Tom Shakespeare - Mar 3 2020

**SPEAKERS**

Molly Joyce, Tom Shakespeare

**Molly Joyce** 00:16

The first question is, what is access for you?

**Tom Shakespeare** 00:23

Access is the right of everybody to go where everybody else wants to go. So for disabled people, it's to face minimal barriers, that they can have level access to buildings or activities, that they can have, maybe signage that's appropriate for visually impaired people, maybe space, bathrooms, all those other aspects, it just removes barriers so that we can do what everybody else can do.

**Molly Joyce** 00:55

What is care for you?

**Tom Shakespeare** 00:58

The same people don't tend to use the word care, care traditionally is looking after, where people are needy or vulnerable. Disabled people tend to talk about assistance or support, we all need assistance and support whether we're children, adults or older people, if you are able to pay for your own support workers, you're going to need circle care a lot less, you're gonna need more control. And if you're in an environment where you can participate, you're going to need less support. So it's a dynamic thing, care. And many of us would rather we didn't talk about it so much.

**Molly Joyce** 01:38

What is control for you?

**Tom Shakespeare** 01:42

Control is about having choices in your life. And many people have limited control. Disabled people want the same control as everybody else. And we're in the grip of bigger, more powerful forces. So nobody is completely free. We're all dependent on other people. But almost all of us are able to say what happens to us, and often disabled people aren't.

**Molly Joyce** 02:06

What is weakness for you?

**Tom Shakespeare** 02:09

I think all human beings are weak at some points in their lives. And at some points in the year. Nobody is invulnerable. Nobody's perfect. Nobody is free of frailty. Some disabled people are weak some of the time. But so as everybody else.

**Molly Joyce** 02:27

What is strength for you?

**Tom Shakespeare** 02:30

You could say that strength is the opposite of weakness, that it's having power and control. I think everybody demonstrates strength in their lives at different times. And I think we should support people to be stronger, more resilient. Not because they shouldn't need any support. But because they can make more choices and have more control if they can access is more strength.

**Molly Joyce** 02:57

What is the cure for you?

**Tom Shakespeare** 03:00

So was that what is cure?

**Molly Joyce** 03:02

Yeah.

**Tom Shakespeare** 03:05

There's a medical tradition of worrying about cure. But most of us are not resolved or here are illnesses and impairments. Sometimes there's a extraordinary intervention. But mostly, the interventions made life a little easier. They provide assistive technology, they mitigate pain. They make the difficulties of our bodies easier to cope with. I think the focus on cure all costs is really damaging to disabled people.

**Molly Joyce** 03:37

What is interdependence for you?

**Tom Shakespeare** 03:41

I think human beings are naturally interdependent. I get here by the bus driver in the shop that sells me milk or coffee, my portrait, the door of my building, all of those other things we should take for granted, enable us to live the life we appreciate. I think that normally people ignore it. And I think the disabled people are the ones that need extra help. But we're all interdependent. If we were on that famous Robinson Crusoe desert island, none of us would live very long, because we all require the people.

**Molly Joyce** 04:17

And last one, what is the assumption for you?

**Tom Shakespeare** 04:22

People look at me and make assumptions all the time. I think we should enable people to stand in their own eyes and ask for help or support when they need it. Rather than thinking, oh, they're disabled. They need to be looked after.