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Life hacks I learned after becoming disabled



Life hacks I Learned after becoming disabled part 2.

Chase Friedman · 3-22

Made my life sooooo much easier
#LifeHack #lifehacks #duvetcover ... more

♪ Love You So - @The King Khan & BBQ...

Accessibility related life hacks



what is your favorite accessibility related life hack that you've learned!

Kieran Michael · 2022-12-7

What's your favorite #lifehack?
#disabilitylifehacks #disability ... more

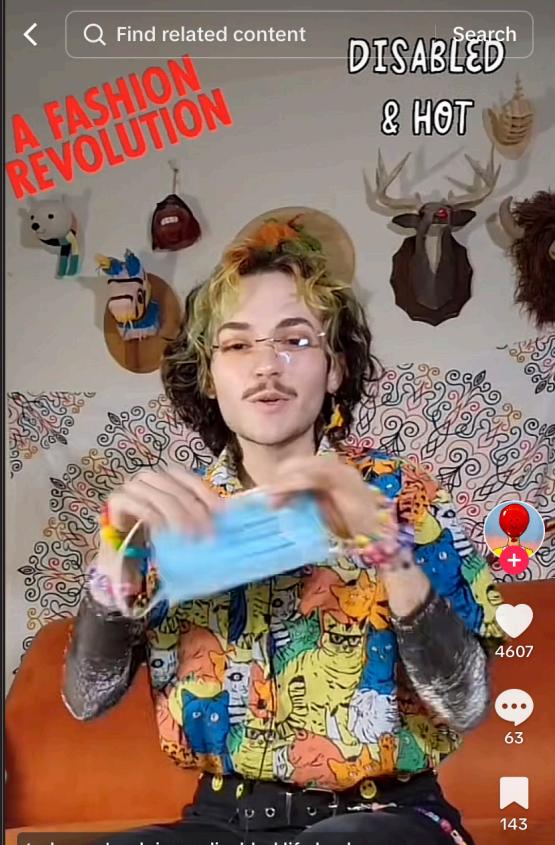
Stitch this and share your favorite POTS tip

in honor of Dysautonomia Awareness Month

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I can't wait to hear everyone's tips!
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today we're doing a disabled life hack. ☺️

Max ☺️ · 2021-10-6

disabled life hacks ☺️ 🤳 #disabled

#disabledfashion #fashionhacks #foryou

♪ original sound - ceekayye (Contains m...

