

**Triangle, Inc.**

Disability Services

# THE DJ TIMES

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NEWSLETTER OF THE DISABILITY JUSTICE TASK FORCE (DJTF)

## Welcome!

BY JEFF LAFATA-HERNANDEZ

Happy Fall! The Disability Justice Task Force is excited to share our latest DJ Times with everyone as we begin October, National Disability Employment Awareness Month, and Disability History Month in Massachusetts. We hope you enjoy this edition of the DJ Times, full of resources to support your disability justice journey and our collective effort to expand Triangle's mission and impact.



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# Local Arts + Culture - Community Tips for Accessible Fall Adventures

BY CHARLIE WARREN

Heading out for a fall adventure? Here is a guide with shared knowledge on how to plan and prepare a smooth and fun outing.

## Plan Ahead and Do Your Research

- **Make a Call:** While many places have general accessibility info online, a quick phone call can get you details about accessible entrances, quieter visiting times, or specific accommodations.
- **Check the Layout:** Fall events often take place on historic streets or uneven ground. Look for maps of the venue to see if you'll encounter stairs, cobblestones (especially in Salem), or steep hills.
- **Parking & Transit:** In crowded areas, accessible parking fills up fast. Research alternative transportation, like accessible public buses, and have a backup plan.

## What to Pack: The Fall Go-Bag

- **Medication and Supplies:** Always pack extra medication and medical supplies. This is the top piece of advice from the community, in case of unexpected delays or changes in your outing.
- **Layers and Comfort:** Fall weather is unpredictable. Pack layers to stay comfortable. For sensory sensitivities, consider bringing noise-canceling headphones or other comfort items.
- **Tools for the Unexpected:** For those using mobility aids, a small repair kit with items like duct tape, a wrench, or a portable tire pump can be a lifesaver. Don't forget a portable charger for any electronic devices.

## Navigating Fall Events

- **Pace Yourself:** Don't feel pressured to see everything at once. Build in time for rest, and be prepared to take a break if you feel drained.
- **Ask for Help:** Don't hesitate to ask staff for assistance. Many people are happy to help with finding an accessible restroom, navigating a busy area, or answering your questions.



# Accessible Meditation - Accessible Yoga is Yoga

BY KRYSTAL LINN

Accessible yoga is more than twisting the body or holding shapes for long periods. The *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, comprising 196 short verses written around 400 C.E., guide us toward wisdom and self-realization through the practice of yoga. Patanjali defines yoga as the effort to calm the mind. We all have minds, even if they feel chaotic or are disordered, and we can all practice that effort. Sutra 1.3 reminds us that “The Self abides in its own true nature.”

Even from its ancient roots, Yoga was never intended to be exclusive. Its essence is unity, connection, and mindful awareness. Beyond physical postures, accessible yoga helps regulate the nervous system, is trauma-sensitive, and respects personal choice. It encourages students to modify, rest, or explore alternatives without apology, creating a psychologically safe environment and honoring the full range of human experiences, including those with disabilities, neurodiversity, and aging bodies.

Jivana Heyman, founder of the Accessible Yoga School, says, “The yoga practices are all designed to lead us back home to ourselves. They’re not about giving us something new or making us into something else... but rather, peeling away the layers that block our experience of that truth.”

Yoga is a practice of *ahimsa*, the Sanskrit principle of non-harming. Rooted in compassion, *ahimsa* extends beyond our actions toward others to include how we treat ourselves. We cannot practice non-violence while causing ourselves physical, emotional, or mental harm. Accessible yoga is not a separate style or “type” of yoga. It’s more than just yoga blocks, straps, boosters, and chairs. It’s a return to yoga’s heart—expressing compassion, patience, and self-awareness in practice. Communities of healing thrive when yoga centers, teachers, and creators commit to accessibility.

My recommendations for Inclusive and Accessible Yoga teachers and Social Content:

- [The Accessible Yoga School](#)
- [Allihopa Yoga](#)
- [ML Maitreyi](#)
- [The Underbelly Yoga](#)

Works Cited:

- [What are the Yoga Sutras](#)
- [Embracing Difference, Not Conformity: What Does Accessible Yoga Really Mean?](#)
- [Interview with Accessible Yoga Part 1: Early History of Yoga for People with Disabilities](#)



# Anti-Ableism Resources & Tips

BY JEFF LAFATA-HERNANDEZ

In EPIC's Ableism Trainings, we often discuss an essential part of being anti-ableist and an ally to people with disabilities: the importance of listening to disabled voices, learning about disability history, and continuing to educate oneself. Whether you do this through reading, watching documentaries, listening to podcasts, or by following disabled creators on social media, there are many ways to ensure you are hearing from intersectional disabled voices about disability culture, history, and advocacy.

To help people begin this work, EPIC has created an online resource list featuring books, movies, podcasts, and disabled influencers. We want to ensure the Triangle Community has access to this resource. This is a live document that will be continuously updated; please check back periodically.

[Click here to access the resource list.](#)

## Disability History

BY KASSI SOULARD



In 2009, thanks to the leadership and advocacy of youth with disabilities in the state who pushed for the Governor to sign a proclamation, Massachusetts became one of a handful of states that celebrates Disability History Month in October. However, there was no curriculum or mandate behind the celebration until 2018, when advocates pushed for DESE to update its social studies and history curriculum to include lessons about disability rights and history. A video resource, "The Great Fight for Disability Rights," and associated curriculum was made available for free to any Massachusetts teacher who would like access to it. While there's still no requirement for disability history to be taught in schools, having resources available makes it easier for teachers to include this important topic when planning their coursework.

## Accessible Recreation - Accessibility at the Topsfield Fair!

BY MELISSA STROUT

The Topsfield Fair is a favorite around here! It runs from October 3-13, and there are a number of our residents, participants and staff employed or volunteering at the fair. The Topsfield Fair offers a few accessibility services to check out. For example, Sensory Day was held on Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup> where the fair featured no flashing lights, loud music or announcements. An FAQ provides more information and there is even a social story available with visuals for younger children. Topsfield Fair also offers dementia friendly tips with suggestions on visiting the fair as well as specifically trained greeters for support. You'll also find information on accessible parking and where best to go.

Check out this link for more information: [Accessibility | Topsfield Fair 2025](#)

Have fun at the fair!

**Want to join the DJTF?**  
**Reach out to Jeff at**  
**[jlafata@epicleaders.org](mailto:jlafata@epicleaders.org)**