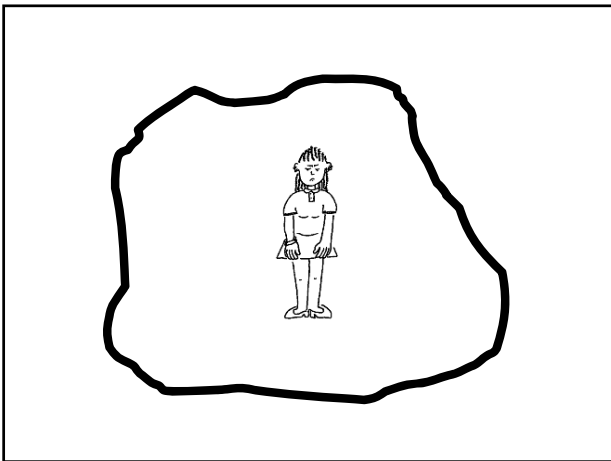
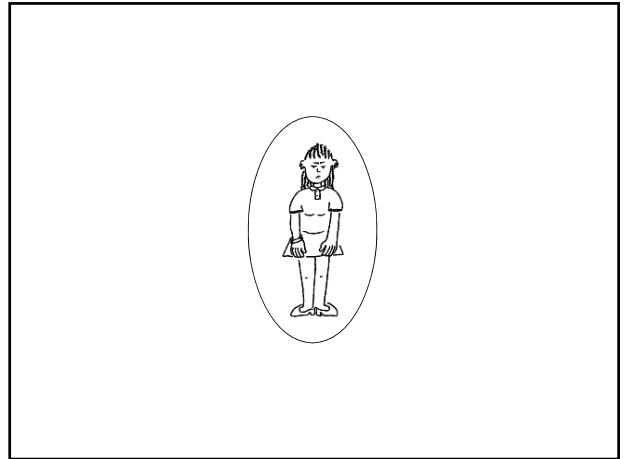
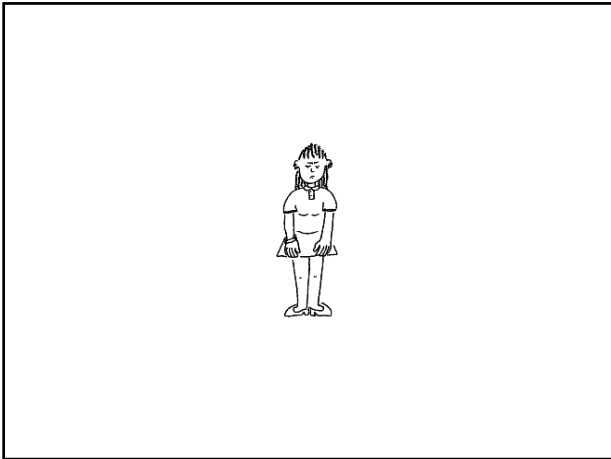


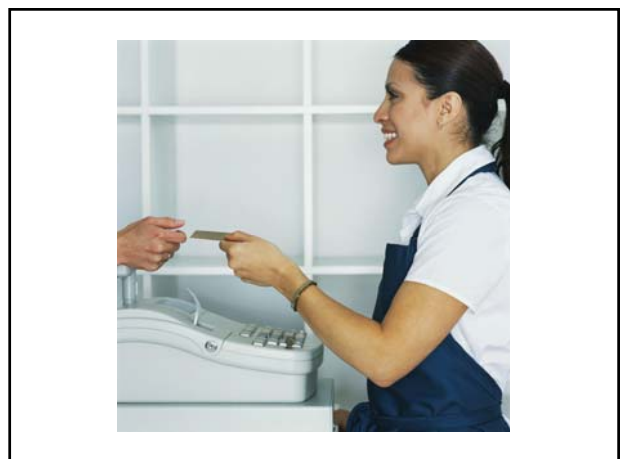
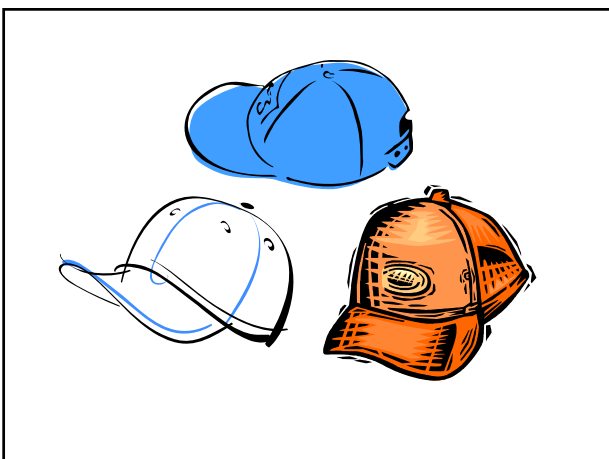
- Describing
- Analysing
- Guiding
- Imagining

- What are people doing?
- Where are they doing them?
- Who are they doing them with?
- How are they doing them?









Analysis



Guide for action

- Enlarge people's social networks, particularly by engaging new people who are not known to everyone in the existing network.
- Change the composition of people's social networks, specifically by bringing non-disabled people into them.
- Change the quality of their relationships with non-disabled people, so that some are characterised by familiarity and friendship.
- Find places where the same people can meet routinely, and social interaction is high, so that non-disabled people can have direct experience of with people with intellectual disabilities.
- Help people need to gain familiarity with one another so that they can make a decision about whether they want to spend time with each another.
- Ensure that staff understand that part of their role is to expand the social networks of people with intellectual disabilities to include relationships with non-disabled people.
- Give staff the knowledge and skills they need to provide support to people with intellectual disabilities in a way that looks beyond service-based supports towards informal or natural supports

Imagining



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