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Perfect, so you should now be able to toggle that on and off of the bottom of your screen. I'll also tell you a little bit more about that in just a minute about how to turn that on and off throughout the workshop today, whatever you prefer and whatever

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is most helpful for you. Great. We've got some introductions coming in. Great to see you all Tiffany from Toronto, Canada. Great to see you Steve dv sa in a wet and drizzly back Soham see great to have you here welcome Halifax, Ontario.

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Prince Edward Island. Great to have you here as well. Lots of Canadians joining us, first thing. great to see all this I think it's fairly early in the morning for many of you, so thanks for starting off your day with us.

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Good to have you here.

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Again, I'll give everybody just a minute to get settled in but if you're just joining please do pull up that chat we've got some great introductions coming in, see a little bit who else is in the virtual space.

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And if you're able to in just a minute I'll ask you to briefly turn on your cameras and give everybody a wave to again sort of start off with a bit of connection before we dive in, totally optional if you can't turn on your camera that's no problem but

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let's go ahead and do that now. So if you're able to turn on cameras give us a wave you're welcome to turn them off after, no problem if it's first thing in the morning, can see we've got some lovely home backgrounds know some little ones joining as well.

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Great to have you all here.

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Excellent. Thanks so much everybody it's really nice to see some smiling faces from around the world, we've got a really great international audience, as you'll see in the chat.

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If you're just joining us, please do share those introductions in the chat we'd love to know who you are, where you're joining us from today and where you work, just to get a sense of who else is in this room together.

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I'm going to go ahead and dive in and get started with just a couple of minutes past the hour.

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So start off with introductions for myself so I'm Helen, and I'm a campaigns and communications project manager here at a political.

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And I'm really delighted to be part of today's workshop about how to really embed disability inclusion in the public service. So, ranging from recruitment processes to accommodation measures performance management we're really going to be talking about

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how to build a public service with inclusion. At its heart.

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So, not something that's an add on something that's really integral to the public service itself.

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Now for those of you who may be joining us for the first time.

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And if it is the first time you're joining us, please do let us know in the chat, we'd love to know if you're in a political workshop first timer, I'll tell you just a little bit about a political.

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So a political is a network and learning platform used by over 150,000 public servants from more than 170 countries. Our mission is to build 21st century governments that work for people and the planet by putting the best knowledge and skills at the fingertips

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of public servants around the world. Now we do this through events like this one, courses and our knowledge sharing platform and network.

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Great to see a few first timers, Shelley first time at 6am, thanks for joining us so bright and early or dark and early as it may be, wherever you've joined us from a few technical notes that I'll get out of the way first.

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So the first one is that we are going to be recording this session and we're going to host it online on the apolitical website via Vimeo, you should have been notified when you joined.

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We do this so that participants and a political members can review the content on demand to further their learning. It also enables us to share content with any participants who are unable to make it to the session for example, in different time zones

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around the world. Now please do be aware that especially if you come off mute, because of the recording may be able to see your zoom username. If you have your camera on they'll also be able to see your face in addition to any information contained in

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your background, please do get in touch with my colleague the Porsche or myself. If you have any questions about this. You can also find out more information at the contact details of our data protection officer at the footer of our homepage.

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We do also have live transcription available on this call and I'll just paste some introductions into the chat, you should be able to toggle this on and off as you prefer.

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By clicking hide if you want to turn it off the bottom of your screen you should see something about live captioning closed captioning.

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So today, we're really fortunate to have Jonathan mock Helen Jeffries and harsh Dessie for joining joining us for our conversation. But before I dive in and hand it over to them.

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We want to get to know who's in the room a little bit better so we've had some great introductions coming in. And we want to do a few poll questions just to get a little bit of a sense check where you're coming from, how you feel about the topic.

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So, I'll get this first question up. Now I want to emphasize that this question is completely anonymous. So the question is on a scale of one to five with five being the most inclusive and one being the least inclusive.

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How would you rate your organization on its disability inclusion right now. So again, completely anonymous not tied to you and your organization at all just curious to get a bit of a sense check.

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Is it you know, sort of not quite fair it's they haven't really started five they're doing loads lots of really great accessibility and inclusive it measures, or maybe you're just not sure, maybe they don't do a great job of talking about it or maybe

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it's not something you're involved with directly. I'll give you just a minute you can see the posh is posted that in the chat.

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If you haven't seen the zoom poll pop up on your screen, feel free to just type the number in the chat as well I realized that's a little less anonymous so if you're not comfortable doing that totally fine you can just wait and we'll pull up the results

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in just a minute.

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So give everybody just a minute or so I think we've got most people participating, which is great.

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And I will share these results like and you won't be able to see who's voted for what just a little bit of a general sense of how we're doing across the board.

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So we've got I think a pretty good spread, I'm really pleased to see very few ones I think that's quite encouraging and a lot more concentrated sort of in the middle so people feeling like maybe you're kind of halfway they're not quite as far as it could

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be. some people on fours and fives which is really great.

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Some of you saying not sure 14% of you, which is fine maybe that's something that you haven't really explored before or again maybe it's something that your organization needs to be doing a bit more sharing about and maybe we can talk a little bit more

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about ways to make that visible to everyone in the organization as well in our chat going forward today.

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So I've got just a couple more questions for you.

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So, this question is have you encountered any opposition in advocating for disability inclusion.
So this sort of ranges from. Yes, you've been kind of lots of opposition maybe some opposition.

