Peter Wehrli - Feb 11 2020

**SPEAKERS**

Molly Joyce, Peter Wehrli

**Molly Joyce** 00:01

Yeah, just a little better. It's getting better. Yeah. We'll see. I'm in DC right now. So, we'll see. Great. So, the first question is, what is access for you?

**Peter Wehrli** 00:17

Yeah, I mean, access is the one thing that I often don't find, when I am about with my wheelchair, and often very often hindered to have access. And usually, I have a map in my mind, where I can go through and where I can't go through. So I don't really meet them at that many places where I can't go through but access means I can go in like everybody else, that's for me. It's just like everybody else. That means not the hand, the back door, not through the kitchen. But through the main entry to the normal lift and everything, there is a lift, of course, and so on. And so

**Molly Joyce** 01:04

 Okay, thank you. What is care for you?

**Peter Wehrli** 01:10

In a general sense, or in a specific sense for disabled people, I mean, in the general sense, it's that actually, what people do to each other, so be nice to each other, and to look at the other, it doesn't get heard, that it can grow, and I can grow, that we can all grow. And we help each other, or we support each other in growing, that's caring a general sense. In this sense of being...requiring care, I try not to have to require care as much...care as much as possible. I have grown up in hospitals and in an institution for disabled children. And I have a horror from the situation where I'm utterly dependent on the goodwill of somebody else to...for my basic functions. So, I try to do whatever I came by myself. But of course, I'm aware that one day I will need care again. And then I just hope I will have somebody nice and kind to take it to really let me grow. And let me live the way I want to.

**Molly Joyce** 02:31

Thank you. What is control for you?

**Peter Wehrli** 02:37

That's the one thing that comes with care very often. That's the one thing that I fear when it when others have control over me. So, my needs of care. But usually, I think of control as the one thing that I would like of my own life, I would like to have control over my own life, to know to decide when I go, when I come, when I eat, when I don't eat, what I eat, and so on and so on. That's the things that I would like to do by myself. The truth is that when you live with someone like me with my wife, you don't have control the type that you as soon as you are with other persons to control is something that you have to negotiate all the time.

**Molly Joyce** 03:31

What is weakness for you?

**Peter Wehrli** 03:34

Yeah, that's the one thing that at least I think I experienced very much as a child, that is the total weakness, the total dependence on other people. And that is something that, I fear. Although, in certain situations, it's nice to give up control and to have somebody else take over and as I said, let me live and let me grow and let me be myself. So, it has two sides, the whole thing and the more I am in control of my life, the more there is also this fantasy of the just let go of the control and let somebody else take over their data to give the weakness to somebody else.

**Molly Joyce** 04:26

Interesting. What is strength for you?

**Peter Wehrli** 04:30

Sorry?

**Molly Joyce** 04:31

What is strength for you?

**Peter Wehrli** 04:35

Yeah, strength to say philosophically, it's it’s the capability of standing to your weakness, of allowing your weakness to to be part of the thing. I mean, to agree that your weakness that you're...can give this weakness also as a present to somebody else.

**Molly Joyce** 05:03

I love that. This kind of a controversial question you don't have to answer if you don't want to. What is cure for you?

**Peter Wehrli** 05:11

Cure?

**Molly Joyce** 05:12

 Yeah.

**Peter Wehrli** 05:15

Cure is something that, you know, it's contradictory to the term of disability. I mean, disabled, to be disabled is not to be sick or to be ill, to be disabled is something that is not curable. And so it's very liberating, if somebody tries to cure me, tell them may go on. I don't want to be cured because I can't be cured. And actually, I'm healthy. I'm not sick, I'm ill. So, I don't have any hopes for any kind of cure. It's not in my perspective Not at all.

**Molly Joyce** 05:58

What is interdependence for you?

**Peter Wehrli** 06:02

Yeah, that's this the thing that when live when living together with other people, when you are not the lonely Trapper in there, somewhere in the woods, then you are independent, even a lonely Trapper in the woods is actually independent, because he needs his gun and he is a musician and he needs to sell his first to someone so he is also in the past, he cannot live the illusion of independence. So independence is something that we get born as dependent beings, and we die as dependent beings. And all the time in between we are interdependent with other persons. And so the idea of strength and control is always a contradicted that we also have always this interdependence, we always have to negotiate.

**Molly Joyce** 06:59

What is the assumption for you?

**Peter Wehrli** 07:02

Assumption? I don't know. I don't know the word. I don't know. Can you give me an example?

**Molly Joyce** 07:11

Like when you assume something of others, or like, if I assume like, my body won't do something, or if I assume you won't be able to do something?

**Peter Wehrli** 07:26

Yeah, I think we all have assumptions. Of course, that's our prejudice about the world. We all assume that we know things which we don't actually know. But we assume they are. Somehow, the way we think they are, until we get these appointed by a by the nature of things. But that's, that's how we live. And of course, people when they see a person in a wheelchair, like me, they make certain assumptions about this person. They think the way I should be, as the normal cliche of a person in a wheelchair should be. So we are met with lots of assumptions by people around us, which I call prejudice, prejudice, but it's understandable. And when they know, what do they know about me as a person, they know something about the cliche disabled person in the wheelchair. Because that is reported by the media. And it's reported by the institutions that collect money, and they also portray disabled people in a certain way, either as heroes or as little things that needs to be taken care of. So there's lots of assumptions around but that's you. That's normal. I mean, we can't live without assumptions. We do that all the time.

**Molly Joyce** 08:51

And last one, what is difference for you?

**Peter Wehrli** 08:57

Okay, again, you probably think about the difference between men, human beings, between, yeah, between normal human beings, that differences that seem to be very decisive or not like skin color, or sexual orientation, or disability or not this ability, let's say like, and, again, that's a part of the way we organize our life. We always think in categories. Which our assumptions about what we think we know about other people are usually wrong. And usually helpful to me to assume this, more or less will be like that, but usually they're wrong.

**Molly Joyce** 09:49

No, that's great. And that's all the questions there.