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ORCHESTRATINGchange

a film about

THE WORLD'S
ONLY ORCHESTRA

for people living
with mental illness



a film by

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ABOUT THE FILM

Me2/Orchestra has created a model for society where people with and without mental illness can work together in an environment where acceptance is the norm and supporting each other is a priority. While hearing exhilarating music, conductor Ronald Braunstein wants, “The audience to walk away feeling like, wow, people with mental illness can really work together and make something really incredibly beautiful. Any stigma that I ever had for people with mental illness, I’m just so ready to let it go.”

ORCHESTRATING CHANGE takes the approach against mental health stigma to a new level by allowing viewers to experience social equity for themselves. It is these experiences that can help reframe how we see mental illness, and put the focus where it belongs, on the need to change society’s misconceptions. If we can make the invisible disability more visible, perhaps we can begin to design crucial societal accommodations that allow for greater success.

LESSON 1:

MAESTRO RONALD BRAUNSTEIN’S STORY

The Americans with Disabilities Act and Reasonable Accommodations

OBJECTIVES:

With the use of *Orchestrating Change*, students will be able to:

- Understand the protections provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Identify possible accommodations that help Maestro Ronald be successful
- Consider and discuss if an accommodation is reasonable for the workplace

GRADE LEVELS:

9-12 and Post-secondary

SUBJECT AREAS:

Disability Studies

Music Therapy

Civics

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MATERIALS:

Orchestrating Change clips

Definition of an accommodation

Definition of a reasonable accommodation

ESTIMATED TIME:

40 minutes

BACKGROUND:

To protect individuals with all forms of disabilities from discrimination, Congress passed the ADA:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became law in 1990. The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. The ADA gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications. The ADA is divided into five titles (or sections) that relate to different areas of public life.

Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits private employers, state and local governments, employment agencies and labor unions from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. The ADA covers employers with 15 or more employees, including state and local governments. It also applies to employment agencies and to labor organizations.

The purpose of this act as laid out by Congress:

TITLE 42 - THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE

CHAPTER 126 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

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Sec. 12101. Findings and Purpose:

(a) Findings

The Congress finds that

- (1) physical or mental disabilities in no way diminish a person's right to fully participate in all aspects of society, yet many people with physical or mental disabilities have been precluded from doing so because of discrimination; others who have a record of a disability or are regarded as having a disability also have been subjected to discrimination;
- (2) historically, society has tended to isolate and segregate individuals with disabilities, and, despite some improvements, such forms of discrimination against individuals with disabilities continue to be a serious and pervasive social problem;
- (3) discrimination against individuals with disabilities persists in such critical areas as employment, housing, public accommodations, education, transportation, communication, recreation, institutionalization, health services, voting, and access to public services;
- (4) unlike individuals who have experienced discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, or age, individuals who have experienced discrimination on the basis of disability have often had no legal recourse to redress such discrimination;
- (5) individuals with disabilities continually encounter various forms of discrimination, including outright intentional exclusion, the discriminatory effects of architectural, transportation, and communication barriers, overprotective rules and policies, failure to make modifications to existing facilities and practices, exclusionary qualification standards and criteria, segregation, and relegation to lesser services, programs, activities, benefits, jobs, or other opportunities;
- (6) census data, national polls, and other studies have documented that people with disabilities, as a group, occupy an inferior status in our society, and are severely disadvantaged socially, vocationally, economically, and educationally;
- (7) the Nation's proper goals regarding individuals with disabilities are to assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for such individuals; and

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Sec. 12101. Findings and Purpose (cont.):

(8) the continuing existence of unfair and unnecessary discrimination and prejudice denies people with disabilities the opportunity to compete on an equal basis and to pursue those opportunities for which our free society is justifiably famous, and costs the United States billions of dollars in unnecessary expenses resulting from dependency and non-productivity.

(b) Purpose

It is the purpose of this chapter

- (1) to provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities;
- (2) to provide clear, strong, consistent, enforceable standards addressing discrimination against individuals with disabilities;
- (3) to ensure that the Federal Government plays a central role in enforcing the standards established in this chapter on behalf of individuals with disabilities; and
- (4) to invoke the sweep of congressional authority, including the power to enforce the fourteenth amendment and to regulate commerce, in order to address the major areas of discrimination faced day-to-day by people with disabilities.

LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)

What is an accommodation?

- Share with students the definition of **an accommodation** from *Merriam-Webster*:
 1. something supplied for convenience or to satisfy a need, such a lodging, food and services or traveling space and related services

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LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION (cont.)

- Have students list all the accommodations they use in their lives. Those things we need to do, but require or choose help from a device or a service. For example, a pair of glasses is an accommodation device for many. Without glasses, many people with visual impairment would not be able to drive or read a computer screen. An accommodation can be a service as well. An Uber to get to work or school, or food delivery are examples of what many of us use to be successful throughout our day.

What is a reasonable accommodation?

- Share with students the definition of a **reasonable accommodation** in the work place from the U.S. Department of Labor, and ask them to keep this in mind as they watch parts of the documentary:
A reasonable accommodation is any modification or adjustment to the application or hiring process, to the job, an employment practice, or the work environment that allows a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of the job.

When is a person qualified for a reasonable accommodation?

A qualified individual with a disability is an individual who: satisfies the skills, experience, education, and other job-related requirements of the position can perform **essential functions** of the job, with or without a reasonable accommodation.

What are essential functions?

Essential functions are job duties that are fundamental to the position, as opposed to marginal or occasional duties that may be performed by the worker. Factors for determining essential functions of a job include: position exists specifically to perform the essential functions the number of other employees available to perform the same job duties expertise or skills required.

Are there limitations to an employer's obligation to provide reasonable accommodations?

An employer has a responsibility to provide accommodations unless doing so would cause undue hardship to the employer, or in cases of direct threat. Undue Hardship: when an accommodation is expensive, difficult, disruptive to the work environment, or will fundamentally change the nature of the position.

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LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION (cont.)

Here are a possible accommodations posted on the US Department of Labor's website for those have a mental disability:

CHALLENGE	POSSIBLE ACCOMMODATIONS
Maintaining consistent attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flexible leave to attend counseling• Making up time missed• Schedule a later start time
Dealing with change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintaining open lines of communication with supervisor• Scheduling regular meetings with supervisor to discuss work-related issues
Interacting with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing a mentor, a team leader or a buddy to facilitate social and work-related interactions• Participating in team activities
Managing time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An electronic calendar marked with meetings and deadlines• Use email as a time management tool• Daily or weekly performance goals• A partner or a mentor to help with time management
Organizing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assistance in prioritizing tasks• A written to-do list, which can be reviewed on a regular basis• Dividing large assignments into smaller tasks• A personal data assistant or other electronic organizer
Handling stress and emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short breaks to walk around the block• Praise and positive reinforcement• Permission to call or instant message a support person
Maintaining concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A quiet location• Space enclosures• Wearing a headset or ear sets and listening to music or "white noise"

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LESSON 1:

ACTIVITY (30 minutes)

Maestro Ronald Braunstein and Executive Director Caroline Whiddon share that it is the support she's able to provide the Maestro that allows him to successfully lead the Me2/Orchestra. As you will see, once Maestro Ronald was asked to leave his position, he was kept on for a few months to get the orchestra to the new season. Why would an orchestra ask him to stay if they felt he was unable to do the work?

- Show the clip of Caroline talking about when Maestro Ronald lost his contract and where she talks about what she does to help him be successful. CLIP TIMECODE: 00:14:16 - 00:15:06
- As students watch the clips, have them list those things she is providing for him so that he is able to do the necessary job of conducting.
- Have students share their lists in small groups.
- In small groups, have students discuss what kind of accommodations a professional orchestra could provide that would help Maestro Ronald be successful. Do they consider these accommodations reasonable? (see the DOL possible accommodation list above)
- Have the groups answer these questions (for themselves or within the their small groups):
 - › Do you think Maestro Ronald would have lost his contract if his disability were physical, such the use of a wheelchair, instead mental?
 - › How might someone with a mental disability be treated differently in the workplace than someone with a physical disability?

