

TWO MODELS OF DISABILITY: A CONTRAST

Adapted from a diagram authored by Carol J. Gill, PhD. Used with permission.

Medical Model

Disability is a deficiency or abnormality.

Disability is a negative.

Disability resides in the individual.

The remedy for disability-related problems is cure or normalization of the individual.

The agent of remedy is professional.

Interactional Model

Disability is a difference.

Being disabled in itself is neutral.

Disability derives from the interaction between the individual and society.

The remedy for disability-related problems is change in the interaction between individual and society.

The agent of change can be the individual, an advocate, or anyone who affects the arrangements between the individual and society.

