

Lily:

Welcome to Everything You Know about Disability is wrong.

Erin:

A podcast by disabled people for disabled people.

Lily: :

But if you're not disabled, stick around. You might learn something new.

Speaker 3:

Oh my goodness, you are such an inspiration. Wow, you really are. You're so strong. Can I pet your service dog? 1, 2, 3, let's go. (singing)

Erin:

Hey everyone, welcome to Everything You Know about Disability is Wrong. Today we have activist and author Emily Ladau.

Lily:

Hi. Welcome to the podcast, Emily.

Emily:

Thanks Erin and Lily, I'm so excited to be with you.

Lily::

I am so excited to have you on this podcast. I am such a huge fan of your work, specifically your book, *Demystifying Disability*. It gave me so much language to give others. It's like my gold standard. If I were to be in the dating scene again, I would arm myself with this book and I would, before talking to anyone, I would be like, "Have you read this? Can't talk to you unless you've read this."

Emily:

So funny story is I am dating someone right now and he was making a joke about how he is going to assign the book as reading for his family. And that is wildly embarrassing to me, but I'm really glad it's a resource for you.

Lily::

No, absolutely not embarrassing. It is assigned reading for all of my friends. So on the topic of this season of the podcast, we're talking about love dating relationships. There's a quote in your book where you say, "In high school, a guy had a crush on asked me how I put on my pants. Dudes on dating apps have asked if I'm physically able to have sex before so much is saying hello." I think that sums up so much of just what an ableist space dating apps can be and what the teenage into early twenties experience of dating can be with a disability. So just kind of wanted to kick off the conversation there. You said you're in a relationship now, but have you spent a lot of time in the dating app space? What has your experience been like?

Emily:

Oh my goodness, yes. So I was using dating apps quite a bit in my early twenties. And then in my mid-twenties I started dating someone who I met on Tinder actually. And we were together for about four and a half years. And then last year I got back into the dating world and back on the apps. And let me tell you, they do not improve from your early twenties to your late twenties. And I'm in my early thirties now, I'm 31. And I think that all of the people that I interacted with on there, for the most part, seemed to still be stuck in that early twenties' mentality. So it was really like wading through a swamp and hoping that you find the gold coin at the bottom. And luckily I did find that, but I would not say that the situation has improved at all.

Lily:

Those are waters I do not want to wade into. I feel like people just think that their creepiest version of themselves is acceptable to be on an online dating space.

Erin:

It's like they don't have a filter. They think it's not face to face, so they can just say whatever they want and there's no implication on actual people's feelings and experiences. It is really tough to navigate online dating, I have to say.

Lily:

Erin, you've used some of the older dating apps, correct?

Erin:

I tried Match.com. We're not sponsored by anybody to say, but I think OkCupid obviously it worked out for me. My relationship now is from that, well, it's from Twitter and it led to OkCupid, but it was a whole experience that I never want to do again.

Emily:

I wouldn't recommend it. I have used probably almost all of them. I had a brief relationship with someone from OkCupid. One of my ex was from Tinder. I used Coffee Meets Bagel. I used JSwipe, which is Jewish Tinder, just so many. But anyway, the person who I am currently dating I met on Hinge, which is one of the more modern ones, I suppose.

Lily:

I think Hinge has a little bit more get to know you quality rather than just swipe on my face.

Erin:

Have you ever used dating sites specific to disabled people?

Emily:

So this is such a tough question for me because my answer is no, and I feel like it's because I am not interested in being self-limiting. But at the same time, I don't want people to think that I'm being hypocritical and ruling out the possibility of dating other disabled people. That's not it. I have been in a serious relationship with another disabled person and that was a largely positive experience for me. But I met that person organically in a situation where I was surrounded by a lot of disabled people because I had gone to a camp for kids with disabilities and then we met at some kind of alumni event years later. And so I think being in that organic setting felt right to me, but limiting myself right off the bat and being like, "I'm disabled come date me," doesn't really feel quite right to me. Even though it's a huge part of my identity, but also I don't necessarily trust that people on those sites are on there with good intentions.

Erin:

I was just going to say, I did try and my experience was a lot of [inaudible 00:06:57]. They were just like, "Let me take care of you. I can wash your face." I was like, "Okay, bye." But it was just a lot of that weird stuff. And even though I'd used OkCupid it seems the only people that would respond to me are other disabled people. And I think it's interesting how you just find each other no matter what.

