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Reflection 3

When we first started talking in class about the language people use to describe those with disabilities I didn’t think that the language was going to be anything I didn't already know. It surprised me how much I didn't know about language and how to speak to someone who has a disability. I of course knew that there were words that aren't kind that you should never use to describe someone with a disability. For example the word retard or mental. These words are words that no one should be called no matter what type of disability they have or even if they don't have a disability. Of course, I knew that these words are awful but I didn't know that there were so many other nice ways to refer to someone that has a disability. For example, if you know someone that is blind instead of referring to them as that blind girl, you could say the girl that has a vision impairment. Another example is instead of saying that person is mental, you could say that person suffers from depression.

I had thought of these words and how they could affect those who suffer from a disability but never had thought about alternative ways that you could say these things that aren't hurtful. I definitely think that the way people say things and what they say has a big impact on people. For me personally, in high school, I would go to different rooms whenever I would take big tests. My friends would always make jokes about how I would have to leave the room whenever I needed to take a test. Little did they know that the little jokes that they would say would actually make me feel less of myself and hurt my feelings. They didn't realize that I had a learning disability and needed to be put in small rooms for testing. So coming from someone who has been referred to as stupid, or disabled those aren't the labels you want to feel like you have.

I definitely think that the media and social media have an impact on the hurtful things people say about those with disabilities. I think over the past couple of years the language has got a lot better than it used to be. The word retard used to be thrown around with no consideration and I think over the years the use of the word has gotten a lot better.