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Not very much, none at all. Not sure or something else and do please share in the, in the chat if it's something else.

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If it's maybe not something you yourself have encountered but you're aware of other people encountering it, feel free to answer in that way as well.

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And if you do want to share any details what will sort of ask another follow up question in just a moment. So you'll be able to share a little bit more in the chat in just a second.

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So I'll give everybody just a minute.

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Again, ranging from. Yes, lots of opposition, all the way to none at all.

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And maybe you're not sure, or maybe it's something else maybe it's somewhere in between.

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So just a minute or so to respond.

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Okay, I think, responses are starting to slow down so go ahead and pull up the results.

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Okay.

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So again, we're not seeing a lot of people experiencing lots of opposition, which I think is pretty encouraging and 33% of you, though, have experienced some opposition. 29% of you sort of on the other side not experiencing much 24% experiencing none at all, which I would say is, again really encouraging really great to see and

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11% not sure so maybe you're not involved in this directly yourself, Or maybe you're just not not quite sure.

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Excellent. So, this is just a follow up question that you can be thinking about as we're introducing our speakers, but if you have experienced opposition, I was wondering if you could share some of the most common kinds of opposition to reasons for opposition,

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opposition, you've received in the chat. And again, this could be just something that you're aware of maybe you haven't been directly receiving this opposition yourself, but I'd love to know what kind of opposition, you're encountering if you are so maybe

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we can talk about ways to sort of counteract that.

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In the meantime, while you're thinking, I'm going to go ahead and introduce our brilliant speakers who are with us today, and I'll hand it over to them in just a moment.

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So, first we have with us with us, Jonathan.

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Jonathan is an ecosystem builder research and insights at dream impact the community of socially minded entrepreneurs and Hong Kong, Jonathan social justice journey began when he was, he was diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, ADHD

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autism spectrum disorder ASD at the age of 37. At the time he was working for the education bureau focusing on career and life planning education. Lately, he completed talent for impact Fellowship Program nurturing your next generation of environmental,

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social and governance and impact investing professionals. We also have with us today Helen Jeffries, who is the deputy director of policy and strategy at supplies at Cabinet Office, Helen has worked in the UK Government for more than a decade and departments,

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including Defra the department of health and social care, and most recently on the task force at the Cabinet Office, Helen has written about her experiences with autism in the workplace, on a political and beyond.

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We also have not but last but certainly not least harsh Jesse, who was previously the head of operations that UK is managed quarantine service and was also the head of UK testing security at the test and TRACE program within the Department of Health and

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social care. Ours is a policy and strategy specialist in the areas of security, and is written about the role of disability and hiring processes in the civil service.

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We also have some really great writing by all three of these brilliant speakers, which we will share with you after the workshop, just going to quickly take a look at the chat before I hand it over to Jonathan to you to see some of the responses of what

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kind of opposition people have experienced and great lack of resources. That's a really helpful one Spence's everyone at my organization loves disability inclusion in theory but don't want to put any money behind it so maybe a sort of budgetary opposition

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I'm seeing a lot of nodding from our speakers, maybe sounds a little bit familiar to them.

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Let's see some really interesting ones, feel the person in question with a disability may not be a good fit for a position due to their disability.

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So maybe sort of using that as a bit of a reason to not put resources there.

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Yep Helens got a great example all very well to be inclusive but the work we do here doesn't allow us to do that or doesn't allow us to do that thing, which is really interesting resistance to change not understanding the need for change, really great

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point.

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resource and time for really, really great answers to a lot of budgetary bureaucratic concerns and lack of understanding that's a really great one from Beverly as well.

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Thanks so much, that's really insightful reasons why you may be encountering some opposition that I think will definitely come up in our discussion today.

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So without further ado, Jonathan, I want to go ahead and turn it over to you share your thoughts with us.

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Thank you.

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Today, I would like to share some samples, about what private about what government departments can learn from the profit center for disability inclusion.

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And these lessons are mainly based off of my daily work as I am reading corporate sustainability reports.

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Why should the government departments learn from the private sector for disability inclusions.

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There is a number of reasons. first of all,

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comprehensive disability inclusion requires policy assessments. Then, it requires an organization's to assess organizational governance, they operations employment for people with disabilities.

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facilities facilities, assess abilities relationship with service providers and the relationship with the whole community.

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Let me try to give you two examples. The first one is, Hong Kong bank, a Polish with a local NGO called can do.

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So what they do is to produce a staff handbook.

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And the handbook covers training for all different like Hong Kong bank stuff.

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The handbook.

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Literally, basically tell the symptoms of people with disabilities, and the handbook provides guidance for Hong Kong bank staff members about how to work with people with disabilities, and also on in case if the people with disabilities.

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Demonstrate social emotional issues that Washington staff members, be doing and show you show show you may show, it means that you need the top leadership team to lead the initiative.

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And you also take the whole community collaborations of disability advocacy groups to make things happen.

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Likewise, and the other example I would like to give is from Oliver James, a recruitment agency headquartered in London.

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But the Hong Kong office.

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How party is a new initiative named Andre ability, show you how as people with special needs to look for jobs, but it is more than looking for jobs, it, Audrey abilities also have employers to reroute their recruitment policies in order to make it friendly

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for people with disabilities. And for some of the employers, and we have challenges, about how to work with people, people with different needs. So what Audrey ability to do is to connect with our local NGOs to profile web shop for the corporate clients

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And also, they also had the terrorism to show you how to be proactive proactively reaching out to employers to promote the candidates. So show what our show.

