David Furukawa - Mar 26, 2020

**SPEAKERS**

Molly Joyce, David Furukawa

**Molly Joyce** 00:02

In the first question is what is access for you?

**David Furukawa** 00:07

The word access or access as far as how, what kind of access Do I have to the world?

**Molly Joyce** 00:15

I'd say either or.

**David Furukawa** 00:17

Okay. You know, of course,... my LinkedIn... sorry. Access means quite a few different things to me, in that I had sight up until I was about 30, 38. And I'm 55 now. So you know, having full access with regard to my sight, with really no functional disability, and then slowly losing your sight, I lost access to quite a few different things, whether that was physical access, whether that was professional access, and of course, whether that's social access. So, you know, the impairment was a gradual increase in all of the different spheres that I have experienced. But the one thing that I have really gained a lot of insight in over the over the years, is that access is really a very subjective term, because it's all according to how you adapt and how you overcome the various obstacles that that you face. And quite frankly, I now am able to, quote unquote, venture into areas that I never thought I would have in the past. And I almost credit my visual impairment, for allowing me the vision, if you will, to actually explore those. ie, I have gone zip lining, I've gone mountain climbing, I'm a civil war medical reenactor all kinds of crazy stuff that I probably wouldn't do if I was fully, fully sighted.

**Molly Joyce** 02:17

I really loved I meant to add to I'm not gonna say much during your answer, because I want just more your recorded point, sir, it seems like I'm being especially quiet. And the next question is, what is care for you?

**David Furukawa** 02:35

Care. You know, my background is medicine. I'm a retired physician assistant. And, and ironically, I'm a physician assistant in ophthalmology. So being blind, and or at least being visually impaired, working with other patients that had vision loss was, was a very supportive and also comforting role that I had in delivering care to others. But it also provided me with a social support network, and a Mental Health Network, in my own care. So care is a is a very valuable word in my, my world in that, you know, it's all about how you look at yourself, how you look at others, what types of things that you need, help with, and what types of things other people need help with. So, by the word care, you know, I view it as an extension of not only your, your own self being but other self being as well. And again, my visual impairment has really enabled me to go out and provide support and care to others that have fallen down the same path that I have in that now. I can hopefully provide some level of comfort to those that are going through this, you know, initially because I've already gone down that road and experienced some of the bumps and, and cracks so cares very, very important work in my my life.

**Molly Joyce** 04:35

It's great. Next question is what is control for you?

**David Furukawa** 04:42

Control. I'm fortunate that I'm not a control freak, might have numerous friends that are control freaks and they have to control every aspect of every part of every minute in their life, but Control is definitely a boundary, whereby whether or not you have the ability to have mastery over yourself over your environment over others. And, you know, there are certain instances, like, for instance, I have friends that have the phobia of flying in planes. And you know, that's a definite control problem because they can't control flying the plane, they can't control the environment of the, you know, weather when you're in the air, and it freaks them out. Whereas, for me, I look at it as well, you know, you can't control certain things. So you might as well just deal with it, and hope for the best. That I guess that makes me an optimist. But control is, is definitely an interesting term, because, you know, has negative and positive connotations associated with it. So I look at it as, as a boundary by which you figure out how to accomplish something.

**Molly Joyce** 06:25

What is weakness for you?

**David Furukawa** 06:28

Weakness, Weakness, gosh, you know, everybody has weaknesses, and most of us don't like to admit to them. When I first started losing my eyesight, obviously, my vision impairment was a massive weakness. And, you know, that can certainly consume you with regard to every aspect of your life, whether it's, you know, preventing you from doing things professionally, whether it's preventing you from doing things socially, whether it's preventing you from doing things personally. And if you allow that to basically consume your entire life, then you end up in that dark hole, or pit. And that's where, you know, a lot of us have been there. And I'll admit that I certainly have been in that dark, dark hole a few times myself during my journey. But weakness, can also be a strength, in that if you can understand what your weaknesses are, and then try to improve the other strengths that you have, then it actually acts as a catalyst to move you forward. And that's another part of my mantra that has helped me to overcome my disability.

