

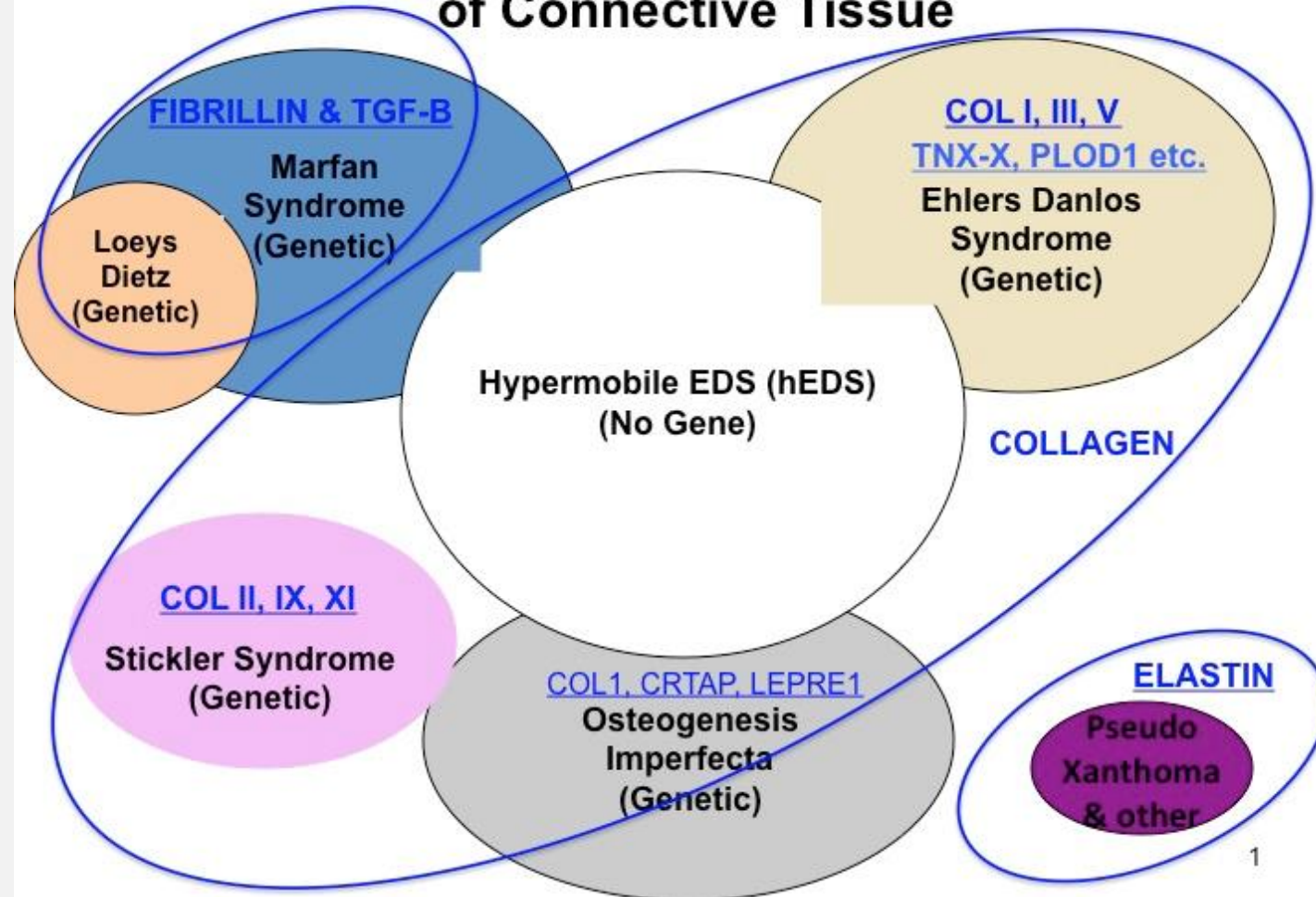
ABILITY AND ALLYSHIP IN TUTORING:
BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS OF
DISABILITY

Vanessa Thompsett

BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS OF DISABILITY

- Why I wanted to talk about this topic
- A way forward
- Consider ways of working with tutors with disabilities
- Mutually beneficial

The More Common of the Hereditary Disorders of Connective Tissue



ME AND MY DISABILITY

- Too tired to go to lectures or work
- Debilitating pain
- Was I 'too old' for university?
- Diagnosed in 2014 with Joint Hypermobility Syndrome

JHS

- Affects energy levels
- Daily joint pain
- Affects mobility
- Extremely hard or even impossible to work full-time, 'normal' job

“WHY NOT TRY PRIVATE TUTORING?”

- Meant I could sleep in and set my own hours
- I'm good at it
- Love it
- Yippee!
- Began the 'usual process' of setting up as a private tutor
- Oops

“YOU GOTTA TRAVEL.”

- I lost ~50% of my students
- Discount for the ones who were able to come to me
- Different set-up for second year: online and in-person at my flat only.
- It worked!

OTHER EXPERIENCES: LISA

- Music Teacher
- EDS (Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome)
- Mobility is badly affected; she needs somewhere comfortable to sit during lessons
- A couple of negative experiences: “your unreliable health”
- Complicated risk assessment suddenly required
- Council ‘discouraged’ application to work in local schools due to accessibility issues
- Mostly positive experiences

OTHER EXPERIENCES: ROSE

- ESL teacher
- Neurological issues
- Fatigue and risk of epileptic seizures, especially when stressed
- Teaching online
- Lots of change can result in a negative impact; stability helps
- No work pressure to 'level up' and very little or no pushing to achieve certain goals
- "Career progression on MY schedule"

WORKING WITH A DISABILITY IS HARD

- Like a second job!
- Having to constantly assess and understand your own needs
- Can be very rewarding and maintain a feeling of independence
- Other disadvantaged groups – life coaching
- Dealing with potentially negative responses and concerns from parents

NEEDS

- Flexible hours
- Little to no travel
- A liveable wage
- Understanding and empathy

WORRIES

- Preconceptions of how you might be seen
- Negative attitudes
- Guilt of having to cancel
- Playing 'catch-up'
- Reliability vs staying well
- Employability

“Change the problem.”

CHANGE THE PROBLEM

- Address negative attitudes
- Positive impact on the world of education and tuition
- Help those who want to work as tutors
- Ensuring greater equality
- Benefits of unique life experiences

ONE SIZE FITS ALL?

- Of course not
- Just one viewpoint
- But more can be done
- How you can help and be an ally

ALLYSHIP

- Understanding, compassion and kindness
- Think about what you say
- “We have to take on responsibility”
- Knowing and understanding limits

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THANK YOU!

- Questions
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