Nicole Kelly - Feb 5 2020

**SPEAKERS**

Molly Joyce, Nicole Kelly

**Molly Joyce** 00:00

The first question is, what is access for you?

**Nicole Kelly** 00:23

Access to me is giving everyone the opportunity to be able to communicate and to be able to join conversation. Whether that is literally through words or weather is, that's the ability to be able to literally get into a room, or have a text on your phone or computer to be able to follow along. Access to me is, is giving the opportunity for everybody to have a seat at the table and to be a part of the conversation.

**Molly Joyce** 00:58

What is care for you?

**Nicole Kelly** 01:02

I think care to me, is looking at a person holistically and examining when it comes to disability what is the experience? Not only medically perhaps what...what needs should be met, but also emotionally and socially? And what does the structure look like? Currently, and where are the gaps? So I think, I think cares looking holistically at a person's needs and working to actually fill whatever those current gaps are. I said that kind of jumbled.

**Molly Joyce** 01:41

No, definitely no, it's gonna be everything could be a little like, I'm gonna have to pick and choose whatever to include everything. So no worries about being super elegant.

**Nicole Kelly** 01:50

If I ever said it will just be like, say that again. Like, hopefully repeat more clearly.

**Molly Joyce** 01:59

What is control for you?

**Nicole Kelly** 02:04

Control to me is being empowered to step up and say with confidence what my needs are, and to know that I will be respected and not questioned when I voiced what needs I may have.

**Molly Joyce** 02:26

What is weakness for you?

**Nicole Kelly** 02:30

A weakness to me is stepping into a vulnerable space where I know perhaps the disability identity hasn't been addressed or explained or talked about. So vulnerability to me is gaps that hadn't been talked about or thought about or addressed. Therefore leaving me and my needs behind the rest of the group.

**Molly Joyce** 03:02

What is strength for you?

**Nicole Kelly** 03:07

Strength for me, I think strength for me is connection and a community of people. I felt empowered for the first time when it came to my disability when I started to find people who are active in the disability movement and who spoke a language that nobody had ever taught me. But nobody had ever taught me because I was surrounded by people who weren't a part of this movement. So finding that strength and community finding the people who are daily doing the work to fill the gaps that you've been talking about the gaps of care to close those bridges between the places where we're vulnerable and where we have strength. That to me is truly where the strength lies is is being able to find that community, share with that community and then work with that community to bridge the gaps that currently exist.

**Molly Joyce** 04:13

This is like a tricky question. What is cure for you?

**Nicole Kelly** 04:18

Cure, for me, is not a good word when it comes to disability. Cure to me makes me think of the medical model of disability or doctors perhaps are stepping in and telling me that I'm broken and that they are things that they can do to fix me. When the reality of the thinking that I like to have is I'm not broken. there are gaps that existed but I am adaptable. And there are ways that we can perhaps change a little bit of structure to the way that we approach society in order to you know bridge that gap for me and what my level of capabilty So that was my really long way of saying, cure to me means that I have a problem that needs to be fixed. But when I think about my disability, I don't think about being broken, I think about changing the world around me to see me as whole. And cure doesn't have a place in that.

**Molly Joyce** 05:26

What is interdependence for you?

**Nicole Kelly** 05:30

Hmm. Interdependence to me, wow, that, I feel like I take that in so many different ways, which I know I'm sure is the point at all of these questions. So I'm, you know, I'm going to get it this way. interdependence to me, means looking at the doctors and the advocates and the parents, the people who are able bodied who surround me, but still are the support that I need and the voices that I need to again, be bridging gaps into spaces that maybe aren't accessible yet, or maybe the idea of inclusion hasn't been presented, they, in many cases, our keys, they understand us, they care about us, they have the knowledge that we need them to have. But also they have the privilege of being able to step into rooms that we're not always quite welcomed in yet. And so I think the inter-dependence there is this give and take between, you know, they are not the disability series, we'll never know what it's like to live with a disability. But at the same time, they have a level of care and a level of privilege, where where we can help one another out and understand that, that there is steps to be taken and that we can work together to take them together.

**Molly Joyce** 06:56

Yeah. What is assumption for you?

**Nicole Kelly** 07:07

Assumptions are the everyday microaggressions that I encounter. So when people initially see me and see that I have physical disability, the assumption is always that my capability is much less than the reality of what my capability is, the assumption is, even that my intelligence is a lot lower than I might have intelligence really is. There, there are a lot of perceptions that are drawn. And unfortunately, I think because we live in a place where media talks about us incorrectly or wrong, those those stigmas has stayed. And we've only continued to hurt our community instead of you know, really reporting on us correctly, or telling stories about disability where we aren't the heroes or we haven't gone through something totally tragic, right? Like it tell our servers are sold as if we are normal people. I think those those are the types of things we'll continue to encounter. So to me it, it means the Yeah, the microaggression and the looking down on and the stigmas that we face because the education that our culture currently has is not correct.

**Molly Joyce** 08:32

And I'm gonna add one more, that's okay.

**Nicole Kelly** 08:35

Yeah, totally.

**Molly Joyce** 08:36

What is difference for you?

**Nicole Kelly** 08:41

Um, difference for me, in my automatic reaction, is that for the sake of me having physical disability, so in that respect, difference to me is when I walk into a room, my disability leaves, that is what people see, first, immediately the assumptions and the gaps in society. Those are the first things I'm encountering when meeting people, but also then I think of like invisible disabilities with that as well. And, and, you know, that's easier to quote unquote, hide or easier to pass as normal. And so that's an easier question. I'm gonna try to answer it. But like, yeah, I guess I guess I'll just answer it. Yeah. To reiterate, I guess for physical difference. Yeah, difference to me is is my disability lien in a room, you know that that identity being the thing that I have to address with my confident body language or my confident speaking language, so other people can kind of jump over that hurdle of Whoa, oh my gosh, she has one hand. She has something that that we assume means we're going to have to treat her different or pamper her in a way because stigma in our society tells them to be that way.