Gabriel Roderick - July 26 2021

**SPEAKERS**

Molly Joyce, Gabriel Roderick

**Molly Joyce** 00:04

The first question is, what is resilience for you?

**Gabriel Roderick** 00:09

What is resilience for me?

**Molly Joyce** 00:13

Resilience yeah.

**Gabriel Roderick** 00:40

I think resilience for me has to do with a little bit with like stamina, just being able to outlast being able to, maybe not outlast but last. I think also kind of, has to do with existence I think, to exist is resilience in a lot of ways. Yeah. And I know for myself as a, as somebody who lives with a disability, I think it does take an amount of resilience. I have five spinal cord injury and I think, to, to live in this kind of body and this kind of lifestyle, it does take a certain amount of resilience to do so. I've had one friend too. He had a spinal cord injury and he couldn't do it and ended up overdosing and passed away. And then I know other people who you know, they're not they haven't given up but as far as like their life, but in some ways they have given up and they've resigned themselves to just kind of existing and not pursuing anything of meaning and purpose. And so in my mind, it it takes a certain amount of resilience to kind of live and struggle and fight and be able to find the joy and gratitude and all that that that life can bring you.

**Molly Joyce** 03:22

That's great, thank you. I love the thing about living and struggling as well. Next question is, what is isolation for you?

**Gabriel Roderick** 03:59

Think isolation for me is most present, I think in in a lot of public spaces but I mean also when I'm alone, but I think that's so when I'm thinking of isolation in public spaces. I'm thinking of, you know, just being in a space that is designed mainly for able-bodied people. And it can feel very isolating sometimes. And you feel trapped in ways. Like I went to this, I went to my cousin's baby shower, like a little over a week ago, and is was that friend's house while I actually go, I go to their house, a decent amount, but it's not accessible. And I was sitting in the living room, and a bunch of people who were there went out into the backyard. I, it was like, a lot of friends I haven't seen in a long time. And I was sitting with people who I see a lot and I had this feeling like, oh, I want to go outside and talk and hang out with those people. And, you know, I love the people that I'm hanging out with, but I'd like to connect with other people. And I just had this moment of like, oh, wow, this kind of sucks. Like, I can't go outside and hang out with those people. And in that moment, kind of felt it felt kind of isolated and trapped. But then I think when when I think of, like, kind of physical isolation, I think of I guess it's pretty related. Still, just like, especially during the winter, like it's much more difficult for me to go outside and go places and because, you know, snow is snow and ice is just it's a lot of labor to get outside and to the car and from the car to wherever I'm going. So, I think I exist with a lot a decent amount of isolation, just because of the nature of the world around me.

**Molly Joyce** 07:18

And then kind of the opposite of that, what is connection for you?

**Gabriel Roderick** 07:50

I mean, connection is, is so based in community for me. How vital community is to all of our existence. I mean, I think kind of jumping back to the resilience thing, like I think the only reason that I'm still here today is because I have I have a really strong community. I have a lot of support. And I also participate in supporting others and I have a lot to offer to others. And I think that kind of loop is what what connection is for me. And that, like I think this idea of like being seen and, like understood, even even if even if people don't necessarily like you know, even if people don't have spinal cord injuries, I think they can still understand what you know, what struggle is what it is to be resilient, what it is to be isolated, but you know, all those things. And so connection is like that understanding.

**Molly Joyce** 09:53

And last question is, what is darkness for you?

**Gabriel Roderick** 10:02

I've been thinking about this a lot lately, well actually I have a poem. Yeah, I'll just read this real quick. It's called who illuminates: they say light is the one who illuminates what's hidden in the dark I don't think I wrote this right. Okay, I'm gonna start over. They say light is the one who illuminates what's hidden in the dark. But what happens when the light gets too bright? In the dark you need darkness to illuminate what's shrouded in the light who's too bright? I don't know I think the idea of like the light being good and the darkness being evil is I think it's kind of a false idea. Just because I spend so much time in the darkness and I've found a lot of truth and good healing, I think in the darkness in deep in the depths and I don't you know, I think a lot of people are like, Oh, the darkness is bad. Don't go there. Or like you have to avoid it somehow you have to use light to house the darkness. But I don't know. I think there's a lot of beauty to be found there. And, you know, this is so metaphorical and so abstract. But in its you know, darkness is what darkness is to other people. But for me. I find a lot of comfort in the darkness and questions and the unknown.