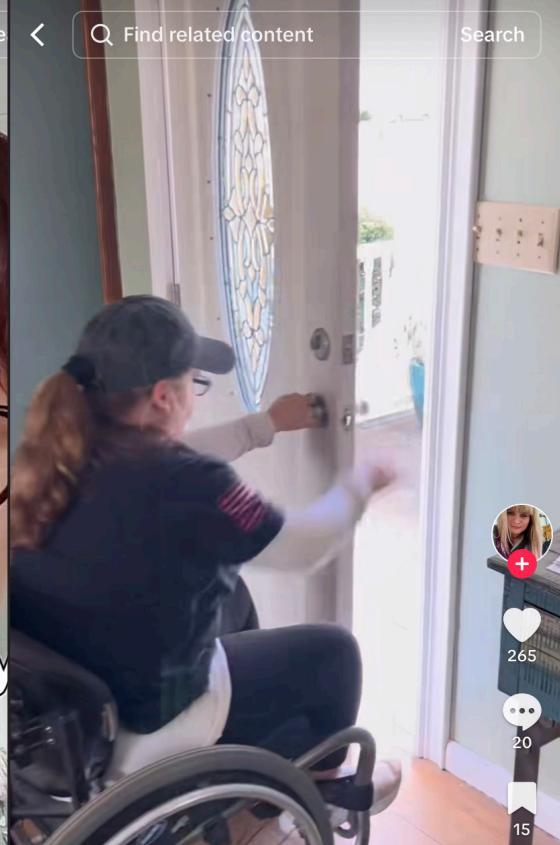


for things that make my life easier as a person with a disability

Friday · 2022-1-24

#disabilityhack #disabledlife

#AssistiveTech



I found this little trick along the way ☺️

APRILROE · 2-24

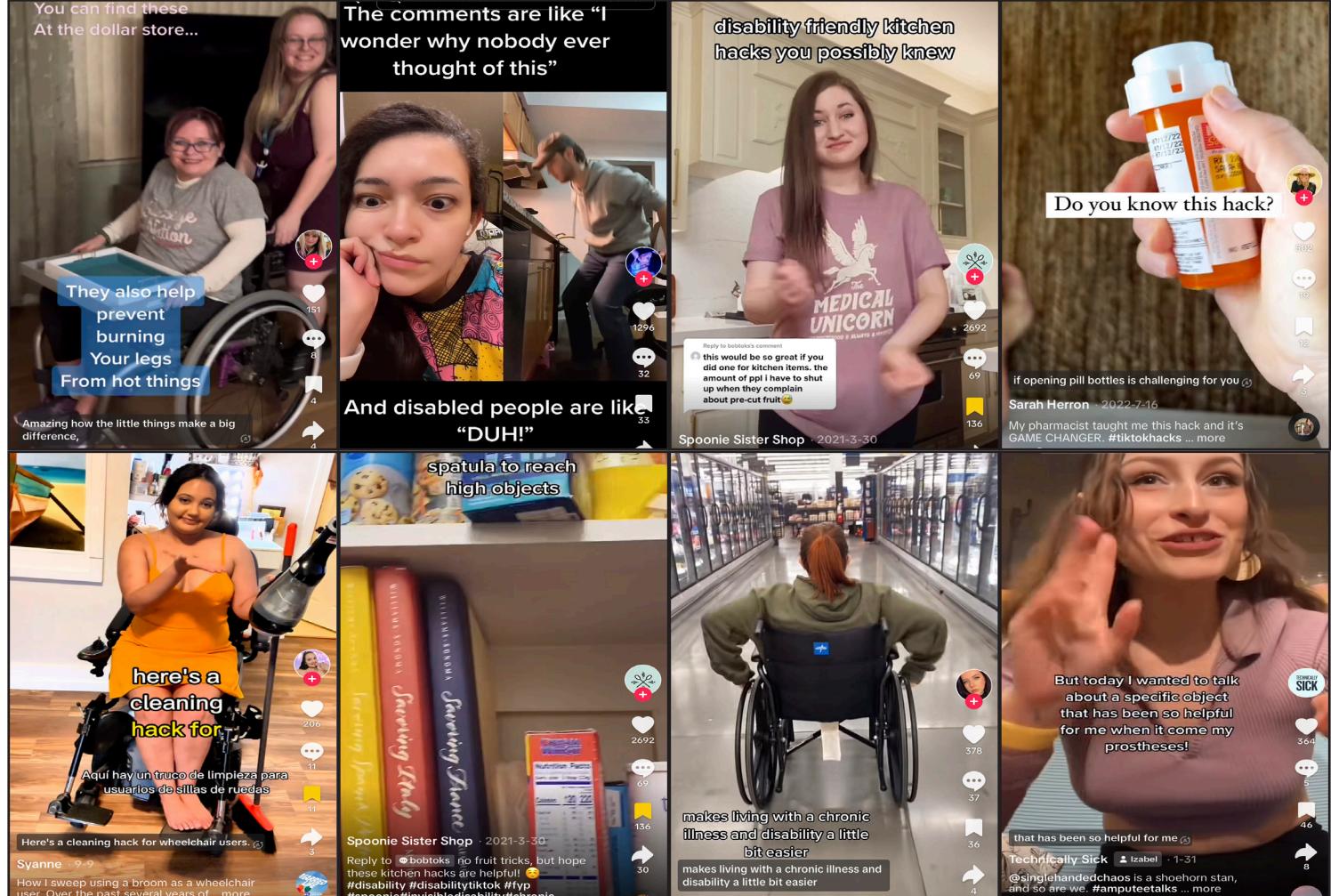
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#disability #disabilitytiktok ... more

#DISABILITYHACK #DISABILITYTIKTOK #DISABILITYLIFEHACK #ACCESSIBILITY

Every-day problem solvers and innovative designers in the disability community driven by a need to navigate spaces not designed for them.

Elizabeth Singer



Disabled creators transform challenges into innovations online.

INTRODUCTION

Although people with disabilities make up nearly a quarter of the population, they are often overlooked by professional designers of products, spaces, and experiences. While dominant narratives tell stories of isolation in the disability community, the disability community has been building rich communities online and sharing the wisdom of how they navigate spaces that were not built to include them. While designers and companies deliberate on whether and how to support the disability community, the disability community has been actively engaging in innovative and thoughtful design, and using social media to publicly showcase their problem-solving capabilities.

Members of the disability community are pioneers in creating creative solutions to navigate environments, systems, and products that were not initially designed with their specific needs in mind. It is clear who are the experts in “designing for disabilities”: those with disabilities. #disabilitytiktok is one of many growing archives that showcase the world of alternative uses of unlikely objects and adaptive objects created by disabled individuals to traverse their environments, homes, and lifestyles.

CONTEXT

Innovation and technology serve as key instruments for fostering an equitable, inclusive, and accessible

future.

