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## Summer Edition Newsletter No.1

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Summer is a good time to review and update some past posts. This week the topic is cognition, dementia and autism.

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### Cognition and inclusive design

Practitioners and researchers are seeking more solutions for people with sensory and cognitive impairments, particularly dementia. But our building standards are silent on this growing issue. The value of designing an age-friendly environment is discussed in "an article by Hadjri, Afacan, and Gadakari. As with all universal design features, the authors argue inclusion needs to be embedded in the early ...

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### Altering design mindsets about people with dementia

A diagnosis of dementia used to mean staying home and being cared for. Those who work in the area of dementia are doing their best to change this view. But is the design community prepared to embrace people living with dementia? In *Breaking Well-Formed Opinions and Mindsets by Designing with People Living with Dementia*, researchers report on a range of ...

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### Universal design in the kitchen

The Center for Real Life Design at Virginia Tech renovated two kitchens to incorporate many universal design features. One kitchen was designed for a multi-generational family, including an older grandparent and a child with autism spectrum disorder. The

second was planned as a multifamily kitchen. The Center's webpage has an article that explains the design features. Several pictures show what was ...

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## It's not wet, just shiny

A shiny floor may not be wet but it could look that way to someone with dementia. A black mat isn't a hole in the ground either. And shadows of lattice through a window can look like steps. Mono coloured features are hard to distinguish too. These design details can easily be overcome with some extra thought about perception at ...

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## Autism and Building Design

If designers are not thinking about autistic people now, they soon will be, or should be. Autistic people have the same rights to functional and accessible spaces as everyone else. In his article on Branch Pattern website, Stuart Shell gives an overview of ASD (autism spectrum disorder). He explains why building owners and designers need to include this group, and how it ...

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## Dementia Friendly Kiama

Kiama Council in NSW has taken steps to make their community "Dementia Friendly". The aim is to keep people connected to family and community and avoid early entry into the residential care system. The SBS News channel showcases this example on their online news page. There is also a video of the story (without closed captions). This is very topical ...

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## The sound of one hand clapping?

Here's the dilemma. An audience clapping enthusiastically is seen as a good thing. But what if the sound has an adverse effect on people with autism or others who are neurodiverse? A UK university student union has banned clapping and introduced the sign language equivalent of applause - the soundless "jazz hands" movement - for meetings and events. But what about ...

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## 7 things the autistic person needs in the workplace

Ashlea McKay wrote an interesting article on Linked In, "7 things the autistic person in your workplace needs from you". Ashlea was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) aged 29, but she prefers to refer to herself as an autistic person - "I am autistic" she says, and she explains why. She discusses the difficulties of being stereotyped and how small ...

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## Remembering to be dementia-friendly

Here are some good resources for considering people with dementia in designs. The topic of dementia can also include people with acquired brain injury and other cognitive conditions at any age. They've been collected from this website for ready reference. Too many good publications are soon forgotten after their launch. Dementia Friendly Homes - an app from Dementia Australia. Designing Homes ...

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## Get me out of here!

How useful is a "way out" sign? It depends on where you are and what your spatial abilities are at the time. For people with dementia it can be a real issue in places where toilets are placed down corridors away from the shopping mall or supermarket. This issue was highlighted earlier this year when a man with dementia died ...

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## Conferences and calls for papers

4th Australian Universal Design Conference Early announcement of Keynote speakers: James Thurston from 3Gitec, the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs, will talk about smart cities for all. Philip Taylor will share his passion about older people and workforce issues. The conference will be held 12-13 May 2020 at Melbourne Showground's brand new Victoria Pavilion. The theme is Thriving with Universal ...

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