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So what can show what can the government governments do. And maybe they again they need to assess the knowledge gap.

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The gap between what they should, what they will do in terms of disability inclusion, or what is always really happening on the ground. It's also about engagement with our different stakeholder for disability inclusion.

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And you also about evaluating input outputs and outcomes for disability inclusion work. So, to me, to, to end my sharing for now, disability inclusion wasn't just just dropped.

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He also.

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He also requires the government departments to have a holistic disability inclusion policy.

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disability inclusion policy. I know that people may be may be having questions, and I'm happy to share my views and later on. Thank you.

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Thanks so much, Jonathan, I mean if you sort of key themes that I've heard you saying is community collaboration, sort of collaborating within the whole community, buy in from the top, seems really important as well getting buy in from that top leadership

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so that it's not just people sort of on the ground, pushing for this and then also sort of learning from best practices and learning from others experience and really making sure that you're collaborating with stakeholders where you can and really learning

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from and bringing in their expertise, and so thanks so much for that. That really helpful introduction, harsh I want to go ahead and hand it over to you.

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Hello, buddy. And I'm so pleased to be here today, and to speak about some my experiences.

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And it's interesting what Jonathan's has said on what we can learn from the private sector.

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And I think we have some really good practice in government and within the, and I can you speak to the UK civil service.

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And, but there's always, there's more we can do.

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And I think the things that I have experienced myself is.

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And I talked about it quite extensively in my article is how people recognize a disability, especially if it's hidden.

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And I was kind of, you know, get the, the person who's in that situation.

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Often myself speaking about well, is my disability deliberating, or is it enabling you know how much of it goes to people's understanding, and my previous experience has taught me that I've always had to have my tools and, you know, sometimes really sharpened,

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You know, sometimes really sharpened, but sometimes you know, being equipped to go into conversations with HR and rely managers, upfront to tell them, and you know what my disability is what kind of support I might need.

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But more often given assurances.

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I don't need lots of support, and I just need you to be patient with me I need you to be given me time, because there are certain things with my condition that will require your understanding more times you know the numbers, and sometimes getting

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those things can be the hardest especially if line managers or you know you're in a position where it's very target driven, or you're working fast pace, we sometimes get caught up with that.

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And, and sometimes, you know, it comes at a cost and falling ill or not being able to, you know, attend appointments or, you know, being able to rearrange them and things like that.

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This is the things that I've personally kind of done is, you know, I've had to manage this inclusion and diversity myself from the beginning.

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And to give myself that voice so I am heard.

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And, and things like this can include, you know, in better practice where we're recruiting people we understand very much what their background is, and.

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And I think when we're recruiting people we often kind of deployed is to take process. And, and what take trial and colleagues, understand about it, you know, do people automatically get interviewed.

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And do they meet the bar. And I think some people understand that. And some people don't.

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I think one the other bugbears is, if you don't get selected for interview, it's things like, what was the feedback, you know, I, you know, there could be.

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I know colleagues who struggle

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with time and putting applications that makes a bit more more difficult. And I think when their development and talent performance, you know, is either coming up, or it's in question.

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Feedback is so important and I think, you know, if you've identified as somebody, you know, has declared disability, then I'd really like employers to be able to provide feedback, so that's not only just provided to the individual that they can work that

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in within their own development needs, which again sometimes gets lost in the workplace, depending on what kind of circumstances and conditions, people are facing and and that's me included, because sometimes, you know, you just don't know where you stand.

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And the other things I think inclusion and diversity has come a long way, is we aren't just talking about it anymore. We're not just trying to fill a fill a gap, you know, because it sounds good on this we kind of do some sort of compliance with legislation.

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legislation. We are putting things in place, so you know advertising correctly we're having more conversations with got, you know more networks, talk about issues with talking more openly with staff and colleagues we want managers were doing more preparation

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and making more awareness sessions. And, you know, generally the organizations organizations are becoming bit more enlightened.

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So, I think I'll stop there. Before I take any more time and, but I think there is still a lot more to do, but we have started this journey. And I think you know in time we'd like to see more positive steps.

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So much harder, that's a really helpful sort of overview of kind of what's, what's being done now that's being done well, and maybe some space for improvement and in the future I think one thing that really stood out to me from what you said is the combination

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between open communication, and that sort of feedback peace and communication and also coupled with action. So not just stopping at communicating about it but then taking it that next step and and sort of doing things.

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Helen I want to go ahead and pass it over to you before we move into q amp a.

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Hi everyone, it's lovely to be here. Can I just check that you can hear me.

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Brilliant. Thank you. And having spent about 18 months on zoom I still don't trust it. And so yeah I'm Helen Jeffrey's, I'm a senior civil servant, in the case of a service as Helen said at the start, I've been working on code so a lot of very high pressure

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work. And in fact Kobe's been quite helpful for me with my disability which is that I'm autistic. And that means that I can tend to be literal, I can miss nuance and I find socializing difficult.

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So I've come to realize that actually just being in a room with people takes up an awful lot of my brain power. And so being on the end of a zoom call makes frees up a lot of my brain to be able to operate for other things.

