

Two human hands are shown from the wrist up, palms facing forward, reaching out towards the center of the frame. The hands are positioned symmetrically, one on the left and one on the right. The background is a clear, solid blue sky. The lighting is bright, suggesting daylight. The text 'Look At Me' is superimposed in the center, between the hands.

*Look  
At  
Me*

CREATING AWARENESS ABOUT DISABILITIES

**Writer - Ritika Sahni**  
**Rani Kaur Banerjee**  
**Illustrations - Debashish Deb**

© Trinayani  
828/1 Block P, New Alipore  
Kolkata - 700053  
Tel: + 91 33 24007348  
[www.trinayani.org](http://www.trinayani.org)  
email: [trinayani.contact@gmail.com](mailto:trinayani.contact@gmail.com)

Mumbai Office:  
Gulmohar Cooperative Housing Society,  
67/666 M.H.B Colony, Opposite Parijat Society,  
90 Feet Road, Mahavir Nagar,  
Kandivali West, Mumbai 400067.  
Tel: +91 22 65340887, 28697390



## *Nothing about me without me*

**Talk to me** and you will see

We're not so different, you and me.

Meet my eyes; don't look away

I'm on a hard journey; **meet me** half way?

**Learn with me**; play with me; work with me

Let's make a healthier society –

Where you can be you and I can be me

I'm tired of you deciding things for me

And that'll be enough for everybody.

I'm tired of you deciding things for me

Ask me what I want and how I want it to be

Say it with me, do it with me, help me be free –

**Nothing about me without me!**

## *There are a 100 million of us around you*

Yet we don't exist in your daily life.

**It is not that you want to ignore us.**

It is just that we are made invisible to you as we live in our “special” homes and go to our “special” schools. We do not impinge on your social fabric and have no impact on your social and political life.

**It is not that you want to pity us be cruel to us.**

It is just that you do not have a frame of reference as to how to talk to us or conduct yourselves in our presence.

**It is not that you want to be unnatural and uncomfortable around us.**

It is just that you have never had to relate to us in everyday social situations.

**We are a part of you. We're not so different from you. We could be friends. This is our way of trying to let you know that we exist.**



## *Look at Me!*

I've grown up with your sympathy.

I've grown up with words like handicapped, crippled, abnormal.

Your pity, fear or ignore me.

Your eyes talk to me even as you look away.

"Poor things" your eyes say.

You pointedly ignore my face, my arm, my leg,  
my differences.

Yet that's the only thing you see in me.

**Look at me; look at the person in me, and  
then my disability.**



## ***Don't Label me!***

Just like you're not "cancerous" if you have cancer.

I'm not "disabled" because I have an impairment.

Your cancer may not have a cure.

It may worry you, make your family anxious, shorten your life.

**But it does not define you.**

You have a life outside of your diseases.

You have a career, friends, parents, children.

You have moments of fun and laughter,

Periods of sadness,

Bursts of anger, pangs of hunger.

You have aspirations, ambitions, hopes and desires.





You have a life.

And so do I.

I am able in many ways and disabled in some.

When you define me, you confine me.

You have a life.

And so do I.

I am able in many ways and disabled in some.

**When you define me, you confine me.**



## *Ask me!*

Me was so excited.

Her childhood school friend had moved to our town.

“We used to be like twins. I haven’t seen her for thirty years!”

Ma said.

We went to Ma’s friend’s house for tea.





She was very pleasant and cheerful.

As she served us, she asked Ma, “Does Minkshi like chocolate cake?”

That surprised me!

You know, I am 24 years old.

Still, people ask my mother about the smallest decisions regarding me.

When you do that, I feel invisible. I feel powerless. I feel I don’t matter.

**I know what I like and what I don’t like  
Ask me!**



## *What's normal?*

Everybody has something they can't do. That's a disability.

You can't control your anger. That's your disability.

I can't walk. That's mine.

You can't play chess. That's your disability.

I can't see. That's mine.

You can't keep your formulae straight in your head. That's your disability.

I can't keep my head straight. That's mine.

Everybody has abilities they can boast about.

You can sing well. That's your ability.

I can foot-paint. That's mine.

You can play cricket. That's your ability.

I can play the violin. That's mine.