Many of those with disabilities have become master innovators, crafting solutions and strategies to navigate the built environment, especially spaces not built with them in mind. These adaptations frequently lead to the development of inventive uses of unlikely objects or the creation of new tools that enable them to navigate their homes and other spaces. These objects showcase the creativity and resilience of the disabled community. Many members of the disability community also harness social media to share their wisdom and innovations using tags including the following: #disability #sicktok #disabilitylifehacks #lifehack #disabilitytiktok #chronicillnesshack #accessibility #disabilitylifehack #disabilityhack.

This #disabilityhack social media trend gained momentum during the challenging period of the COVID-19 pandemic, which particularly impacted the disabled community. This trend remains popular today, showcasing an expanding collection of innovations crafted by disabled individuals. This content has gained visibility, reaching audiences beyond those with disabilities. Viewers without disabilities are tuning in to these videos, experiencing shifts in their perceptions of the disabled community and recognizing them as adept inventors.

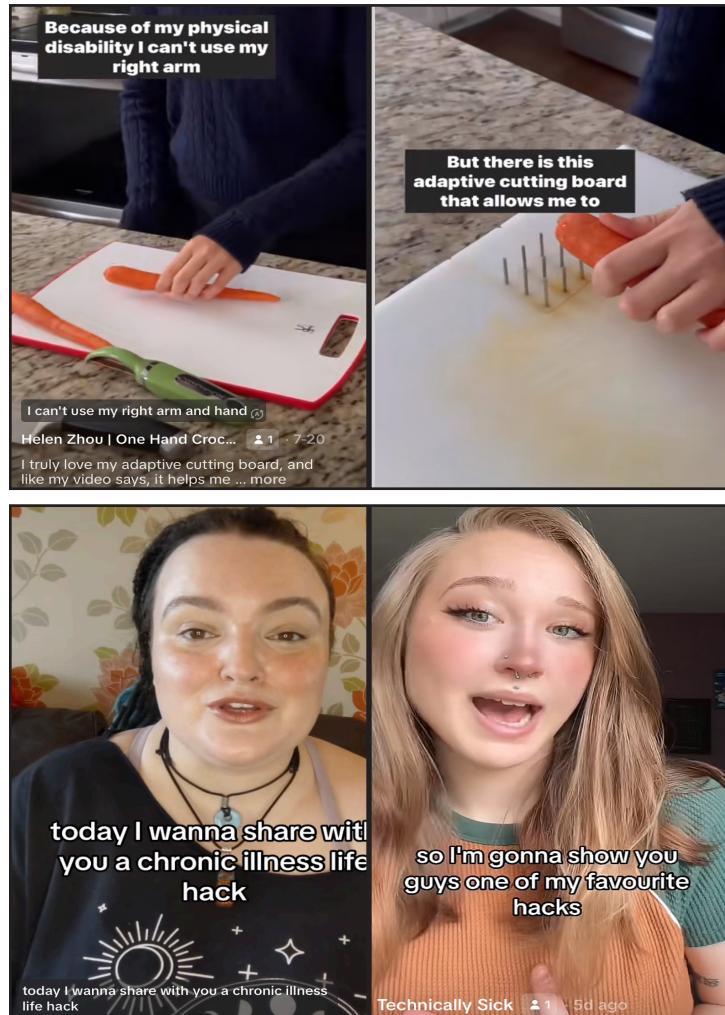
THE RISE OF “LIFE HACKS”

Disabled content creators on social media platforms like TikTok and YouTube increasingly share their adaptive innovations around the world. This provides a window into their lives, showcasing how they collaborate with their bodies, the devices they create, their partners, friends, family members, and healthcare professionals. These shared strategies, often referred to as “life hacks” or “disability hacks”, provide insights into how everyday challenges can be overcome. This exchange of knowledge fosters a sense of community and encourages a culture of knowledge sharing to occur across the internet and the world.

One content creator, Helen Zhou, posted a video on Tik Tok where she demonstrated how she peels and chops food in the kitchen. “Because of my physical disability I can’t use my right arm and hand to help me peel and chop food. Like this carrot here.” She places a carrot on a spike sticking out of her cut-

ting board. “But there is this adaptive cutting board that allows me to peel and chop food with only one hand. By inserting your choice of food onto the nine spikes. It will hold the food in place while you peel or chop with the other hand.” She peels the carrot with her left arm and hand while it’s held in place by the spike. She says her cutting board “gives me so much independence in the kitchen and I am able to create delicious dishes with this adaptive cutting board.”