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And so I've actually found that my career has really taken off in the last couple of years because I've been able to do interviews, over video calls like this, and I haven't had to waste 75% of my brain thinking, Oh, I'm in a room with people, I need

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to make eye contact, or what body language should I be using. Or, what does that mean. And so, they have definitely been some positives for me, I, I, in contrast to a lot of disabled people.

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I lived, almost all of my life without a diagnosis not even realizing that I was in anything different about me. I knew that there was something a bit about me but I assume that it was my fault that if I tried harder I could overcome it.

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And it was only in the last few years where I finally got my diagnosis of autism. And I then thought because I couldn't see any senior leaders in my organization with autism that that must mean that I couldn't get promoted anymore.

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But because of Covidien the positive things that I've just mentioned.

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I did manage to get promoted and since then it's been really important to me that I be open and try and be the role model that I didn't have myself.

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And so, I think the thing that I really want to convey to as many people as possible is that being autistic doesn't have to mean being the stereotype that you see in films like Rain Man.

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Actually, in women autism quite often manifests as hiding your autism really quite effectively so the main symptom is the, you're just exhausted because all of your brain and all of everything that you do is concentrating on hiding your autism rather

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than anything else.

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And that's how it has been for me and finding out about my diagnosis and being more open at work has freed up an awful lot of energy and ability to do other things.

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So in my case actually better understanding in me. And in my employers of what's going on inside my head has meant that I've become a more effective employee, so hopefully that's a positive story about how disability inclusion can do some good.

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Thanks so much for that Helen, I love that point about sort of not only understanding of employer but also self understanding, and how that can play such a big role.

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We've also had some really great conversation in the chat that I just wanted to highlight there's some really good conversations going on and Samantha pointed out an issue about the fact that accommodations can require a great deal of paperwork, which

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can be a really big barrier, especially if some people are fighting to get evaluation and diagnosis, which I know can be really challenging and saying the same thing can happen in the US where diagnosis can be quite expensive and can be really out of

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reach for people.

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I suppose it sort of more of a comment than a question but actually just want to open that up to our panelists.

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Is there anything you'd like to maybe reflect on on the kind of barrier between the sort of paperwork, anything that you found that could be helpful or or maybe something you think could be helpful if it's not being done now.

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And I'll maybe pass this one yeah harsh Do you want to go first.

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Okay.

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Yeah, my own experience, I think, reasonable adjustments has been.

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Sometimes he'll struggle.

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Because so often, you have to go through so many stages, you need to go through occupational health, then you need to go into, you know, your own practitioner, to be able to provide an assessment, and then provide the type of equipment you might need.

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So, apologies everybody, I'm Helen so bravely spoke about herself, I forgot to because it was launched into the issues. So my hidden disabilities, I've got a, a very compromised immune system because I've had a kidney transplant.

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And that means, when I say what I need people be money, I need to manage people it's about getting people to know.

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And also, I've got you know a couple of other things that are related to that so reason just, just to get a chat, or, you know, or having some time away from the desk previously has been an uphill struggle because people not understood why can you turn

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away. You know what I'm trying to preserve my, my immune system, so I don't fall ill.

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And so the paperwork can take ages, and 10, and then when it does come it can be like four or five months later. And at that point, you I've had to do personally stacks of paper.

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So I could see properly stacks of Christians behind me so I don't feel really tired, or sometimes just sitting on the floor. And so, and and you know just taking make them with positions in front of people, but that's good stuff because my practices have

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have said well you need it you don't get solved, you know with your transplant.

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And, and that's impossible, relax a bit strange, but it's like, I'm not going to justify and put some paperwork for every single thing that I do, you know, the organization needs to accept me for me as an individual, But there is a gap between the time

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it takes put requesting two things getting what needs to be done. And, and there's the gap of what happens in the interim, you know, what's the fixed me solution, and often there isn't.

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And so, you know, line managers out there, if you do have somebody like this, you know, just take time and patience just to understand what your staff are asking for, and it's often not much it's within your gift to give it

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such a great point about that sort of gap between the maybe big picture you know lot longer term changes and what can be done right now. I saw Jonathan hell you both came off off mute so Jonathan Do you want to go first and then Helen.

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Yeah. net. Okay.

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Okay, before I share for the show my spirit and so let me saturate a pitch, because I remember that so I was first diagnosed with ADHD by private psychologists, and then I, and then when I decided to disclose my sketches, I was asked by the government

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to meet a proper psychologists, and then, But at the time.

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Kids, I would be a magician, I could be dad was a show like so late in my life so the psychologists, the proper hospital psychologist also asked my mother to come with me.

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And then, and then, and then our hope was you know our whole meeting last three hours, but going for the accommodated measures, and I believe unity there lots of things for you.

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There are lots of things to consider. Shake in my case.

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But by the time I, I got the meeting with the site.

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There was a famous gap on show on the one hand you're trying to figure out what would be, what would be the way for your team members to help you. On the other hand, you could feel that.

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Sometimes they were reluctant to try to provide support, but they had to, because they didn't want to be accused of a discriminations.

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They don't want a dirty mark in their, in their profiled eventually hurting their carrier. Show that I wish it was rather ended with a situation which was passive aggressive.

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So, they will be very reluctant provide support but they knew they have to in order to protect themselves.

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Yeah, thanks for sharing that Jonathan and Helen did you want to comment as well.

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I've got a few things in the chat, but I think the thing that really strikes me about reasonable adjustments, is that it is a struggle to get them.

