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Synopsis:

Deciding to access support is a difficult choice for many disabled people: while accessing support may provide perceived benefits, it could also increase the risk of stigmatisation. The decision to access support may therefore promote difficult dilemmas for how disabled people construct an identity that they view as authentic. This thesis describes how disabled people with physical impairments face conflicting demands of both wanting to acknowledge and present their support needs to others (e.g. to address concerns of being perceived as “disabled enough” for available help), but also wanting distance from associated stigmatisation (e.g. by trying to avoid feelings of “difference”).