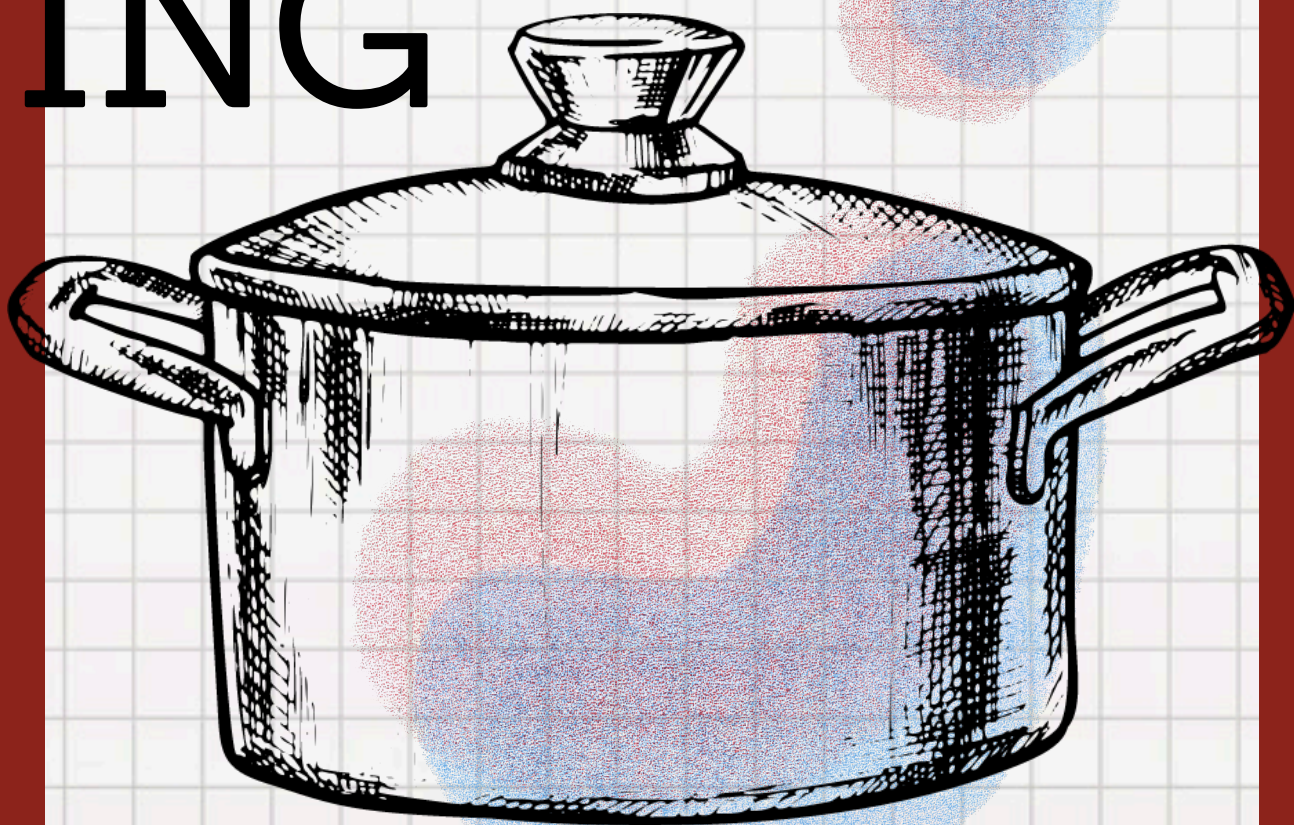


DIG EST ING

a zine by Aeslinn Noel

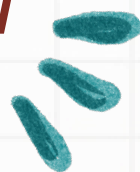


DIS ABI LITY

INTRODUCTION

“WE KNOW THAT WE ARE POWERFUL NOT DESPITE THE COMPLEXITIES OF OUR BODIES, BUT BECAUSE OF THEM.”