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And you have to really believe that you. You deserve them.

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And when the whole world is telling you that maybe you're not as good.

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Then, or you feel that the world is telling you that, then you think, oh no I don't actually deserve that thing, I won't fight for it because why would anyone fight for me.

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And then, in my case, particularly with autism, the reasonable adjustments that I need tend to be the sort of thing that almost anybody would want. And so it's very easy for managers and employees to see them as special privileges.

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So for example, I need at least a half an hour maybe an hour of quiet time in the middle of the day in order to reboot my brain so that I don't have to socialize or go to meetings.

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But clearly, most people would like a lunch break.

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I need to have a designated desk so that I can always sit in the same place, so I don't have the uncertainty. But clearly, most people like their own desk.

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So, it's very easy for what I need. And even now I'm struggling to say that I need it because it does feel a little bit like a privilege.

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And it's very difficult to get other people to understand that it is something that I need and not just something that I want.

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And I think that's at the heart of a lot of the difficulties with reasonable adjustments that it's difficult to convince yourself that you should have it.

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And then even more difficult to convince other people.

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Such a good point Helen, and I want to highlight something that Samantha said in the chat that's gotten a lot of agreement, which was that, that if you succeed at hiding your disability, most of the time and are able to excel in a world not designed for

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you on the bad days when people are on the bad days and you can't hide it. People don't always believe you when you say you need extra support so that can be a real challenge, even if you are sort of able to mask this disability, a lot of the time.

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you know, you may not be able to all the time and you may not need to all the time. So they've got such a great point.

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I do, so I know there's been a lot of conversation, and has you brought up exactly the question that I sort of wanted to address a little bit which is about how hidden how invisible disabilities are hidden disabilities can be managed without exposing

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them for someone if they don't want to disclose. so not everyone is comfortable in a work environment disclosing more widely. Maybe not to their manager or maybe just not to their colleagues, maybe not at all.

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And so I was wondering if you could sort of talk about any tips for managing those invisible disabilities, when you maybe want to balance.

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Not feeling comfortable disclosing Helen I'll start with you first on this one.

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Well, this is one area where I realized that I've got a huge amount of privilege.

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So having taken the decision that I was going to be open about my disability. I don't have to think of any of these problems anymore. I put the fact that I'm autistic in my email signature I put a link to my blog which helped more probably share at the

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end.

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And, and that means that I don't have to go through that process of agonizing, but previously I did waste, an awful lot of my time and energy on thinking, who can I tell who can I trust.

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And some people. What most people were very positive when I said that I was autistic. And because most people are very positive when you say it, I, when you actually asked for some kind of adjustment or change, they may be less positive.

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But I did receive some pushback and some hurtful comments as well. So, I'm on balance my experience is that it's better to be open because it just removes a whole load of stress and worry about what to choose from your life, but it does get you some blowback

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and, but I guess the other thing I would.

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It's quite. The other thing I was going to say is that, because I'm in quite a senior position. That gives me an awful lot of privilege as well. So that I'm keenly aware that things that I do now, expressing my disability, what I'm doing now say people

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describe them as being inspirational or great leadership, whereas when I did them at did similar things that are lower level of the organization that was me being a nuisance awkward.

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And I think it is definitely the case that you get treated differently depending on your level of seniority. So a lot of these.

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I guess what I'm going to is, I don't know the answers this question, because I've got the luck not to have to worry about it.

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But I do hope that having more people being open should make it easier for those who don't want to be open so if it becomes more understood that.

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I need a lunch break because my brain is worn out, then maybe other people who need it but they want to say exactly why will find it easier to get it.

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Thanks Helen I think that ties really nicely also to that point Jonathan made earlier about that kind of buy in from the top down, and also being able to have, you know what you call inspiration or sort of champions who are those higher levels and maybe

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have the privilege to be able to safely speak out about it.

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To make it easier for those who are maybe less senior and feel less comfortable, Jonathan You go ahead.

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No I my immediate reaction is to your question is, the truth is set you free.

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So we if you really have a

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discloses.

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Yes, people may say that your character dies and then whether you should move with this job.

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But once you disclose it. And you know what, what would be helpful for you, then you can get the support you need.

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Because without official decorations, and then you have, you have your right there obviously you distribute the performance of standards by addition submitted disclosure then you add your access to this upon your list is basically guaranteed.

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In my experience, well, I mean, not on me, I have ADHD, but two years ago I was also diagnosed with autism.

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And I will say that both of my college did not believe it did not believe in the, in the doctors and analysis. But eventually, when I showed him the laptop, when I showed them that explains why the concept of the service has received over time.

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They didn't say anything. Show show for so for, I mean you can see some pushback.

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But it might. But, but you felt bad for usually when people go out, you can say it this way. Some people decide what to push back anymore because they're afraid of disability discrimination, because they don't want to be seen as foolish behind your back.

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So you're gonna see some people.

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We let asleep.

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Working with you, but at the same time though, once you meet the disclosure and you demonstrate you can you can still be as good as this as quick as they are.

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They give you a date they give you more respect.

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So, I mean, at the end of the day, it's up to you to decide whether you want to disclose a lot that you need to consider the pros and cons, but in my will.

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The pros are more than cons.

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Thanks Jonathan, I'm harsh Was there anything you wanted to add to that question.