Lily:

Definitely. And you bring up a good point of the intention of people who use those kinds of dating apps because there's a kind of newish app that's for dating and friendship for specifically neurodivergent people. So it's called Hickey, I think. And I remember being really excited when I heard about it because I was like, "Oh, I can make other autistic friends. This is going to be amazing." And then sitting on some kind of Reddit threads and hearing people talk about it and saying, the space in this app as of right now is pretty misogynist and there's a lot of dudes who are fetishizing autistic women on there and things like that. And I think that's just a risk of having something that is specifically for a community and then you're going to get the people who want to be creepy towards that community.

Emily:

And I think that this is something that's kind of unavoidable across dating apps, whether they are for specific communities or not. But even when I was on Jewish dating apps, I mean there were people who were on there who were saying, "I'm not Jewish, but I'm looking for a nice Jewish girl." And that just made me feel weird. So I think that there's just a very odd dynamic where yes, you are trying to create a space to find people within your community or who share an identity, but there's just not enough safeguards in place to make sure that it's actually a safe space. And some of that's really challenging because you can't really demand that somebody disclose personal diagnosis related information.

Do you want a doctor's note so that I can join a dating app? So I mean, I get that they're in a really sticky situation and they're relying on the honor system for people to self-identify. But it also just opens up a lot of ethical questions about what guardrails are put in place. And that's a question for all dating apps, but especially for ones that are I think identity based. And so I just found that it was easier for me to not go into those spaces.

Lily:

I completely get that. One of the questions that's kind of come up for me and Erin is that where is the line between ignorance and ableism? And Erin and I couldn't really come up with an answer for that. So we were kind of wondering, we were like, "Well, maybe Emily will have thoughts on that."

Emily:

I'm not sure there is a right answer here because I think context and intention matters so much. I think that what one person may say because they genuinely don't know any better, is something that another person can say and they are being a horrible ableist jerk. And so for me, I think the line comes from did this person know better or was this a genuine honest mistake? And then if you take the time to say, "Hey, the way you said that wasn't cool, it was actually kind of ableist. Can we not use that word? Can we not talk in this way about disability? Can we reframe our thinking in this way?" It depends on how they respond. Because if they respond defensively, then obviously that to me crosses the line towards ableism, not so much ignorance. If they're like, "Oh my gosh, I really didn't know. I'm sorry. I am going to do better next time."

Then to me, they really just didn't know and there's an opportunity for growth. So I'm not sure there's ever a right answer. It's just so dependent on the person and also on building that trust in your relationship where you feel like you can say, "Hey, that actually wasn't cool. I want to tell you why." That doesn't mean that I don't want to continue this relationship, but I feel like here's an opportunity for us to communicate.

Lily:

That's such a good point. My boyfriend is not autistic, and I've found that the more comfortable I've gotten with discussing, the more I'm actually calling things out. The safer I feel in our relationship, the more trust I have. The easier it is for me to say, "Did you know that this kind of train of thinking is rooted in ableism?" And it's kind of different than expected that it's actually when I feel safe that I feel like I'm able to talk about that. Because if it was just a random person on a dating app who I feel like crossed the line from ignorant ableism, it's easy, just unswipe, I'm not wasting my time trying to explain.

Erin:

In your relationships, does your partner ever ask you, is this ableist? Because I get that all the time in my relationship, even though my partner is also disabled, but in a different way from me.

Emily:

So I think that my relationship dynamics has evolved as I have evolved because in my first serious relationship, I was in my early twenties and I was still coming to an understanding of ableism. I had internalized quite a bit of ableism, but I didn't understand that that was the case. And so I was sort of in the process of just beginning to unlearn my own ableism around a lot of things at that time. And that was the time that I was dating someone who also was disabled, but he was not particularly immersed in that world. So I was sort of figuring it out and I was like, "Wow, there is so much for me to learn and unlearn." And I would say he was probably not as on board with that journey. And so that was sort of a point of divergence for us.

And it's only really now that I'm finally older and dating someone who I think it's safe to say is much more mature and aligned with my values in terms of social justice. That he has been really willing to be like, how does this make you feel? Is this ableist? What can I do to better the situation? Or what can I do to make something more comfortable for you? But not in the sense of do lots of work and teach me things, more like, "I'm curious how this impacts you and I want to talk about it."

Lily:

That is such a good distinction, the teaching versus curiosity. And I think that if you work in any kind of activism, advocacy, anything like that, there is that level of being able to come home from work or be with your partner. And I don't want to have to teach the same stuff that I'm advocating for at work, but at the same time, I genuinely love curiosity. I really like that distinction.