– Patricia Berne



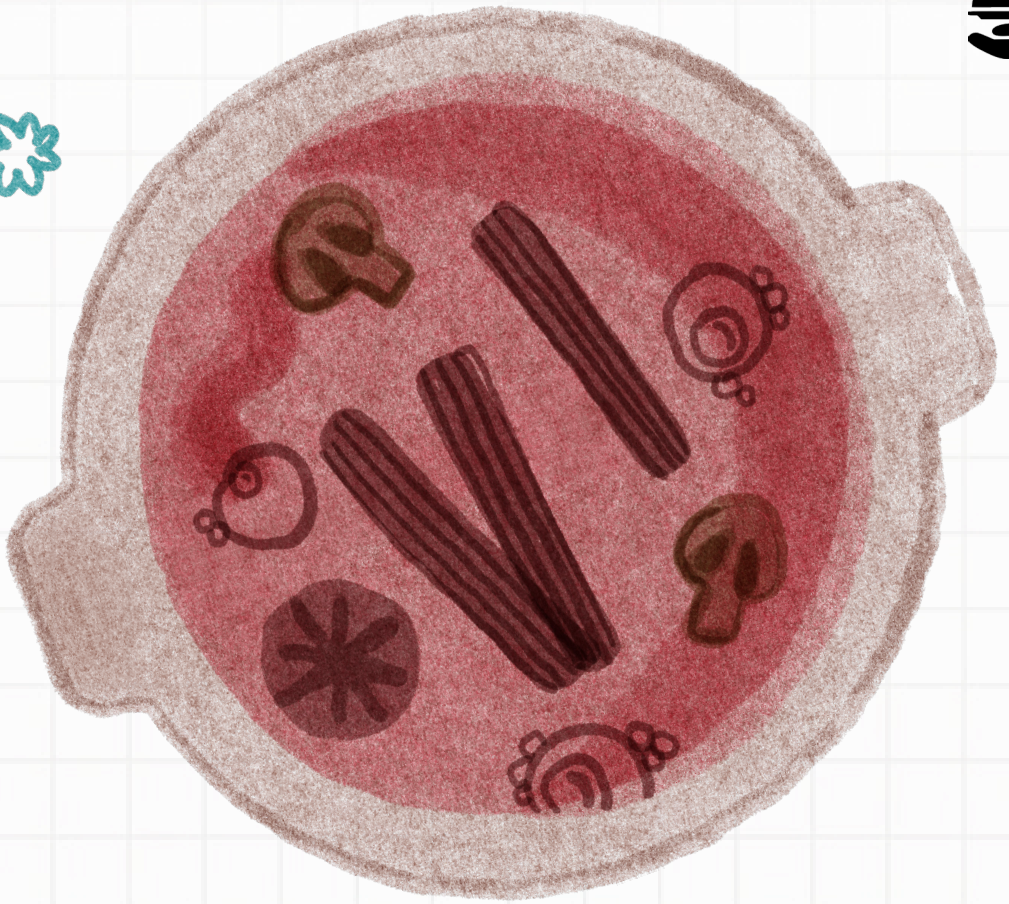
Disability is nothing new to this world - and yet, gaps remain in every area of our lives like potholes on a busy highway. The differently-abled are marginalised, pushed aside, and misunderstood despite society advancing.

As a disabled, queer person, there are several layers of obstacles for me to overcome in my everyday life. Much of this violence is subtle; invisible even to me. It's just something I know I have to live with, and for most of my life, I did not expect to find a community that would understand or empathise with my situation.

With this zine, *“Digesting Disability,”* I want to share some of what I learned throughout my time with CREA's *Disability & Sexuality Rights Online Institute* in hopes that it would resonate with others and shed some light on a subject that might be daunting to some.

Learning something new can be scary, especially when there exists a fear of judgment for not getting everything right the first time. I hope this zine can soothe some of that by breaking down the overwhelmingly broad umbrella of disability and sexuality rights into something friendlier that reminds you of home.





INGREDIENTS

1.5 litres **ableism**
1 tbsp **stigma**
1 tsp **exclusion**
1 litre **colonialism**
500ml **capitalism**
300ml **lack of access**
a pinch of **violence**
100ml **removal of legal capacity**

