

# BIG IDEAS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD OF DISABILITY

- What do they mean?
- How can we use them?

# Theory

- A theory is an idea which:
- Helps us think about problems
- Explains why something happens
- Suggests what might happen next

# Workshop

- » This workshop is about a different way of thinking about disability
- » We are going to learn how Buddhists view disability and the meaning of life
- » We will discuss what these ideas mean for us

# About Buddhism

- » This is a really old religion
- » Founded by Buddha in India 2500 years ago
- » The teachings spread all over Asia
- » Now there are millions of Buddhists all over the world
- » Many are in the UK and Europe -Germany and Austria - and the USA

500 BC

1AD

2022AD

Buddha

Jesus



# India

(show a map of India here)

# Who was Buddha?

- » He was a really rich prince
- » He lived in a palace
- » But he felt something was missing
- » He left all his rich clothes and money behind
- » He went out into the world with one thing - a begging bowl for people to give him food

# Buddha's big idea(s)

- He met many people who were poor, who had illness and disability, who were unhappy
- He said that life is suffering
- We must recognise this
- We must think about the reasons for suffering
- We must not run away from suffering



# What should we do?

- » Take time to think about suffering
- » Do not be defeated by it
- » Find ways to help others and help the world
- » Like Buddha did

# Culture, Disability, Suffering

People have different beliefs about disability.

In some cultures people think disability is a punishment for something a person, or their family, has done wrong.

In some cultures, people think disability is the result of a curse or a spell.

In many cultures, people think disability is the will of God.

And in some cultures people think a disabled child is very special, a gift to take care of.

In the West, people with disabilities are often shown as suffering and worthy of pity.

# Disability

- » Buddha believed that disability is NOT the cause of our suffering
- » If you exclude people with disabilities then you create suffering not only for others but also for yourself
- » We need to think about how we are “privileged” and “rich” and what we do not like to see and exclude from our lives

# Our Palaces

A palace or castle is somewhere where we  
can feel protected

The world is shut out

We don't have to go there

We can turn away from what makes us  
uncomfortable

Build your own castle out of bricks!

# Build your own castle

- » As you put it together, think about the ways you are privileged or rich
- » If we are going to go out and feel solidarity with others who suffer, we will need to leave our palace
- » Leave behind possessions, attitudes, beliefs
- » What will we take with us to share with others?

What have we learned from  
our game/discussion/activity

What does this mean to you?

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# Discussion questions

- Are these ideas new to you?
- How does the idea about all life being suffering change the way we think about disability?
- Is this idea different to how people in the West think about disability
- Do you know any other religions and their ideas on disability?