

Top Ten Lists from each chapter of *My Body is Not a Prayer Request*

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1. Disability Curatives

Top TEN Recommended Remedies

Strangers recommend these “treatments” for my disability.

10. Sleep with a bar of soap.
9. Put garlic in your socks.
8. Get more sun. Avoid the sun. Become a vampire and never see the sun again.
7. Put a heat lamp on your leg. Put ice packs on your leg.
6. Bathe with Epsom salts. This will draw out the disability.
5. Take vitamin C, magnesium, iron, or sometimes all three at once, just for fun.
4. Drink bone broth or pickle juice. (But not together. Never together.)
3. Try to relax.
2. Try jogging. After a while, your legs will remember how to walk.
1. Hit your other leg with a hammer to take your mind off the pain.

2. Disability Discrimination

TOP TEN “At Leasts”

Folks say these to me about being disabled, usually to make themselves feel more comfortable with my body.

10. At least you’ll be running in heaven.
9. At least you’re only physically disabled.
8. At least it’s not cancer.
7. At least you have a husband to take care of you.
6. At least you don’t look disabled.
5. At least you can count your blessings.

4. At least you don't let your disability define you.
3. At least you've inspired others.
2. At least this is part of God's plan.
1. At least you get good parking.

3. Disability Doubters

TOP TEN Disability Denials

Folks say these to me when they approach me in public, criticizing me for not being disabled enough.

10. Stop using your grandpa's placard!
9. Just wait until you get to my age, then you'll really be disabled!
8. You're not disabled—you're differently abled (or special needs or handicapped or an angel).
7. You rely too much on that cane.
6. Don't let your disability hold you back.
5. The only disability is a bad attitude.
4. You're too pretty to be disabled.
3. You're too young to be disabled.
2. You don't look sick.
1. You can't be disabled with a smile like that!"

4. Disability Justice

TOP TEN Reasons I'm Disabled

Prayerful perpetrators cite these reasons for my disability, unsolicited.

10. Your body is a result of the fall.
9. God needed a special angel.
8. You symbolize the worst fate that could happen to any of us at any time.
7. You've given up hope.
6. You represent the world's decay.

5. You keep us grateful.
4. You've sinned.
3. Your parents have sinned.
2. Adam and Eve sinned.
1. You just need to have a little more faith.

5. Disability Blessings

TOP TEN "I Know How You Feels"

Folks say these to me when they are trying to empathize with being disabled.

10. My friend/cousin/coworker/barista is disabled . . . so I know how you feel.
9. I burned myself out after partying all weekend . . . so I know how you feel.
8. I sprained my ankle back in third grade . . . so I know how you feel.
7. I get exhausted when I walk all day too.
6. One time I had an ingrown toenail removed, so I know how you feel about doctors.
5. I had to go to physical therapy for six whole weeks after I busted my knee.
4. I was wheeled out after giving birth, so I know how hard wheelchairs can be to use.
3. Aren't we all just a little bit disabled?
2. We all have something. That's just your cross to bear. My boss is mean.
1. I think I have a little bit of what you have."

6. Disability Mosquitos

TOP TEN Mosquito Swatters

Folks respond with these after I call out disability mosquitos.

10. It's not my fault you took offence.
9. You need a thicker skin.
8. Cancel culture is too much these days.
7. Your tone hurt my feelings.

6. You need to take a chill pill.
5. What ever happened to freedom of speech?
4. Who are you, the language police?
3. You are too sensitive.
2. It doesn't mean that anymore.
1. That's not how I meant it.

7. Disability Lessons

TOP TEN Disability Icebreakers

Folks say these when I am approaching in my mobility scooter. Usually, they are strangers. Always, they are awkward. Disability is not an icebreaker, a pickup line, or a way to create shared laughter for nondisabled people.

10. "Wide load, everyone. Make way! Stand aside! Look out, roadrunner coming through!"
9. Any time I stand or reach out of my wheelchair: "It's a miracle!" Or, during December: "It's a Christmas miracle!"
8. "Don't run me over now!" 7. "Do you have a license for that thing?"
6. "But you don't look like you need that thing."
5. "Wow, you're in a wheelchair!"
4. "Here comes Professor X!"
3. "Good for you for getting out and about."
2. "It must be nice to sit down all day."
1. "What's wrong with you?"

8. Disabled Foundations

TOP TEN Disability Accolades

Folks say these to praise me, as though I am a superhero simply for existing while disabled.

10. God doesn't see you as disabled.
9. You're so courageous.

8. God needed another angel.
7. You remind me it could always get worse.
6. I wish I had an excuse to stay home. Must be nice!
5. You don't even look disabled!
4. You make me realize my suffering isn't that bad.
3. I don't know how you do it. I'd kill myself if I had what you have.
2. I don't even think of you as disabled.
1. You're such an inspiration.

9. Disabled God

TOP TEN Disability Theologies

Folks share these with me, unsolicited.

10. Jesus wants to see you running.
9. If you just believed, God would heal you.
8. What sin in your life is preventing you from getting up and walking?
7. Adam and Eve weren't disabled, so that's not God's plan for humanity.
6. You need to hope for more from life than disability.
5. There are no wheelchairs in heaven.
4. Everything happens for a reason.
3. Jesus didn't die for you to be in a wheelchair.
2. God doesn't give us more than we can handle, so you must be able to handle this!
1. God doesn't see you as disabled.

10. Disabled Church

TOP TEN Disability Dreams

These are my dreams for what church communities could become. I dream that churches would . . .

10. Welcome change to become more inclusive and accessible to all disabled people.
9. Believe us when disabled people share that something is inaccessible to us.
8. Celebrate the holy disruption of disabled body-minds.
7. Incorporate disability theology into worship practices and gatherings.
6. Learn from the prophetic witness of disabled experiences.
5. Invite and equip disabled people to lead.
4. Budget money, time, and resources to make spaces and community etiquette more inclusive.
3. Create community care networks to support disabled people.
2. Pay the crip tax for disabled people in the community.
1. Worship the disabled God.