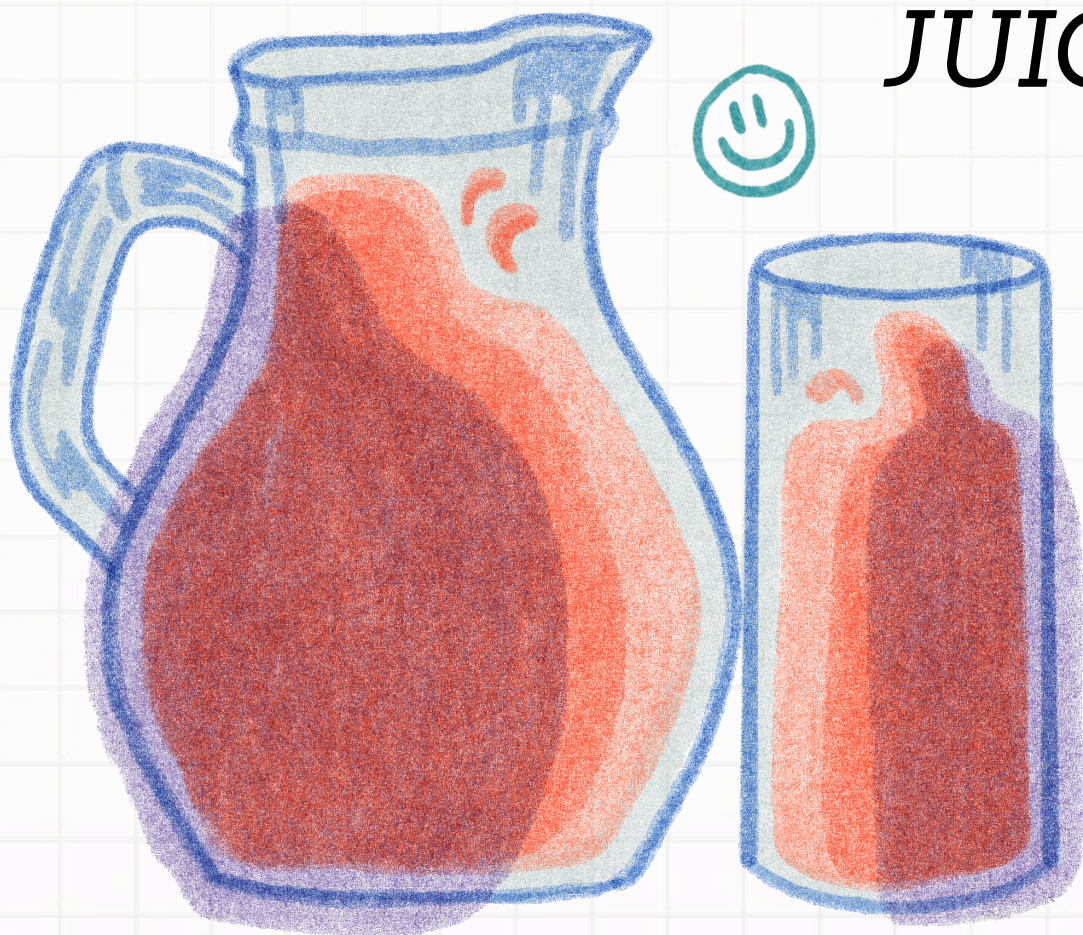
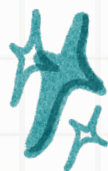
Though **more than 15% of the world's population is affected by disability**, there remains a significant number of barriers and hurdles that disabled people have to overcome in their everyday lives. Disabled people are seen as "the other"; outsiders

BARRIER BROTH

in their own communities who are treated with less respect and given less resources and opportunities. **Stigma, exclusion, a lack of access, and violence are rife within their lived experiences.** To overcome these barriers, we should raise awareness and empower others through education. A wider range of services should be made physically and informationally accessible, and disability should be addressed in laws and policies.



JUSTICE JUICE



Fighting for one's rights is important, but it often addresses only symptoms of inequity, not the root. Disability and reproductive justice are frameworks that understand **all bodies as unique & essential, with strengths & needs.**

These movements are powerful when they are led by disabled people of colour and disabled queer people, as they are statistically the most marginalised and therefore often know the most about the oppression.

