

Presentations & Workshops by Melinda Smith

Examples of individual or group sessions available include:

Living With Cerebral Palsy: Disability Awareness in the School and/or Workplace

1 hour lecture format with Q&A

Melinda will share stories from her life, reflecting on experiences in school, the work place and family life. Depending on the audience, this can be adapted to suit students in an inclusive classroom, school staff, community organisations or conference presentations.

Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and/or brainstorm solutions for issues in their current setting. Schools can use this as an opportunity to problem solve and discuss practical goals for specific students.

Well-Being And Skill Development Through Dance: Including Children And Adults With Disabilities In The Creative Process

1 hour lecture format with Q&A

Melinda will discuss the positive impact that dance can have on the well being of all students, especially those with physical disabilities and complex communication needs. She will share stories about her work with students and families, and will provide practical advice on how to incorporate communication and physical goals in a dance and movement session.

1:1 Mentoring—Setting Individual Goals and Practical Planning

*90 minutes, individual support.
“One Off” or Ongoing Sessions*

Following an initial discussion with an individual's support team, Melinda will meet with the person and initiate a discussion around their current life situation. Melinda will encourage the person to identify areas of personal interest and identify long and short-term goals. She will work with the individual to identify resources in their community that can assist them in reaching these goals. Some examples from previous mentoring relationships include:

- Accommodation: helping an individual to choose appropriate housing.
- Using technology for communication.
- Travel goals.

Other presentations can be developed on request. Please contact Melinda to discuss pricing for your specific requirements.



*As a mentor, I want
to share my creative
passion.
If you have a dream,
I can help to make it
your reality.”*

Melinda Smith

Melinda Smith

Mentor, Public Speaker, Visual and Performing Artist

Melinda is available for public speaking, workshop presentations or 1:1 consultations. These can be tailored to meet the needs of children, adults, families and professional staff.

Melinda Smith

www.facebook.com/melindasmithcreative

mismi5545@bigpond.net.au

Mobile: 0417156567 (sms only)

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~ Mentoring ~

In her professional life, Melinda's focus is on advocacy, with responsibilities for the participation, personal rights and inclusion of people with significant speech and communication disabilities. She is currently employed as a consultant by the Cerebral Palsy Education Centre (CPEC) where she acts as a advisor to staff and mentor for students who have complex disabilities.

As colleagues who work in disability support services became aware of her work, they began to ask her to inspire other people with physical disabilities to participate in creative arts

In 2008, Melinda began to develop a series of conference presentations and workshops promoting the health and wellbeing outcomes of dance and movement for people who have physical disabilities, in particular, wheelchair users. She continues to develop her work as a trainer and mentor for people with diverse physical needs.



*"It was Mel who was truly able to help me understand what life is like living with Cerebral Palsy. It opened my eyes as to how important it was for me to provide my student with as much knowledge as possible so that he one day will be able to live such a fulfilling, independent life."
Lynn Bok, Classroom Teacher 2013*



~Public Speaking~

Melinda is sought after by schools, businesses and international organisations as a presenter and keynote speaker. She has lectured on personal development, life skills, and technology for communication at the Temple University, Philadelphia, where her work was recognised with the "Free Speech" award. She went on to teach part of the university's "Daring to Dream" programme to a variety of international audiences.

In 2009 she was invited to be the keynote speaker for the "Communication Matters" conference in England, where she spoke about her life, dreams, goals for the future, and maintaining a work-life balance for people with disabilities.

Melinda has been a member of the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication's leadership development team, and has presented her work at their conferences in Brazil, Canada, Germany and Spain. Closer to home, Melinda was and invited Keynote Speaker at the 2013 "Australian Group on Severe Communication Impairment" conference, where she spoke on the important role of mentoring for young people who have little or no speech.

*"I was deeply touched by the strength of her conviction. Mel's presentation was memorable for the ... creative blend of video and narrative. It remains one of the strongest memories for me in my professional life working in the areas of Assistive Technology and AAC."
David Harraway, Occupational Therapist*

~Visual and Performing Artist~

Melinda has always had a passion for visual and performing arts, and sees participation in this field as essential for the wellbeing of individuals. She believes that regardless of age or disability, all people can participate in the creative process. Melinda uses the mediums of painting, drawing, dance and movement for personal expression.

Melinda has been involved in several performance troupes. She is currently a member of Melbourne's Weave Movement theatre, where she has been involved in the development and performance of four productions. Melinda's dance and movement practice includes using a manual wheelchair, and unaided floor work, which includes contact body work.

In 2012 Melinda was awarded Arts Access Australia's "Cultivate" grant. Working with choreographer Dianne Reid, Melinda used the grant to develop her dance practice, focusing on skills of balance, improvisation, vocalisation, physical comedy and humour.

Examples of Melinda's work can be seen on her YouTube channel:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/MelDanceLoveLive>



*"Melinda's work is not just about dancing with a Disability. It is about accepting and embracing who you are, celebrating the unique person that each one of us is, enhancing self esteem, health, fitness and enjoying life."
Toni Green, Parent*