

## **Blurred lines**

I realize that “disabled” doesn’t necessarily mean “not abled.” In many ways you are more able than me. But the lines between the two are blurred, and I don’t know when it’s OK for me to use my able-ness to assist you with your disabled-ness.

As we simultaneously approach the entrance to the grocery, should I hold the door open for your wheelchair? Push carts out of the way to ease your path? I know you can manage these things yourself...so is it insulting for me to offer an assist? What should I do?

As we pass on the sidewalk, I marvel at your confidence as you check the path ahead with your white-tipped cane. It’s clear that you have mastered this route, so should I warn you about the construction in the next block? Or would that be rude? What should I do?

At Christmastime I saw your prosthesis wrapped in twinkling lights. I thought it was gutsy that you would call attention to your missing leg. Do I say something? “Hey, love the lights.” Or would that be rude? What should I do?

I had hoped that the process of writing this article would provide me some clarity. But the lines are still blurred.

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