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Yeah, I think I'm in agreement, both Helen and Jonathan

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earlier in my career, I did my dog gets excited, whoever's at the door.

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And so, so earlier in my career, I decided I didn't want to tell everybody, and telling my manager was enough.

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But that doesn't always go well because of my managers that means putting a situation well.

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If this person's ill, and the other step No, then it's not my place to tell people, so I've often sometimes come back from illness.

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Number one example, we used to have opening boxes, because three of us at this particular grade, used to be able to say boxes.

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And I saw some comments. Oh, she's off again, you know, who knows what she's off for this time, and I was, I was horrified. You know that my colleagues would think that I was playing the system or something like that.

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And so I've learned lessons to to disclose to not just my managers, but both colleagues, and on staff, so they know.

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You know, for accountability where I am.

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And we've come a long way from where I used to have to take him a hospital letters just to prove I'm going to an appointment.

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And I wants it was left in the team diary.

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And somebody said oh this is yours hard, I couldn't believe it. So, yeah, I mean I don't think we have those kind of situations now because we've got, you know the benefit of data protection.

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But there's been some really shady practices, because of that, I mean the other things, I think, I just want to lead to one more thing is what hadn't mentioned was, you know, feeling privileged.

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But I, but I think there's also this sense of people have viewed me as feeling entitled

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for the wrong reasons.

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And, and trying to overcome that, you know, and rebalance that you know that situation sometimes really hard to repair, but it's a case of, you know, you go for an interview which everybody else says I just got an interview Oh yeah, because she's tick

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that box the past.

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Oh, she's on a disability scheme.

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Yeah, that's because of you know just got free pass that's why she's got some other stuff, positive stuff going on for her because my managers have given her.

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You know more leeway.

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None of which is true, everything that anybody does in any profession or any jobs is not a marriage as we all know.

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But, yes, I will say disclosing is better than not, Because you have to do less justification later.

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I'm sorry that that's the reason why you you sort of felt you needed to disclose to colleagues because they weren't weren't being respectful in general but also a lot of really interesting conversation going on on the chat on sort of various challenges

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of disclosing.

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I think Helen and someone else sort of both pointed to the kind of emotionally exhausting sort of draining part that might happen when, when you become this visible figure, you know the sort of champion.

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People might turn to you to do that in addition to all of the other work you're doing for your actual job.

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So I suppose maybe one of the risks, but I mean a really great point that it can vary from workplace workplace and at the end of the day it's down to what you feel most comfortable with and sort of who's who's going to support you around you.

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But thanks everyone for your really helpful conversation in the chat and also thanks for everyone sharing your own experiences, it's really, really helpful to hear from others who have, maybe, you know, face the same challenges, while trying to do this.

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I want to turn to a point that we've sort of alluded to, but not quite gotten to which is sort of the question of how we can really embed disability inclusion, so I kind of want to take a step back to actually getting people into the public service, who

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have a broad range of ability disability. And so this is kind of talking a little bit about recruiting and what inclusive hiring practices and recruiting practices look like.

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So I would love to know from our panelists sort of what do you see as best practices, whether they're happening right now or not, what do you see as the kind of ways that we can transform the hiring process or tweak it to really make it as inclusive as

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possible and there were some really great comments about this earlier in the chat about sort of taking more holistic ways of thinking about job applications rather than just copying and pasting from the same job application over and over again and thinking

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you know Does, does this particular job really require attention to detail is that what's so important about this job or is it creativity or is it the other way around.

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So, so something like this, I'd be really curious to hear what all of our panelists think, Jonathan I'll maybe turn to you for explaining, you've done some thinking around recruiting.

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Yeah, so I would, I was saying, I wish the in this way.

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For the two organizations that I for the two organizations, I just mentioned.

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They work with cooperation especially financial institutions of ours are trying to the recruitment policies. So, so ensure you means as you're saying if you have ADHD.

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And, I mean, save you when you find it so difficult to sit still for 20 minutes for the interview show if you can really see for 10 minutes.

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10 minutes and they have a five minute break.

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If they care they prefer to have the interview in the afternoon. Then, let's do in the afternoon.

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However, if the candidate prefers to be shorter way say you when you want the room to the paint in blue are there, but that that but but the but the employer.

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You don't have any room in blue that just kind of the candidates. Show the key I mean show their show show the key part of it transparency. You really did you really need to let the cat there's no water can really do, and you are what you cannot really

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do.

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And show, honestly a key and the second is flexibility. So say for people with autism, show you, you hire someone for it. Because at the end of the day, the key part is for the person to complete a task show why so is it is it necessary to assess his

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socio emotional skills. So, yeah, I mean, I'm feeling otherwise, as long as God if another person, autism knows how to control his emotions and perform the job well done.

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So, the other point is you really need to look into your policies. If they are and the era assessment.

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They were filled with the qualities you have to have to perform the job, remove them.

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And then the other thing is ongoing feedback, so I do need to work with different disability advocacy groups to really get the feedback about the recruitment policy.

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And last but not least, yes, disability inclusion this beautiful, but equally important to those invitations shows, say, like I said if you hire someone.

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Introduce weapons, or you need to hire someone to provide engineer jobs, then it's important to find someone who is emotionally stable.

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So, showing you come in so so if the position.

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These different positions cannot really accept people with certain disabilities, provide the reasons why you can't do it, and people, and people understand.