“Disability hacks” like Helen’s demonstrate the disability community’s resourcefulness in repurposing unconventional tools and devices. This level of innovation demands a discerning eye for viewing objects not just for their intended commercial purposes but for their potential to be repurposed as tools for enhancing daily life. #DisabilityTikTok exemplifies innovation accessible to all, serving as a reminder that the advertised purpose of a material or tool doesn’t limit its potential for alternative uses.



Inclusive Ingenuity: Disabled innovators leading the way on the web.

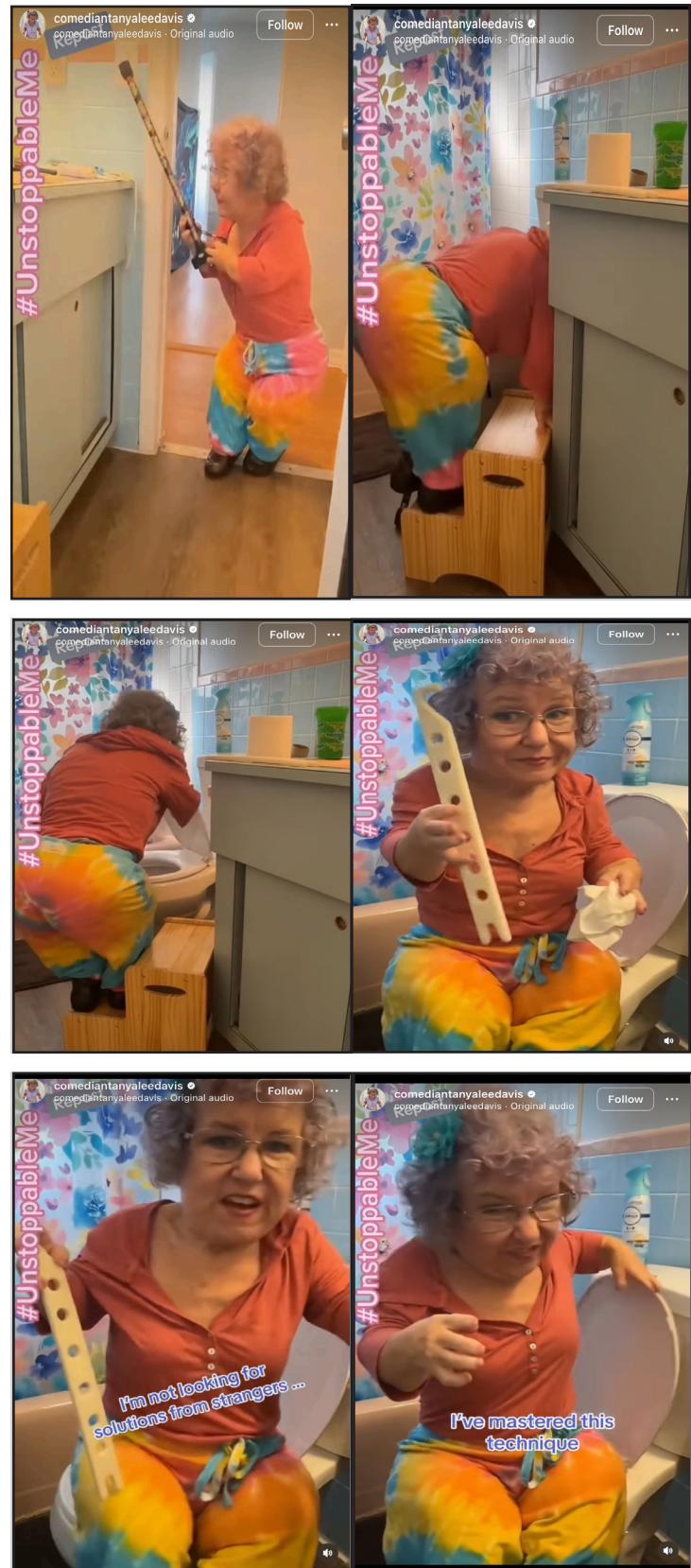
DESIGN

Regardless of their ability to afford cutting-edge, high-tech prosthetics, individuals with disabilities innovate utilizing commonplace tools and materials to craft new devices to facilitate their daily routines. While they may not be professional engineers by trade, they are unquestionably experts in understanding their bodies, needs, and wants. These aspirations fuel their creative endeavors in inventing and altering everyday objects.