Emily:

And it's a real one, and it's one that I am finally noticing because I no longer have to be like, "Let me sit you down and school you on this." It's more like, "Hey, I had this experience and here's how it impacted me. And I really appreciate you listening to that."

Lily:

I love that. It sounds like a very good relationship. After meeting this person, when did you think, "Oh, I think this is going to be more than just talking on a dating app?"

Emily:

I would say within a couple of weeks actually. And I think that so much of that had to do with the fact that the conversation did not center on disability. One thing that I always looked for in the online dating world is someone who, yes, acknowledged my disability in conversation when it came up or asked me questions, but didn't make that the central focus because they also wanted to know me as a whole person and recognize that disability was one facet of that. And so I love the idea of engaging in a conversation where maybe you're like, "Yeah, I love this movie, and oh, there's a disabled character in that movie or something." As opposed to being like, "Let me ask you 20 questions in a row about your disability."

Lily:

Absolutely. I think that the 20 questions game is when it starts to feel like I'm on display for this person now.

Emily:

Absolutely.

Lily:

Which is never a good feeling.

Erin:

It's really important to find that comfort in somebody else, but you're not always having to advocate. You can just exist as a couple in space and time.

Emily:

And I think when you are in a healthy relationship, one thing that's really important is that you don't feel like you are constantly improving yourself, explaining yourself. You can just be.

Erin:

I also see that in friendships with other disabled people, we aren't allowed to just be myself, which includes my disability, and I don't feel like I'm being different in another insight type of way. And it's the same thing in a relationship that that comfort is just knowing you can just be who you are without judgment.

Emily:

And I want to advocate very strongly for having disabled friendships in your life. Even if you're not dating someone else who is disabled, I just find that there is always going to be that sense of understanding and community that you cannot find outside of being around other disabled people. And I think that's okay. People fulfill different roles in your life. And for me, my disabled friends are obviously my friends first and foremost, but also sounding boards who I can talk to about disability related things. And I think it's okay to find that fulfillment outside of just a romantic relationship.

Lily:

Yes. I love what you said about people can fill different roles. I think that so often there's been this kind of narrative, especially pushed on women, that your partner is going to be the person that fills every role and there's so many... I think that growing up, I always wanted to someday at my wedding say, "I'm marrying my best friend." But now that I'm an adult, I'm like, "Well, but I have a best friend that's not my partner, that's my best friend." It's a very different role. And I mean, I'm so grateful when my partner can realize I'm not the person to be having this conversation with you. And some of my very best friends, one of my best friends is autistic as well. And we'll talk often of just ranting and venting. And sometimes I'll try to say the same thing to my boyfriend who's not autistic. And no matter how hard he tries, he just doesn't have the answer I'm looking for.

I'm setting him up for failure if I'm trying to relate on the feminine autistic experience with a non-autistic male. I'm setting him up for failure. And I think that the acceptance of having multiple people in your life that fill multiple roles is really, really important. And something that I wish I would've as a teen been more aware of because I don't think my relationship could be as strong as it is if I didn't have amazing friends to lean on.

Emily:

I also think it's really important to recognize that your friendships fulfill so many things that a romantic relationship may not necessarily fulfill, because sometimes you need to be talking about the experiences of your romantic relationship, and you need to be able to do that with people beyond your partner. And I am a huge proponent of mental healthcare and therapy. I think if you have access to mental healthcare, absolutely that should be part of your support system if you want to pursue that. But also, there's something to be said for just having a conversation with a friend and knowing that you have a safe space to land and engaging in a way that you might not feel comfortable doing if your partner is maybe the source of a particular issue. And I don't think that's unhealthy. I think it's very healthy.

I think that having different avenues where you can have different conversations is really, really valuable. But then disability adds another layer to it because there are just moments where I don't have it in me to explain the exact nuances of my emotions as a wheelchair user and what something felt like. And I just need to say something and I just need someone to get it. And that's the beautiful thing about my friendships.

Lily:

Yes, absolutely. I love friendship, and I think that that's also, I'm a big advocate for don't date people that your friends don't like. Hopefully you have friends that you really trust. And I think that that's been important for me too, to have friends that my like partner and that, because sometimes I'll come to my friends to say something, whether it's an argument we got into or something that's happening in my relationship, and it's my friends who will be like, Well, actually, I empathize with him." I see what he's thinking here. And I'm like, "Oh, yep, I needed to be called out on that." But if he had called me out on that, I would not have accepted it.