LESSON 1:

RESOURCES

ORCHESTRATING CHANGE, a documentary film by Margie Friedman & Barbara Multer-Wellin:
www.orchestratingchangethefilm.com

Americans with Disabilities Act:
www.ada.gov

U.S. Department of Labor:
www.dol.gov

Merriam-Webster online dictionary:
www.merriam-webster.com

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LESSON 2:

DYLAN'S STORY

Social Stigma and Mental Illness

OBJECTIVES:

With the use of *Orchestrating Change*, students will be able to:

- Define stigma
- Identify the effects of stigma
- Consider and discuss ways to counter stigma

GRADE LEVELS:

9-12 and Post-secondary

SUBJECT AREAS:

Disability Studies

Music Therapy

Civics

MATERIALS:

Orchestrating Change clips

ESTIMATED TIME:

40 minutes

BACKGROUND:

National Alliance on Mental Illness describes stigma in this way:

Most people who live with mental illness have, at some point, been blamed for their condition. They've been called names. Their symptoms have been referred to as "a phase" or something they can control "if they only tried." They have been illegally discriminated against, with no justice. This is the unwieldy power that stigma holds.

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BACKGROUND (cont.):

Stigma causes people to feel shame for something that is out of their control. Worst of all, stigma prevents people from seeking the help they need. For a group of people who already carry such a heavy burden, stigma is an unacceptable addition to their pain.

The Mayo Clinic describes some of the harmful effects of stigma as:

- Reluctance to seek help or treatment
- Lack of understanding by family, friends, co-workers or others
- Fewer opportunities for work, school or social activities or trouble finding housing
- Bullying, physical violence or harassment
- Health insurance that doesn't adequately cover your mental illness treatment
- The belief that you'll never succeed at certain challenges or that you can't improve your situation

LESSON 2: INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

Ask students to record their responses to the following questions. Allow for a few minutes, then have them share out in small or whole group.

- What words come to mind when you hear the term mental illness?
- What do you think influenced your ideas on mental health?
- How accurate do you think these images are for those living with mental illness?

LESSON 2: ACTIVITY (35 minutes)

In the film, Dylan is very open about the stigma he has suffered in dealing with his mental illness.

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LESSON 2: ACTIVITY (cont.)

- Share with students the definition of stigma and its harmful effects given in the background information sections. Allow students a few minutes to read and think about the information.
- Tell students to keep this information in front of them as you show clips of Dylan sharing his experiences. Show the clips of talking Dylan talking about living with mental illness:
 - ▶ **CLIP TIMECODE: 00:09:02 - 00:09:54**
 - ▶ **CLIP TIMECODE: 00:52:03 - 00:55:15**
- As students watch the clips, have them check off those harmful effects that Dylan has experienced.
- Have students share what they found.
- Share with students the list of ways to counter mental health stigma, from the National Alliance on Mental Illness:

We all have a role in creating a mentally healthy community that supports recovery and social inclusion and reduces discrimination. There are many simple ways everyone can help to reduce prejudice and discrimination towards people with the experience of mental illness.

These include:

1. Learn and share the facts about mental health and illness.
2. Get to know people with personal experiences of mental illness.
3. Speak up when friends, family, colleagues or the media use language and/or misinformation that perpetuates false beliefs and negative stereotypes.
4. Offer the same support to people when they are unwell, whether they have a physical or mental health problem.
5. Don't label or judge people by their illness.
6. Treat people with a mental illness with respect and dignity, as you would anyone else. Don't discriminate when it comes to participation, housing and employment.
7. Talk openly of your own experience of mental illness. The more hidden mental illness remains, the more people continue to believe that it is shameful and needs to be concealed.

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LESSON 2: RESOURCES

ORCHESTRATING CHANGE, a documentary film by Margie Friedman & Barbara Multer-Wellin:
www.orchestratingchangethefilm.com

Americans with Disabilities Act:
www.ada.gov

National Alliance of Mental Illness:
www.nami.org

Mayo Clinic:
www.mayoclinic.org

LESSON 3: CAROLE'S STORY "Coming Out" as Mentally Ill

OBJECTIVES:

With the use of *Orchestrating Change*, students will be able to:

- Understand the issues of self-disclosure of a mental illness
- Understand the protections provided by law to employees with mental illness
- Consider and discuss the pros and cons of coming out

GRADE LEVELS:

9-12 and Post-secondary

SUBJECT AREAS:

Disability Studies

Music Therapy

Civics

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MATERIALS:

Orchestrating Change clips

ESTIMATED TIME:

40 minutes

BACKGROUND:

There are numerous protections in the workplace provided by U.S. law for individuals living with mental illness. Even with these protections, Carole's concerns about disclosing her illness are understandable.