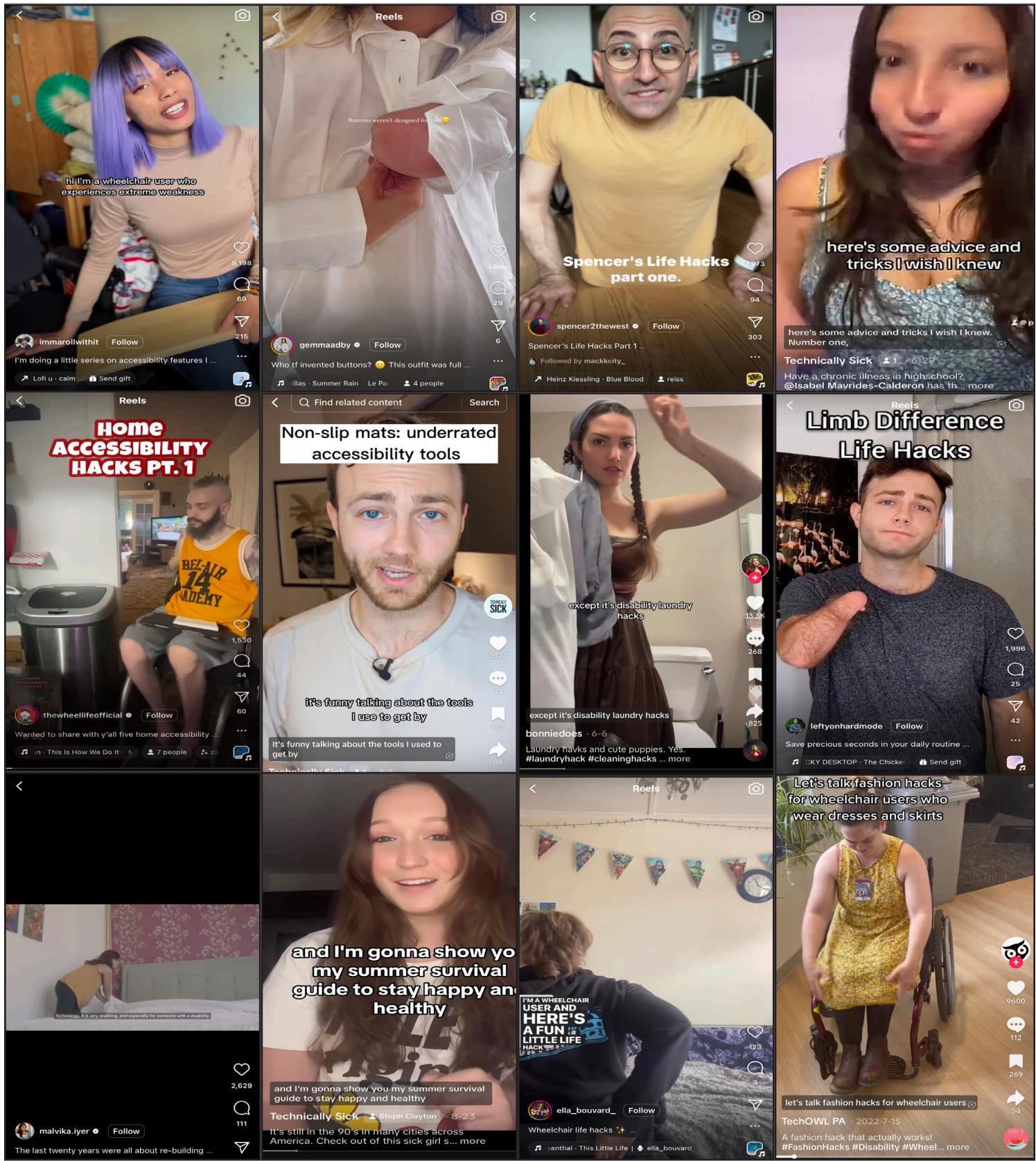
One example of this is content creator and comedian Tanya Lee Davis. Davis posted a video on Instagram Reels in which she shows users how she uses the bathroom. The video begins with an introduction, "Hi everybody my name's Tanya Lee Davis, I have a form of dwarfism called diastrophic dysplasia. Even though I'm only 3 foot 3 inches tall, I have a long body trunk with short arms." She enters the bathroom and turns on the light with her cane.

"So, I have to find my own way of doing things like turning on the light switch. We rent a house. It's not modified, but I found many ways of figuring out my own way of doing things." She climbs onto a step stool next to the toilet. "I got this step stool, that's how I get up to the toilet." She shows a tool she designed herself that has various holes and hooks. "I designed these sticks, I use them for various things: light switches, pulling my pants up and down, but, I use it in the bathroom." She shows how she uses the stick to wipe. Text across the video says "I'm not looking for solutions from strangers.. I've mastered this technique."

Living with a disability provides the opportunity to test innovations daily, emphasizing continuous experimentation and incremental adjustments. This is in contrast to more formulaic approaches like design thinking and human-centered design, which typically involve a set number of interactions with the user. This approach diverges significantly from the one-size-fits-all, mass-produced design paradigm. Instead, it not only prioritizes inclusivity and user-generated ideas but actively challenges this conventional model by embracing a highly specific design-for-one process and promoting the sharing of these tailored ideas.