Erin:

I mean, I don't have a big friend network, but I have a big family network. Whenever I have a relationship issue, I'll always go to my mom because she's just like, "Erin, it's not a big deal. Let it go." And I'm like, "Oh, you're right." Because it's easy to overthink things in a relationship, especially when you're young. And for me, it's good to have that older perspective of somebody who's been married for 45 years. And I do have friends, obviously you guys are all my friends. But having that one person you can count on to give you honest, real advice is so important to me.

Emily:

And I also don't think that in terms of talking about friendships, I am a big advocate for quality over quantity. Always, always, always. And so I think that if you have a million friends and none of them can tell you the truth, that's not very helpful. If you have one friend who can be honest with you, that's awesome. And if that friend is your mom, which in my case it often is, that's great.

Lily:

Me too. Shout out to our moms.

Erin:

All you need is a handful of people in your corner looking out for you. And that's really, I've learned that. I used to not think that, but...

Lily:

I completely agree. I used to definitely think quantity was the most important thing. And I think that social media kind of played into that, in that I'd see people who had just big friend groups that were constantly, this pre-pandemic, but big friend groups that are getting together and constantly doing this. And I would start playing the comparison game and be like, "Oh, I don't really have that. I like to hang out with my two friends often." But as I've confronted my own internalized ableism and things, I've come to terms with my own capacity as well. And when I have a friend, I ride for that friend. I'm very, very loyal, and I'll put a lot of energy into friendship, which means that sometimes I can't maintain a huge friend group because I just don't have the energy to, and texting is hard, transportation is hard to get places and see friends. And so I 100% agree quality over quantity, which is no dig on people who have huge friend groups. If you have 12 people who all are honest with you, good for you on that. That's good.

Erin:

And the internet has opened a lot of opportunity, especially for disabled people to connect, because I was alive before the internet, and growing up it was all neighborhood friends and neighbors. But at times I still felt a little isolated because I couldn't go walk down to the park or whatever. But when the internet came around, it really gave me a lot of solid friendships and online friendships are just as valid as in person.

Emily:

I'm so glad you said that because some of the best people that I know are people who I've connected with online, and that's within the disability community. And sometimes I think that disability is that first point of bonding for us, and then we find that we have so much else in common that it just becomes a really solid friendship. And when I was in middle school, high school, things like that, and social media was just starting to really be active, Myspace, things like that. I very distinctly recall that mostly social media just made me feel left out because I would see a lot of pictures of these people who called themselves my friends kind of out without me doing things that weren't accessible to me. And it made me feel terrible about myself. But I realized that that was because I was not surrounded by other disabled people really, at least other physically disabled people.

And so as I got older and as I think the rules kind of loosened in terms of you can connect with people even if you don't know them. You don't only need to talk to people that you know, stranger danger is a real thing, but also you can talk to new people. And navigating that was challenging in and of itself, but it's because I kind of loosened that a little bit and started connecting with other people that I found really long-term sustained friendships with other disabled people.

Lily:

Absolutely. And an exciting thing is I feel like that's going to get to be the three of us, because we're talking virtually right now. But Emily, you're going to be at the policy forum in DC this month, right?

Emily:

I am. So that means that we're going to go from online besties to IRL besties. Is that what I'm getting?

Erin:

Yes.

Lily:

IRL besties advocating just for really good stuff. I'm like, [inaudible 00:27:14] we're talking about employment and transportation at this forum. Erin and I have already had conversations about, this ties into our podcast because transportation affects dating. If I can't get to you, I can't date you.

Emily:

You know what I'm going to say? So does employment because dating is expensive.

Erin:

It sure is.

Lily:

Absolutely.

Emily:

And I want to be very real that there are a lot of barriers that society and our very flawed systems put in place before you can even pursue a romantic relationship. And employment and transportation are absolutely two of the biggest. I mean, I drive an adapted vehicle, but I can't really do it for long distances and I can't really drive on highways. And so the person that I'm seeing now lives in New Jersey. I live in New York. Luckily it's a train ride for either one of us, but not everybody has access to that. So it's like these barriers are real and we need to talk about them.

Erin:

Yes.

Lily:

IRL besties breaking down barriers, making the world a more accessible place. I'm excited. I feel like we're like the Avengers meeting. [inaudible 00:28:25]

Erin:

We should get matching tattoos.

Lily:

I'm in.

Emily:

With all of our free time.

Erin:

Yes.

Emily:

Sorry, we have to leave the policy forum. We made tattoo appointments.