FROM THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION:

Disclosing your disability in an employment setting is ultimately a personal decision and can change depending upon the situation and the need for an accommodation.

You only need to disclose your disability if you want to ask for an accommodation to complete the application process or to do job-related tasks. Disclosure is necessary to receive a reasonable accommodation because most employers are legally required to provide accommodations for a job applicant or worker with a known disability.

If you do not need an accommodation, disclosing your disability is completely your decision. You should do what you think is best. Always trust yourself regarding disclosure. When and if you choose to tell your employer you have a disability, you should do it in a way that is comfortable for you. Asking people close to you for their opinions on how to disclose your disability may be helpful, but ultimately you should do what you feel is right. If you choose to disclose, focus your discussion on what you can do, not what you cannot do.

FROM THE U.S. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION:

If you have depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or another mental health condition, you are protected against discrimination and harassment at work because of your condition; you have workplace privacy rights; and you may have a legal right to get reasonable accommodations that can help you perform and keep your job. The following questions and answers briefly explain these rights, which are provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). You may also have additional rights under other laws not discussed here, such as the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and various medical insurance laws.

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FROM THE U.S. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION (Cont.)

It is illegal for an employer to discriminate against you simply because you have a mental health condition. This includes firing you, rejecting you for a job or promotion, or forcing you to take leave.

An employer doesn't have to hire or keep people in jobs they can't perform, or employ people who pose a "direct threat" to safety (a significant risk of substantial harm to self or others). But an employer cannot rely on myths or stereotypes about your mental health condition when deciding whether you can perform a job or whether you pose a safety risk. Before an employer can reject you for a job based on your condition, it must have objective evidence that you can't perform your job duties, or that you would create a significant safety risk, even with a reasonable accommodation.

LESSON 3: INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

Ask students to record their answers to the following questions. Then have them discuss within a small or whole group what they feel comfortable sharing.

- ▶ Who should know your medical and mental health information?
- ▶ When would it be okay to you for your doctor and health provider to share personal information with family?
- ▶ When would it be okay to you for your doctor and health provider to share personal information with friends?
- ▶ When would it be okay to you for your doctor and health provider to share personal information an employer?

LESSON 3: ACTIVITY (35 minutes)

In the film, Carole, a Harvard graduate, shares that she has been in and out of many jobs over the last 20 years. Looking back, she wishes she would have shared that she is living with a mental illness, possibly helping her employers understand her better.

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LESSON 3: ACTIVITY (cont.)

- Have students watch the clip of Carole talking about her career after leaving Harvard
 - ▶ CLIP TIMECODE: 00:07:50 - 00:09:00
- Have students describe, in their own words, what her experiences were, and how that has influenced her self-esteem
- Ask students to share their responses with a small or whole group
- Have students watch the clip of Carole at the final concert sharing her disability publicly
 - ▶ CLIP TIMECODE: 01:13:43 - 01:15:37
- Ask students to share their responses to the following questions:
 - ▶ What did Carole worry would happen had she shared her diagnosis at her workplace?
 - ▶ What were her fears in joining the Me2/Orchestra?
 - ▶ What did Carole learn about disclosure by being a part of the Me2/Orchestra?
 - ▶ How does Carole's affect seem different from the first and second clips?
 - ▶ Do you think Carole would have had better job experiences had she disclosed her mental illness? Why?

LESSON 3: RESOURCES

Orchestrating Change, a documentary film by Margie Friedman & Barbara Multer-Wellin:
www.orchestratingchangethefilm.com

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:
www.hhs.gov

Social Security Administration:
www.ssa.gov

U.S. Department of Labor:
www.dol.gov

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:
www.eeoc.gov

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CURRICULUM CREDITS

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Orchestrating Change, a documentary film by Margie Friedman & Barbara Multer-Wellin

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