Creators and viewers use tags to connect with each other and share wisdom and tips. #disability #sicktok #disabilitylifehacks #lifehack #disabilitytiktok #chronicillnesshack #accessibility #disabilitylifehack #disabilityhack



Disabled innovators use social media to share innovations by and for the disability community.

OUTCOMES

Disabled creators on YouTube, Instagram Reels, and TikTok document their own narratives of the adaptive objects and life hacks they have invented. This allows the disability community to share in the experience of reclaiming physical space while creating new communities online, and redefining labels such as “engineer” and “designer”. This encourages inclusivity, highlights the importance of accessibility, and fosters a sense of community among people with disabilities. As more people become aware of these innovations, they may advocate for changes in urban design and the built environment that prioritize accessibility for all. #DisabilityTikTok encourages everyone not to settle for the status quo and to continually seek inventive ways to reimagine objects, experiences, and spaces.

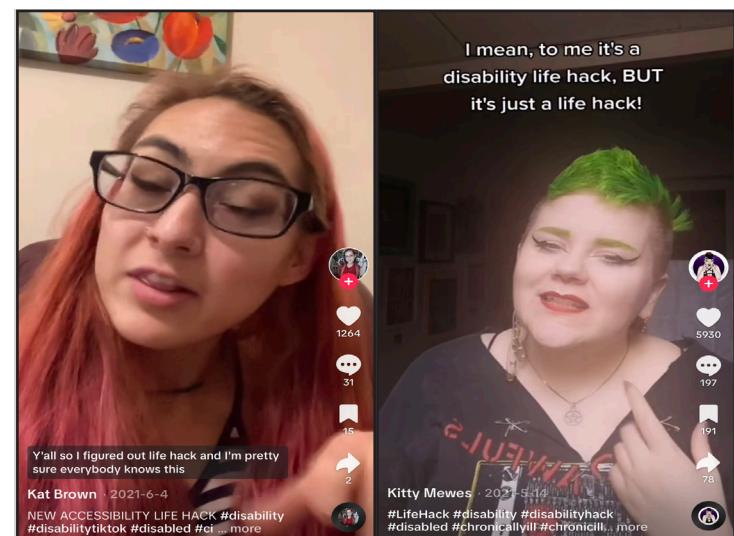
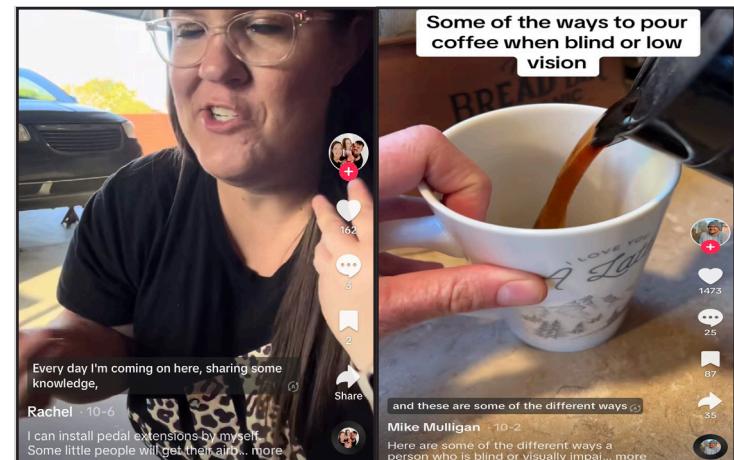
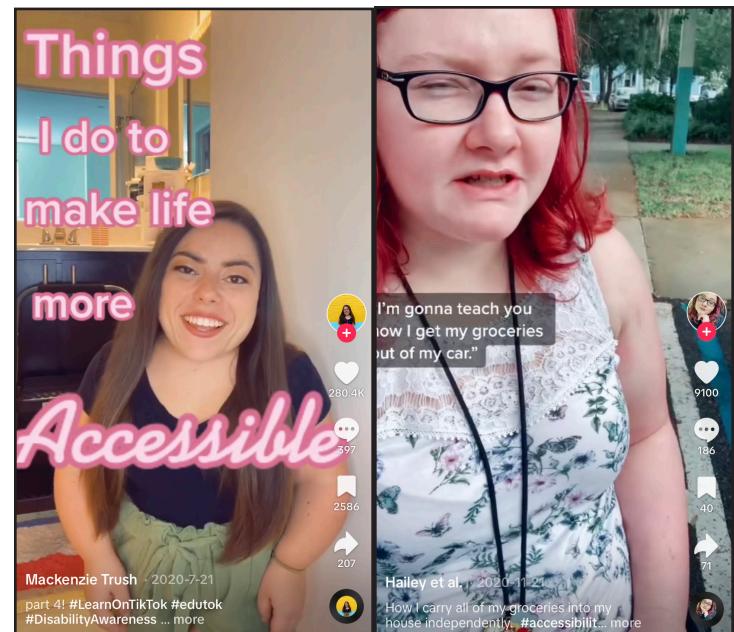
FUTURE