**Molly Joyce** 08:15

In contrast to that, what is strength?

**David Furukawa** 08:18

Strength? You know, when I was in high school, I was a wrestler. And my coach used to always say, No pain, no gain, no power, no glory, and it was all about strength. So you had to go and work out you had run. And you know, it's all about being the strongest person that you could be. And again, like with weakness, strength has to do both personally, physically, professionally, all of this different, different avenues. And of course, some people can access that strength and utilize it to their advantage or utilize it to promote them the best qualities in them. Others, maybe not so much. And they tend to be the ones that are followers and the ones that are underachievers. And you know, I think that in a lot of cases, most of us fall into that middle category where sometimes we feel that we do have strengths, and we are able to accomplish more than what we set out to do. And other times we fall into that rut where maybe we don't have the strength that that we need at the time. So it varies but strength that's that's a you know, it's the antithesis of weakness. So it's Power, it's overcoming things that you are afraid of it's, you know, facing adversity going out into the darkness when you're, you're afraid of the dark. So

**Molly Joyce** 10:20

I love that. The next question is a little controversial. So of course, feel free to skip it if you don't want to answer. It's, what is cure for you?

**David Furukawa** 10:33

Why would care be controversial?

**Molly Joyce** 10:36

I think sometimes a disability, like activism disability studies.

**David Furukawa** 10:43

You know, that's, that's an interesting, that's an interesting conversation, because I have asked people and people have asked me, you know, if you could have your eyesight cured, would you and I've had mixed opinions on that, you know, some would say, you know, of course, I would love to have a cure for my eyesight and become perfectly sighted. And then I've had others that would be like, well, I am who I am today, because of my vision, loss. And, you know, I would never give up, or never accept a cure. But for me, cures hope. And, again, because I'm a clinician, I remember one time, I heard a doctor, tell a patient, you know, we have no cure for you, your eye condition. And, you know, you're going to go blind, and that's the long and the short of it. And that, that, that moment struck me intensely, because I thought, Wow, he just slammed the door in that person's face. And, you know, for me to go, Okay, well, there may not be a cure for you at this time. But that's not to say that tomorrow or in a month, or in a year, they might might not have a cure for your problem. So, I think, you know, having having a cure provides hope, to people to look for something for the future, in spite of the fact that, you know, they may never find that satisfaction.

**Molly Joyce** 12:32

Next one is, what is interdependence for you?

**David Furukawa** 12:36

Oh, interdependence. It's kind of like codependence, isn't it? You know, interdependence to me means you relying on resources, people. You know, of course, obviously, with my disability, I rely on technology, I have a company that provides accessibility to the disabled using smart technology. So I definitely am entered interdependent on technology to provide me with a means of support supporting others. But interdependence, of course, you know, you become quite linked with your friends and your family, your community. So, you know, how you interact with with the world is a direct relationship to interdependence.

**Molly Joyce** 13:44

Last one, is what is the assumption for you?

**David Furukawa** 13:48

Oh, I've gotten trapped in assumption. So many times in my life, it's, it's almost like a dirty word. You know, assumption is when you arbitrarily make a snap response, or a snap decision, based on your belief. And it may not be backed up by fact, or by any credible muscle where I'm trying to say backed by any, any resource, so that you may be right, or you may be wrong. And in most cases, when I make assumptions, it's usually wrong. So I've tried to stop making assumptions. But I guess it's kind of like, you know, again, with me having a science background and assumptions, almost like a hypothesis is that, you know, you are basically saying, Well, I'm assuming that we're going to be Getting back to work by Easter like President Trump said, even though everyone's going, that's absolutely unrealistic, and it's probably not going to happen. But he's assuming that, you know, we potentially could go back to work by by Easter but, you know, obviously making an assumption people are calling him out on that going. Yeah, right.

**Molly Joyce** 15:27

Exactly, I should interview him on one of these. Yeah,

**David Furukawa** 15:33

That would be an interesting conversation for sure.