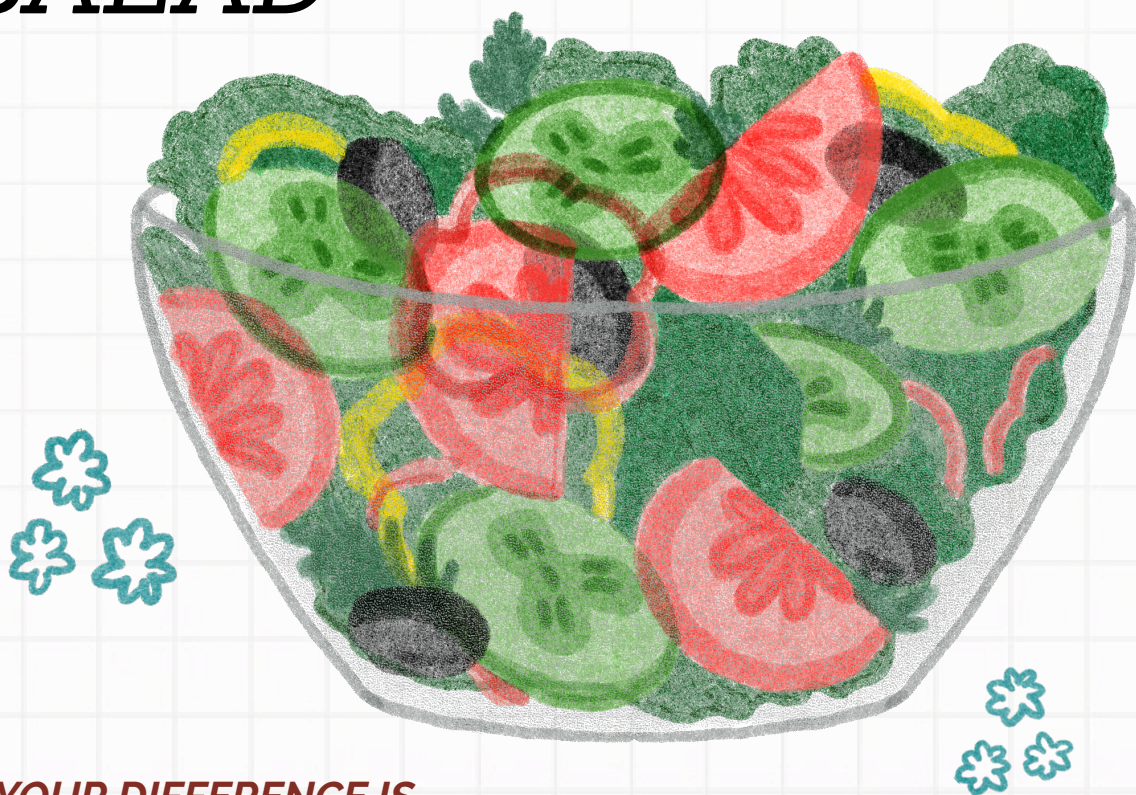
We must acknowledge that **we cannot "overcome" one form of**

INGREDIENTS

1 litre **intersectionality**
100ml **rights and recognition**
3 tbsp **understanding**
1 litre **solidarity**
200ml **interdependence**

oppression without addressing the other forms of injustice. By creating an environment of justice, we will succeed in creating a world in which everyone is free from violence.

SELF-IDENTITY SALAD



***"YOUR DIFFERENCE IS
IMPORTANT. YOU DON'T
HAVE TO BLEND IN AND
BE LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE;
WHEN YOU DO, IT DOES
A DISSERVICE TO THE
COMMUNITY."***

(Rebecca Cokley)

When it comes to the construction of identities, including self-identity, differences between bodies takes on great importance. "Ideal bodies" are linked to social acceptability; but *what is an ideal body? What constitutes a 'livable life' and a 'grievable death'?* By reclaiming our intimate identities

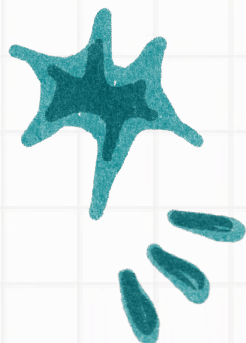
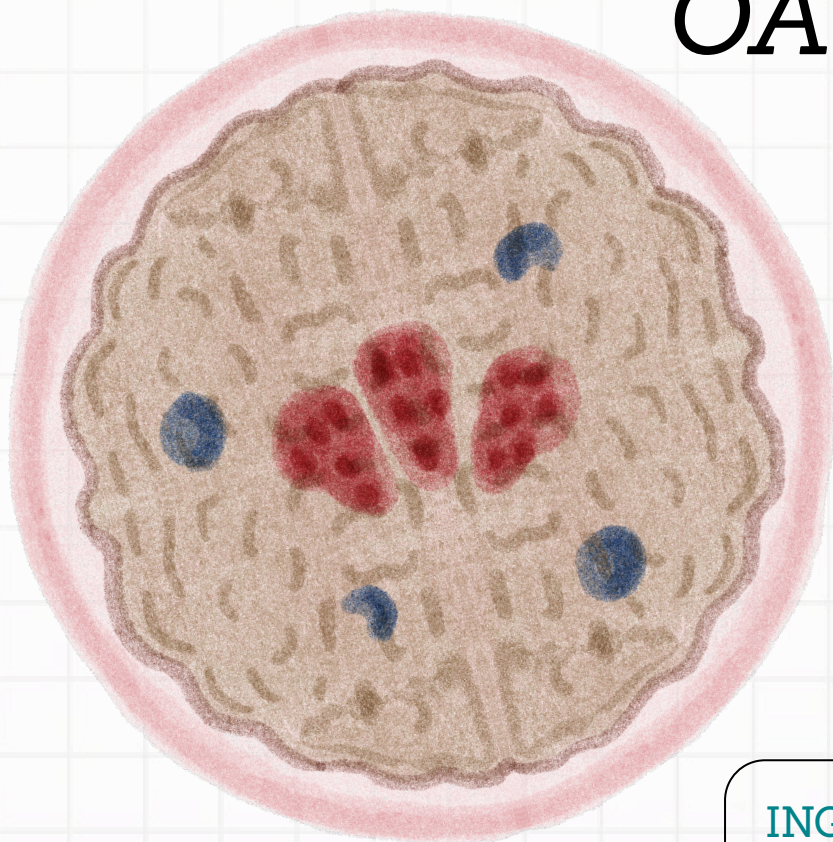
INGREDIENTS