Lily:

Sorry, Secretary Pete Buttigieg, there is a tattoo waiting. Can't hear your keynote address. No, I am so excited to see you in person and just to get to have community. I know Nick [inaudible 00:28:50] going to be there as well. We interviewed him in our last episode. I think it's going to be so exciting. And I'm so grateful to Easter Seals for giving us this opportunity, which I think this is a good time to cut to our break.

Erin:

This podcast is brought to you by Easter Seals.

Lily:

We work for Easter Seals, but maybe our listeners don't know what that is.

Erin:

Easter Seals is leading the way to full access, equity and inclusion for disabled people and their families.

Lily:

And we've been doing this for more than a century.

Erin:

This includes helping disabled people find meaningful employment and addressing healthcare needs for all ages.

Lily:

We're proud to serve communities across the country and ready for the next a hundred years. For more, check us out at easterseals.com.

And we're back. And now our listeners know about Easter Seals and why we are meeting. But back to the main topic, what is your favorite kind of date night? Obviously we just talked about getting to your partner, taking the train, things like this. Do you have any kind of routine date nights that you do regularly, Em, that might be a very autistic question to ask. I'm like, do you have routines that you do?

Emily:

No, I actually think that this is such a good question because I am not super big on spontaneity. I need things planned because if I don't know what's coming and I haven't had the chance to figure out transportation, and if I don't know if where I'm going is accessible, then I get really anxious and then it just kind of ruins the vibe. So I love routine. I love planning. I'm all about it. It makes me really happy. But I would say one of my favorite things right now has been that my boyfriend and I like to build Legos together, and I had never really done that before, but then Lego came out with their botanical collection and all the flowers, and I can't keep plants alive. So I was like, "I'm going to build Lego plants and then I can't kill them." And turns out Legos are fantastic. I'm just upset that it took me until 31 to figure this out but it's been so much fun building them with him.

Lily:

Well, how beautiful to unlock that kind of jovial, childlike experience at 31. And also, I completely agree, I can't keep plants to have to save my life. I've even gone down the succulent route, can't even keep a cactus alive. When I saw those botanical Legos, I squealed. I was so excited.

Emily:

A hundred percent one of my favorite things. And I also think that there's something to be said for the fact that you can find a way to make teamwork out of it even if dexterity is a challenge for you. One person can help navigate the directions and one person can help actually put the pieces together. And I just think there's kind of something for everyone.

Erin:

I can't put them together myself, but my niece loves Legos, so I'm in charge of directing and she puts it all together and it's so fun. But Legos now are so intricate. It takes three hours to put one thing together but it's a lot of fun.

Lily:

Once again, we are not sponsored. If Lego wants to send us stuff, I mean, that's fine. I really like that. I think Legos are a great recurring date because it's like, I love tasks that have a beginning and end and you get to feel so satisfied when you've completed something.

Emily:

So we're in the middle of building a bouquet, so we just do a few flowers each weekend and it's been lovely.

Erin:

That's so nice.

Lily:

That's really nice. I will need to mark that in my brain to remember that you don't have to complete the whole Lego set the first time you open it.

Emily:

I mean, part of me wanted to, but if we're talking economic situations, Legos are expensive, trying to make it last-

Erin:

So expensive.

Lily:

You already said this once, but dating in general is so expensive. I think that's a part of dating that doesn't get talked about is you have to budget for dating because there's only so much you can do without having to spend money. I mean, even throughout this pandemic, I've just spent so much money on renting movies.

Erin:

I was going to say, you can't Netflix and chill without buying Netflix.

Emily:

You need to pay for Netflix or you need to pay for food. Yes, you have to eat food to sustain yourself, but also if you want to go out to dinner, there's a lot of things about dating that are just generally barriers for people who are marginalized in some way. But I feel like the important thing to emphasize here is it's not our fault. Because I know for me, I can internalize really easily that if something is more difficult or if I can't do something, or if something becomes a little bit more expensive because of a certain accessibility need that I have, then I start to feel guilty. Maybe I need to take an Uber or a taxi because what we're doing is not near an accessible subway stop in New York City. Or maybe a certain restaurant is not accessible, or maybe I want to go to an event.

And even though they're supposed to be accessible tickets at every price point, the venue decided that they were just going to ignore what the ADA requires and charge whatever they feel like for accessible tickets. So I mean there's a lot of added expenses that come with disability that also in turn impact dating.

