

Outlook on Lifestyle

This is my nervous breakdown



**Against
the odds**
**PAT
WOODE**

This is my nervous breakdown. I earned it and I have every right to it. There are many rights that we each have that society seems to feel are inappropriate for individuals. Disabled people usually see themselves as individuals even if the public doesn't.

"How are you going to have a baby?" I've been handicapped for 36 years and I am confined to using the same method as everyone else. I've not been granted any special powers and I can't recall any disabled person who has found another way. Come to think of it, none that I know mentioned that they are actively researching other methods.

"He won't want to go there." Don't assume. Just because one can not "see" does not mean "there does not have something to offer. Many of the disabled must learn to live with cabin fever. If nothing else "there"

is not "here". Being paralyzed or deformed does not necessarily mean that it hurts. Likewise, something missing (e.g. leg) does not mean it can not hurt. The best way to find out is to ask. You can touch us in the same way as able bodied people. Disabilities are not contagious. This means that the right to tactile communication should not be lost. Caution: do not patronize by patting on the head, some can be vicious.

"You can't do that." Handicapped people have just as much right to fail as everyone else. Not everyone taking law is going to succeed. Being disabled does not guarantee success or failure. If I have a rotten disposition now, I probably will have a rotten disposition when I'm 65 or confined to a wheelchair. Losing one's spouse, job, hearing or sight are all traumatic. How these stressful situations are handled reveals individual traits. All overweight people are not cheerful just as all quadriplegics can not be transformed into "mouthpainters" or computer operators. "Disability" describes the condition not the person. Wheelchair users still have the right to be individuals. Yelling at a hearing impaired person is not productive. Certain sounds can not be

amplified. The "h" in "half" or the "T" in "fat" sound the same whispered or shouted. Your abnormal behaviour will not assist communication.

Assumptions about disabled people take away their rights. If you treat someone differently without just cause, you are making judgements that in many cases will not be well founded. This tendency to judge is rarely a trait that people develop on their own. People act similarly in similar situations. When the mover takes away the stove, the homemaker comments defensively about the dirt that is left behind. This is a natural reaction. It is also a learned reaction. How we treat others is also learned. Society as individuals must be re-educated. Handicapped people are normal, everyday people and I assure that you can treat them as such.

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Day of Prayer

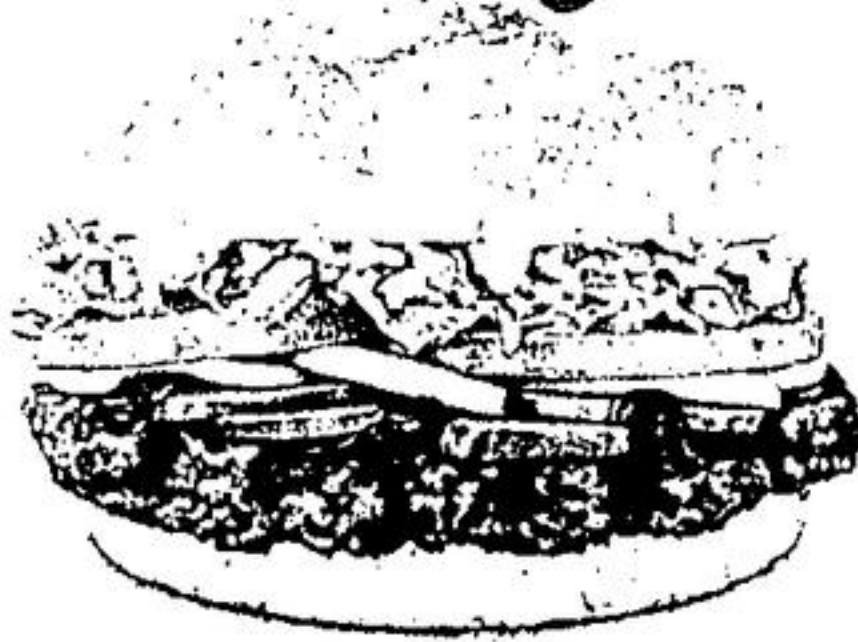
One hundred years of ecumenical prayer and action will be celebrated by Christians in 150 countries around the world on March 6.

In Georgetown the celebration will be held at Knox Presbyterian Church at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is invited.

The story of the World Day of Prayer started in 1887 when the poverty and miserable living conditions of immigrant families touched the heart of Mary Ellen James of Brooklyn, New York. She called for a National Day of Prayer and Action. Since then the movement has spread around the world. In Canada alone over 1,000 services will be held across the country.

Hilda D'Arcy of St. John's United Church has created a banner to commemorate this special 100th birthday celebration and members from 12 churches in the Georgetown area will be taking part. Afterwards, birthday cake and ice cream will be served.

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