100g **dignity**
3 tbsp **vulnerability**
100g **self-respect**
a handful of **dreams and desires**
2 tsp **compulsory heterosexuality**
1 tbsp **internalised oppression**
200g **rights and responsibilities**

and **bodily autonomy**, we regain a **sense of dignity and choice**. Our bodies are diverse spectrums with needs that deserve to be met.



OPPRESSION OATMEAL



INGREDIENTS

100g **disability hierarchy**
200g **structural exclusion**
1 tbsp **ableism**
50g **human rights violations**
2 tbsp **stigma and prejudice**
a handful of **violence**
1 tsp **dehumanisation**

When disability is thought of as a diminished state of being human, it becomes easy to dehumanise and therefore oppress those who are differently-abled. There are many different types of violence; direct, cultural, and structural (which is the most difficult form to overcome.)

Ableism teaches us that there is one set of characteristics that bodies and minds are supposed to have in order to count as human; it measures our worth depending on our beauty, productivity, intelligence, and sanity. This is a form of structural oppression

that revolves around power and is dependent on every other form of oppression that exists.

The goal should not be to “cure the world of disabilities” or to get rid of disabled people. The goal should be to provide accesible opportunities, resources, and human rights.

INCLUSION ON ICE



INGREDIENTS

300ml **liberation and justice**
1 tbsp **mutual aid**
50ml **raising awareness**
100ml **collaboration/partnership**
2 tsp **listening to others**
100ml **accessibility**

***"WE DON'T WANT TO
SIMPLY JOIN THE RANKS
OF THE PRIVILEGED; WE
WANT TO DISMANTLE
THOSE RANKS AND
THE SYSTEMS THAT
MAINTAIN THEM."***

Individuals with bodily impairments are commonly oppressed by social arrangements such as prejudice and discrimination. To move beyond these restrictions, we must acknowledge that **disability is not monolithic; disabled people are not all one and the same.**

It is very important to remember that disability is everyone's business. **No one is above or below being involved in making opportunities and resources available for people with disabilities.**

Accessibility is more than ramps: it involves establishing dialogue, raising awareness, and having empathy for others.



DISCRIMINATION DUMPLINGS



For people with disabilities, prejudice can be the biggest barrier that keeps them from living a fulfilling, easy life. **Disabled people are rarely asked to express their dreams and desires, as the standard belief is that they have none.** There is a silence within society that pervades many areas of disability (and sexuality), resulting in the views of disabled people being silenced.

Societies are often organised to meet the needs of "normal" people, which makes those with disabilities outcast. We have to remember that individuals do not have simple identities defined by one characteristic; there are many

INGREDIENTS

80g **stigma**
150g **exclusion**
a pinch of **violence**
100g **dehumanisation**
3 tbsp **prejudice**
1 tsp **misunderstandings**

aspects that affect our experiences. As they are structurally excluded, people with disabilities face prejudice and discrimination every single day. **We should do our best to be kind to one another no matter the circumstances.**

REFLECTION



It's your turn!

Hopefully you've learned something new, or have some questions of your own. With this newfound knowledge, let's do some self-reflection and get to know ourselves better!

1. BARRIER BROTH

What barriers do the disabled people in your community face? What can you do in your everyday life to dismantle some of those barriers? What barriers do *you* face?

2. JUSTICE JUICE

What forms of injustice exist in the lives of the disabled people around you? Have you thought about addressing the root of injustices, instead of just the symptoms?

3. SELF-IDENTITY SALAD

What does your "ideal body" look like, and how does it differ from the one you have now? How do you measure the worth of the people around you, if you do at all?

4. OPPRESSION OATMEAL

How has ableism and other forms of oppression impacted the disabled people in your community? What societal/cultural beliefs and behaviours has it influenced?

5. INCLUSION ON ICE

How many types of disabilities can you think of? Have you been of the impression that disability is a blanket term? How can you be more inclusive to your community?

6. DISCRIMINATION DUMPLINGS

Do you face discrimination because of any of your identities? What prejudices do you have towards others because of their identities? How can you be kinder?

Thank you for going on this journey with me. Take care, friends!
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