The ongoing sharing of life hacks and adaptive innovations by the disability community points to a future where urban design and the built environment are more inclusive, responsive, collaborative, and accessible. These narratives highlight that the best designers for disabled people are disabled people.

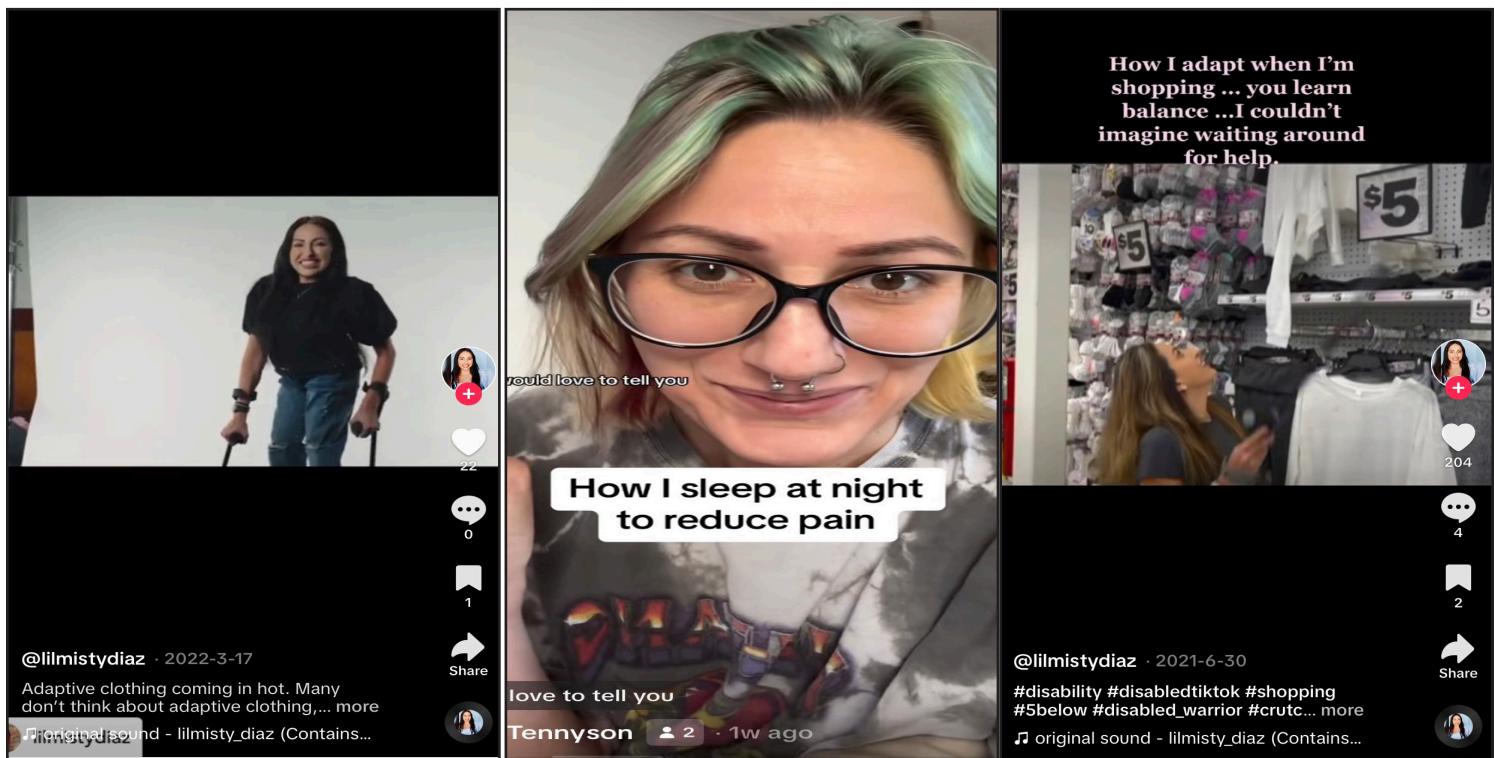
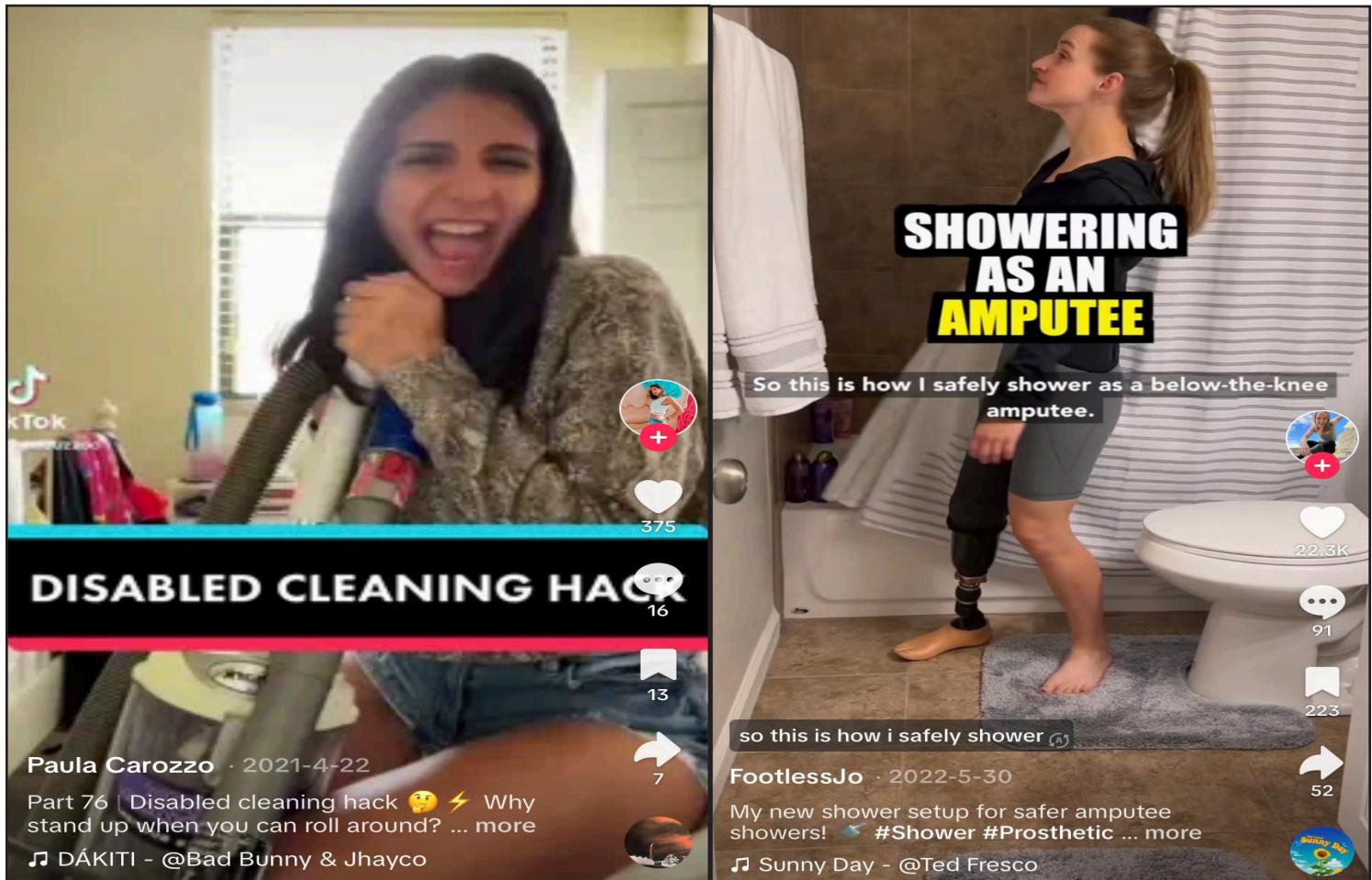
CONCLUSION

When a disabled person designs something tailored to their own needs, preferences, and lifestyle, the focus is centered on them. They are experts. In contrast to other design processes like design thinking which often follows a formulaic approach involving a set number of iterations of user feedback and user testing. When individuals design for their specific needs and their own lives, they have the opportunity to iterate repeatedly until they achieve perfection.

The adaptive objects and life hacks created by disabled individuals that result from this user-initiated, design-for-one process exemplify the creativity and resourcefulness of the disabled community.



#Disabilitytiktok is a growing archive of the utilities the disability community has found for unlikely objects as well as the devices and objects they invent themselves.



Innovations created by and for the disability community out of a need to navigate spaces not designed for them are shared online on social media websites and apps like YouTube and TikTok.