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# SO, CHANGE IT!

THE RIGHT PEOPLE, THE RIGHT PLACE, THE RIGHT TIME

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IASW 2023 Safeguarding Event

THE SOLUTION IS....

Here!



# CHALLENGES

- A strong resistance to moving from a medically-dominated system to a social/holistic/environments system.
- When “it’s everyone’s business” it’s no ones business.
- Disregarding advice and guidance offered by social workers.
- Severe under-resourcing of social work across health and social care services
- Managers and senior members of organisations ignoring when risks are highlighted regarding safeguarding.
- No adult safeguarding legislation.
- No sector-wide policy.
- Inconsistent implementation of the current HSE policy.
- Unclear referral thresholds in the safeguarding process.
- Out of date job descriptions.
- Lack of out of hours social work support.
- No social work governance structure from frontline up to national level.
- And, and, and.....

## THIS LEADS TO

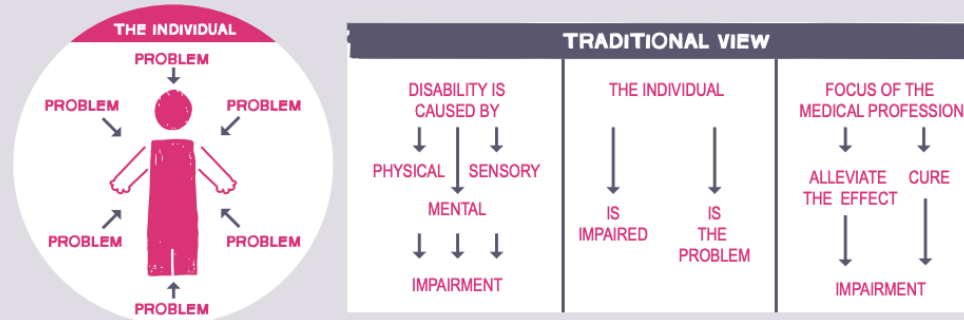
- For social workers the constant reality of these very real and very tough challenges can lead to burn out, disillusionment, fear, exclusion, bullying in the workplace, leaving jobs due to toxic work cultures.
- For people at risk of abuse the constant reality of these very real and very tough challenges can lead to no access to appropriate supports in order to be able to live the life of one's choosing, "institutional" living by default, dehumanizing treatment and experiences, being viewed as a "problem to be fixed" as opposed to a person with all the complexities and nuances that being human brings.

# ALLIES AND ADVOCATES

- What can social workers do?
- Are we using rights-based practices (e.g to inform our work at every opportunity)? That's safeguarding.
- Are we talking openly and transparently to people using services, their supporters and the public about their rights, their will, their preferences and how to access those rights? That's safeguarding.
- Are we using our policy practice skills and knowledge when writing reports, assessments, advocacy letters on an individual level and contributing to consultations, policy development, position papers on a national and global level? That's safeguarding.
- Are we using policies and processes that already exist in bureaucratic systems (think risk assessments, incident forms etc) to explicitly name, highlight and escalate abuse/potential abuse when we see it? That's safeguarding.
- Are we talking to each other and offering each other mutual support in managing and dealing with complexities and nuances we encounter on a daily basis in our work? That's safeguarding.
- Are we developing alliances with user-led organisations and peer-led spaces to ensure the voices of people directly effected are central to what we do? That's safeguarding.

# WHICH ONE WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

## THE MEDICAL MODEL OF DISABILITY



## THE SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY



Source:  
[https://www.mentalhealthreform.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/MHR21\\_UNRPD\\_A5\\_ONLINE-3-1.pdf](https://www.mentalhealthreform.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/MHR21_UNRPD_A5_ONLINE-3-1.pdf)