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Thanks Jonathan, I think those points about sort of transparency and flexibility, are really great sort of core principles because that also. Excuse me, that also sort of allows for making sure that you know where you can and can't be flexible and what

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kind of flexibility you're able to offer and harsh Do you want to comment on this.

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Yeah, I haven't actually got much to lots more to add to Jonathan I think you've made some really valid points.

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And for me, I think I'm in applications for example, and the application. If it's online, you know that there should be a set of algorithm.

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For me, I think, instead of declaring disability right the end, you have a section that you declare it up front.

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And if you declare it out front, then, you know, the things that I like to see changed, is people may require more extra words to write that application because sometimes their disability may not allow them to articulate in such

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concise or, you know, confronting manners, you know, straight away. You've got a different type of application that interview, you know, because the process should follow through, provide extra time, you know, I know, I know, we don't ask that because

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if somebody gets through the certificates because they've met the minimum standard.

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But there should be some extra understanding that you do have somebody who's declared disability and time should be picked up by the panel HR, if you've got somebody appearing before you, that you know you do your homework, so that person feels comfortable,

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And, you know, and not facing any other barriers that they're already, you know worried about facing.

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And so these, those are things that I would really like to see, you know, a change in the recruitment process up front.

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I love that focus on sort of upfront and then also, all the way carrying through rather than just at one stage and then disappears after that, Helen anything you wanted to add.

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Yeah, I think in terms of the wording of the job for the points that have been made a really pertinent as a concrete example of that.

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I mentor, quite a lot of neuro diverse colleagues, which I guess is picking up the point that once you've been opened it becomes part of your job that you support other people.

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But a wonderful colleague found her dream job. It was the job that was perfect for her and her experience, but the job description said must be very organized and she has ADHD, and she thought that meant that she couldn't apply for her dream job.

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I convince set around the manager and have a word, and she was able to go for it, but just those little bits of wording can put people off. And, and there be things that others might not think about in terms of the interview itself, won't you can see

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I'm glancing down now and that's because I'm looking at what I've written down because I've got rotten short term memory so for the interview. It's really important for me to be able to have some notes with me and visual prompts, I don't process heard

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information very well. I process it in written form. So it's really helpful to me to have the questions written down, ideally, in advance.

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You can ask for that some recruitment panels will then treat you as if you've had special privileges as I know to my cost, but you can ask for it.

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And as an autistic person the kind of long impenetrable questions that you get at interviews are really difficult, because I can quite often. Just focus on the last part of a question.

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And rather than the whole thing. So for example, the question might be. So why do you want to work for this government agency. On this particular issue in this point at time in reading.

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Reading is a place in England for those who don't know, and I would probably just say I would like to work in reading because it's convenient for where I get to where I can get to on the train, because I've just remembered the last bit.

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And of course that's an appalling answer to that question because what they actually want is contained in an unwritten rule. And I guess that's actually the biggest barrier for me is the amount of unwritten rules around job applications where you have

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to just know what something means, and it's not literally what it means. So if you write, if you're asked to write a statement of why you're right for a particular job, what you actually have to do is write a sequence of examples of good things you've

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done in previous jobs not actually say why you think you'd be great at that job. So, those kinds of unwritten rules, and then actually I really also liked the point that Jonathan made about facing the problems, honestly, I think it's a great.

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It holds a lot of people back that some employers don't feel able to mention any kind of barriers. So, I think a lot of employers. Avoid employing any disabled person because they don't feel able to say that a particular disability wouldn't fit in that

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job.

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I to give you a ludicrous example, supposing I was recruiting bus drivers clearly I could not recruit blind people to be bus drivers, but as an IT recruiting manager I might just edit out all of the applications from disabled people because I was too

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afraid to get involved in that conversation. So I think if we're able to be a lot more honest about what we actually need for a job.

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And when there are some disabilities that absolutely can't fit a particular job, except that that's okay. Then I think that will empower us to be a lot more welcoming the rest of the time.

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And if I've said anything that was too blunt. That's because I'm autistic really sorry about that.

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I think about that point that point about transparency and honesty is so important. And also I think that the point about the unwritten rules is one that I think can be quite difficult to address because it's not necessarily something that's easy to overhaul.

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It's hard to sort of overhaul the process, you know with with so many unwritten rules, and, and, as Galia has pointed out in the chat these unwritten rules are also a barrier for those coming from diverse backgrounds, so anyone who's maybe not from a

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background of people who are working in the public service or jobs like this might find that really difficult. Not just for people who are autistic so that's a really excellent point.

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We've got about three or four minutes for questions before I start wrapping up and so I want to I want to sort of go for one more, thinking about this kind of this point that we've mentioned a little bit about the kind of higher level champions.

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And I want to sort of think about how you can get buy in from higher levels of management for disability inclusion when it maybe isn't already there.

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So, I might Helen pick on you a bit first because I know you are there. I know you are sort of acting as the kind of high level buy in, but maybe as you were sort of working your way to that position.

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Is there anything you found helpful for getting that buy in before you got there yourself.

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Other than sort of, you know, encouraging people with disabilities to work their way all the way to the top is there anything else we can be doing to really get that buy in at the highest level.

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Well I guess I don't actually feel all that senior there were several levels above me so I'm still trying to get that senior buying.

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And what I do is to remember that those senior people are people. And what works to persuade people tends to be stories anecdotes emotional connection.

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So if I want to persuade the head of my organization to be more aware of disability issues.