Lily:

I think that that's crucial for just everyone to remember that you don't have to take fault for accommodating yourself. I know that that's something that anytime I'm planning an event that's going to cost an amount of money. There's a part of me that's like, there's a chance that you're going to get overstimulated and need to leave this event early, which means you wasted your money, so maybe you shouldn't go at all. And then I have to talk to myself and be like, "No, I don't get, just because I'm going to accommodate this experience to fit my needs doesn't mean that the experience isn't worth it in itself." There's no fault in accommodation and getting your needs met. I think that's very important. And kind of goes into our wrap up topics as we're getting to the end of this conversation. If you could give any advice to young people who are entering the dating scene or people who thought that they were never going to get to be a part of the dating scene and are listening to this podcast, do you have any advice for those people?

Emily:

Well, first of all, I think it's really important to understand that maybe not everybody wants to be part of the dating scene. I think that there's so often a weird dynamic when talking about disability and dating, which is either disabled people are fetishized or disabled people are asexual, and we miss that sort of in between. But I also want to be clear that if someone who's disabled is asexual or aromantic and just decides that dating is not for them, that's cool. And we need to understand that not everybody is seeking relationships. That's okay. However, if you have not necessarily had success in the dating world, and that is something that you want for yourself, and it's not a societal pressure that you're putting on yourself to do something that you're uncomfortable with. But if you genuinely want it and you're struggling to find it, I wish I had some kind of motivational magic words, but honestly, keep at it even when it sucks.

And if it starts to suck too much, take a break. That may not be profound advice, but it's exactly what I did. I dealt with it until I couldn't deal with it anymore. And then I was like, "I'm done. I need a break. I'm going to shut down all the apps. I'll come back later." And then I went back when I was ready. And it's not easy to literally put yourself in the line of ableist fire all the time. And I am a big advocate for being very straightforward about disability, and I know that's not what everyone is comfortable with. But for me, you couldn't miss it on my profile. And that was very intentional because I hoped that it would help rule out people who would write me off just because of my wheelchair but it also meant that I opened myself up to a ton of ableism. And so it was a matter of finding moments to take a break from that and move away from it and say, my worth is not defined by the messages that I'm getting on a dating app.

Lily:

That was profound. And I think this whole conversation has just been so wonderful. Thank you so much for coming on our podcast, Emily. I am so grateful.

Emily:

It was my pleasure. Thank you so much.

Lily:

Any last minute thoughts for our listeners before we go? We always ask that question.

Emily:

I would say you should be in your healthiest relationship with yourself.

Lily:

So profound. Emily, you're dropping gems. That was great.

Emily:

Only because I need to hear them too.

Lily:

Absolutely. Well, thank you so much for coming on the podcast. So we have a segment that we do on this podcast called Ask Us Anything, where we just have people send in questions that Erin and I answer at the end.

Erin:

Hey, you should send us questions at everythingyouknow@easterseals.com.

Lily:

Erin, today's Ask Us Anything is, how do you both get ready for a first date? I think we can answer this first date, but also just any date. So how do you get ready for a date?

Erin:

I used to learn makeup all the time and now like I am allergic to everything. And so I just put my lipstick on, get my hair nice. I put some perfume on, and then I just go and hope for the best.

Lily:

You do rock cool lipstick colors.

Erin:

Thanks.

Lily:

I have a fun little ritual with myself where I will, that was sarcastic. It's not fun, where I will try on a million different outfits and shirts that have been in my closet that I have not worn in months. And I'll try them all on and completely overstimulate myself and get worked up and then think I'm hideous and I'll freak out. And then, freak out's a harsh word, Lily, be kind to yourself. I'll have a little meltdown, but then I'll recover from it and put on a black turtleneck, which our viewers can't see this, but in every episode we've ever recorded. I've been wearing a black turtleneck because I wear black turtlenecks for comfort. So then I put on my black turtleneck and my jeans and then I'm good to go. So I just try on a million different masks and then allow myself to actually be myself.

Erin:

Yes, I used to, this is only a relationship now. I don't do any of that. I just wear my most comfortable outfit depending on where we're going, which is probably the book store. So I just dress comfortably because for me, going out is physically difficult sometimes. So comfort is number one for me right now. Sweatpants, fluffy sweater, something I can feel comfortable and safe in.

Thanks for listening to our podcast.

Lily:

If you liked what you heard, be sure to write a review, like and subscribe wherever you get your podcasts.

Erin:

Join us next time when we discuss more reasons about everything you know about disability is wrong.

Speaker 3:

Everything you know about disability is wrong.