# PAVING THE WAY FOR CHANGE – SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY

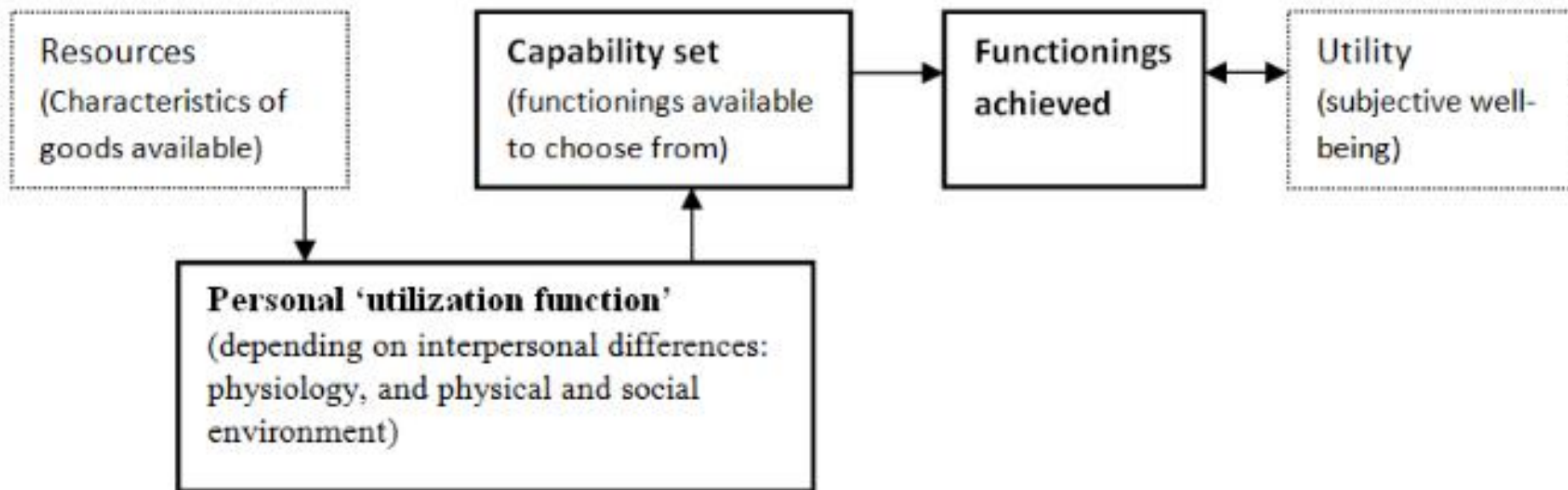


# PAVING THE WAY FOR CHANGE – RIGHTS-BASED APPROACHES

- “realisation of the claimed right is necessary for a group to...achieve their full humanity in common with others” (Jim Ife).
- “A clear advantage of using the language of human rights is that it implies framing citizens – especially marginalized ones – as rights-holders. This rights-based discourse avoids that poor and excluded people are treated as ‘victims’ needing charity (as they are rights-holders) and/or that they feel ashamed of and responsible for their situation. The focus of responsibility for action is shifted from those whose rights are violated toward those who are violating the rights: governments (national/regional/local) and other institutions such as international organizations – the duty-bearers that have the obligation to fulfil human rights” (Laruffa and Hearne, 2023).



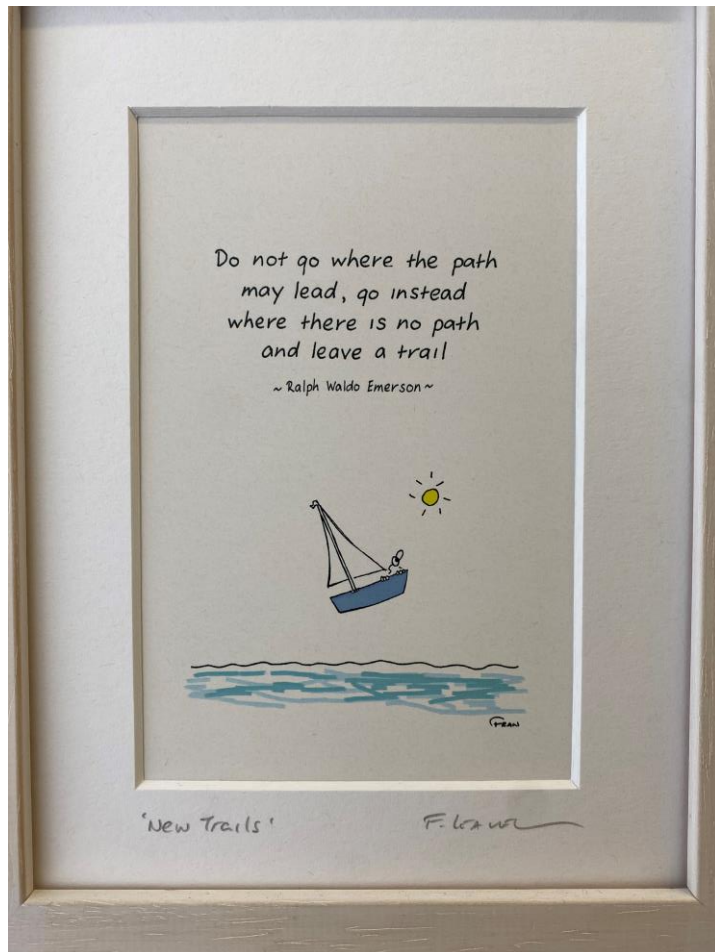
# PAVING THE WAY FOR CHANGE – CAPABILITIES APPROACH



*Outline of the core relationships in Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum's Capability Approach*

Source: <https://iep.utm.edu/sen-cap/#:~:text=The%20Capability%20Approach%20focuses%20directly,well%2Dnourished%2C%20having%20shelter>

THANK YOU



”Philosophers have hitherto only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point is to *change* it”

Karl Marx