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I could present a whole bunch of general statements about disability and some, some killer facts are always good so the fact that of autistic people 22% of us are in work.

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So that means that the vast majority of autistic people don't have a job. That's a very compelling fact that hits people in in the gap.

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But in terms of actually getting their, buy in, I find telling my story, or other people's story is what actually works so what I've been trying to do here is tell stories about real people.

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I mean, the one that really got me going about inclusion was a colleague of mine, who is autistic.

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And he, His managers felt that his reasonable adjustments couldn't be maintained, they told him that you have to scale down his reasonable adjustments over time effectively please stop being disabled.

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They began to dismiss him.

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And I became his mentor, after he'd been found on the eighth floor roof of the building about to throw himself off.

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And it's that kind of emotional punch that I think gets people to realize why this matters. And we probably do need to be able to tell our stories, and tell tell the stories that are really going to stick in people's minds, because that will be what actually

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lodges in their memory at the moment when they're in a position to do something about it.

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So much Helen, Jonathan our hearts anything you want to add

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two things. The first thing is,

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for me. Well, for the possibly for the business centers because they can create a business case for disability inclusion, so say high productivity, more customers using, especially partners because of the company disability inclusion policy.

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So, you can show show it's good to do that. I mean, show that's why a business case for communication for for disability inclusion incorporated is crucial.

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As for the government centers, I can think of two possibilities. The first possibility is a stakeholder surveys show.

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Show you show really to demonstrate the investor impact or disability inclusion in the hope in the community. That may be a high, a better impression or specific government agencies, less complaints, because of lack of understanding regarding disability

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is equally important to codified or embed showing.

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The other thing is possibly more or less related to nutrition in Hong Kong, because of all the changes in the last two years, show for disability inclusion in the government you have been on show.

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It has been framed as a, as a way for a shorter security show, I would say for for disability inclusion in government settings Directorate, or the other way you try to present your case also suggest to the political and social climate at the time.

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Thanks so much, Jonathan hard You go ahead.

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I think you're on mute.

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Apologies I thought I'd muted.

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And just a couple of things for me, I think, you know what, the thing that we don't do well enough is inductions. So, you know, when you're in ducting, a new member of staff into your team tailor that conversation, and not just say the company line, and

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really get to understand, you know, their needs, up front so that you know you can be as supportive as possible, and also some difficult questions you know do other people know, you know, if they don't Is there a reason you know, could we make your environment

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more positive because that's what everyone I manager should be doing anyway.

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And also, I think, you know, we need to improve some handbooks, we have handbooks you know what employees should do and shouldn't do. But there are things about, you know, how do we look after one another, and that should be in the handbook, you know,

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that on there should be a sexual diversity inclusion in the do's and don'ts. So I think those are that's well over to in terms of updating those kinds of products.

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And lastly, you know, it's a making that education awareness for line managers and people up the chain, much more prevalent accessible. I remember to give you one life example is one line manager didn't know that.

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He, he should have given somebody time off, who had a condition or is making a tape of sick leave, silly when I walked up to his division with an armload of legislation in quality disability and diversity stuff.

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And by the way, this is what I've gotten this is what applies to me.

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Okay. Right. And maybe you should send it to somebody else. And, and then steps were taken to kind of give this person. Some early feedback. So some people just don't know.

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And, and that should be part of the line management training.

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Yeah, thanks so much harsh. We're in our final minute and I just want to really quickly. First I'm going to run a very quick poll. It is just one question that should pop up on your screen.

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It's just on a scale of one to 10, let us know how you rate this workshop today I promise I'll only leave it up for about 30 seconds because I have more things to say and our final minute.

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today I promise I'll only leave it up for about 30 seconds because I have more things to say in our final minute. This is completely anonymous, it'll just be for our team. So we won't be showing the results but I'll give everybody just 2030 seconds to quickly

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vote.

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Many thanks for all of you sharing your feedback.

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While you're doing that, I just want to say thank you so so much to our three brilliant panelists today thank you for sharing your personal experiences thank you for being so open and for sort of disclosing and putting yourself out there and for being

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such brilliant examples for all of us, we really, really appreciate it. As we're kind of ending in our final sort of 20 seconds. If you're able to really quickly pull up the chat and just share your one word takeaway.

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Helena shared some fantastic messages just one word a sort of phrase, anything that you want to share it, that's going to be your takeaway from today's workshop, what are you going to take back to your team.

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And I'm going to lightning round go round to our panelists Jonathan has already shared his understanding, heart, what's your one word.

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Listen. Listen, I love it and Helen what's your one word.

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Also, listen, listen, amazing, lots of great ones in the chat empathy asked collaboration, flexibility, honest reasonable upfront. Fantastic. Thank you all so much again thanks to everyone for coming and everyone to share to the chat as well thank you

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so much for sharing your own personal experiences, and for being part of this really great productive, and I think very supportive community and conversation.

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I hope to see you all again at another a political workshop will be in touch tomorrow with a follow up email you'll get the recording from today, lots of helpful resources from our speakers, you can find out about more things coming up.

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We've got a feedback workshop tomorrow, which I think follows on quite nicely from some of the things we've talked about today, workshops about inclusive policy design.

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Lots more but in the meantime Thanks so much, if you would like you can come off mute and turn your cameras back on waves off into the rest of the day.

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Thanks so much everybody. Have a lovely rest of the rest of the week.