You can make friends easily. That's your ability.

I can be a good friend. That's mine.



We're all disabled in some ways. And we're all able in others.

**So what's normal? You're as normal as you can be. And so am I.**

## *Listen to yourself!*

I am not wheelchair “bound or confined it”.

When I use my wheelchair, I can be mobile. I can be free.

I am not “dumb”.

I speak and communicate. Maybe not with my mouth.

I am not “handicapped”.

I don’t beg for my living.

I don’t have a “birth defect”.

I’m not a machine that is defective and therefore useless.

I am not “crippled”.

My disability does not define who I am.

Listen to yourself before you take away my dignity with your words.

**We can control the language we use as, what we say has serious effect on people around us.**



## *Meet me!*

I'm not "special".

I'm not a victim. I'm not a hero.

I'm just me.

I'm a parent, a daughter, an employee, a  
friend, a neighbour—

I have my good days and my bad days.

I am nice sometimes and sometimes I'm  
nasty.

I get angry at some silly things and I laugh at  
other silly things.

I pay my bills and have responsibilities.

I'm a person. I'm an individual.

**You have to meet me to know me.**



## *Yes, I'm different aren't you?*

Are all brown-skinned people the same?

Are all short people similar?

Are all scientists alike?

Are all women one?

Don't you hate it when people stereotype you?

Isn't typecasting a kind of discrimination?

**"If you're an individual, not a category,**

**why are we "the blind," "the deaf," "the retarded?"**



## *Live with Me!*

You send me to “special” schools and homes where I can live and be  
“with my own kind.”

You make me invisible and ineffective-you don't see me, hear me,  
shop with me, work with me or go to school with me. Therefore, I  
do not exist within your daily frame of life.

I am the beggar you pity from your car.  
I am the relative you hide the world.

The most difficult barrier faced by people with disabilities can be  
other peoples attitude.

**Don't let yourself be a barrier to DISABILITY EQUALITY.**









*We are grateful to*

Radhika Sahni  
Sumit Samaddar  
Abhay Tiwari  
Sanjeev Kumar  
Itishree Date  
Rini Bhattacharya  
Satish Kapoor

Rajeev Ranjan  
Vilas Shardul  
Niranjana Khatri  
Shobha Sachdev  
Asmita Huddar  
Hiren Majmudar  
Sudeep Dutta  
Sanjay Bhattacharya

THE TELUGU DESAM PARTY TUESDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2006

# METRO

## Films to down barriers of disability

**AWARENESS CAMP**

From the wheelchair to the stage, the film 'Munna Bhai' is a powerful message to the world. It is a story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor. The film is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor. The film is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor.

The film is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor. The film is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor. The film is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor.

The film is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor. The film is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor. The film is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor.

## Sensitivity Lessons For Teachers

Teachers gather at APJ School, Park Street, on Monday to get a better understanding of the ways to deal with differently-abled children. The real barrier is the attitude of the people," said Pankaj Sahai who was the guest speaker.

The Inclusive Serva Siksha Ashram, a disabled children's school, was the guest speaker.

THE TIMES OF INDIA, Kolkata. Wednesday, November 29, 2006.

## Doing things, differently

**Kolkata:** Last night, a 100-odd people gathered at the Park Street Theatre to watch a play titled 'Munna Bhai', which is a story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor. The play is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor.

The play is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor. The play is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor. The play is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor.

The play is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor. The play is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor. The play is a heartwarming story of a young man who is disabled and how he overcomes his physical limitations to become a successful actor.

**I AM ME!**

LOOK AT ME! LOOK AT THE PERSON IN ME! NOT MY DISABILITY!

Disability - society's point of view

- "tragic"
- "poor things"
- "abnormal"
- "those people"
- "such people"
- "burden on the family"
- "need to be rehabilitated"

**trinaYani**  
Creating Awareness about Disability

An **AUDIO DESCRIBED FILM SCREENING** of **MUNNA BHA!** for the visually impaired to celebrate Children's Day presented by **trinaYani**

A group of people are working on a large sculpture of a person in a wheelchair. The sculpture is made of clay and is being painted with blue and white paint. The people are standing around the sculpture, looking at it with interest.

An Initiative of

