

Moving at the Speed of Trust: Disability and Transformative Justice
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****This transcript provides a meaning-for-meaning summary to facilitate communication access. TypeWell speech-to-text service may not be a fully verbatim record of the proceedings.*

[Begin transcript.]

[Link to watch live event: https://youtu.be/TwWdv_uBGNY]

Hope Dector: Hi everyone, we are getting all the tech worked out. We will probably start in just about five minutes. We will be back in a few.

Hi everyone, for anyone who just logged on, I see some more folks, we are just waiting for a few more people and giving folks a few more minutes to access the updated link.

Hi everyone! I think we're ready to get started, I know some folks are still logging on and might need a few minutes but I think we're good to start, I don't want to lose any time.

I'm Hope Dector. I'm the creative director at the Barnard Center for Research on Women, I'm so happy to welcome you all to this event, Moving at the Speed of Trust.

I want to start with a few notes on accessibility, you can find a link for live transcription on the event page or the description on the YouTube page under this video. Thank you to Wendy and Cara from All Hands in Motion for transcribing. Thank you to Darryn and Natalie, our sign language interpreters. We will be keeping the video in gallery mode so they remain visible. We are expecting this talk to take about 2 hours.

We will be talking about non-punitive responses to harm and restorative justice and ways to engage the public and building accountable communities. I am including some links in the event page and youtube description.

I have a few quick notes of thanks. Huge thank you to Mariame Kaba for creating this and reminding us of hope. Thank you to all my coworkers for making these events possible. They are coordinating so much of the work behind the scenes and managing the social media and communications.

If you have a question for Leah and Elliot you can email it, tweet it or use the chat function on the youtube live page. If you are tuning in, I hope you have had a chance to watch the videos on the event page where we talk about how accountable community depend on interdependence and time. As organizers and thinkers, Leah and Elliot have years of practicing practicing restorative justice. Their bios are on the event page. I don't want to take away any more time except to highlight Leah's recent publication and Elliot's work with the Icarus Project.

I've been looking forward for this talk since last April. Leah and Elliot thank you so much for

participating, I am turning over to you now.

Speaker: Hi everyone! How is everyone doing? Elliot how are you?

Speaker: I'm good! My cat is making me nervous, that's her right there, she really likes to be in the sun but I'm worried there will be a situation where she will leap, spill my water and break my laptop.

Thank you to all of the folks doing access support. Darren and Natalie, Hope and others holding down work behind the scenes. Thanks for bearing with us and for breaking the internet! Twelve hundred people signed up! Not stressful at all! We're going to introduce ourselves and talk about what we hope to share. I want to share that disability justice and transformative justice are huge topics We will get to much as possible but maybe not everything, then have a conversation with each other and you. Sound right?

Speaker: Perfect.

Speaker: Want to introduce yourself?

Speaker: Hi, I'm Elliott Fukui, I use he him pronouns. I arrived at this work through my own lived experience of being institutionalized and forcibly medicated in my young life. I do this work to be connected with those so that none of us are disposable and we all have our needs met and can live our best lives without fear and shame.

Do you want to introduce yourself?

Speaker: Yes, also you have a dog.

Speaker: That's my emotional support dog yes.

Speaker: Hi, I am Leah, I use she and her pronouns, I am calling from Seattle. Pandemic city, like we are all in.

Why do I do this work, I am somebody who is a survivor of a lot of abuse, I was not institutionalized as a kid, Elliot and I were talking about this, dealing with conflict trauma for a long time. So I have a different experience but I was a part of the too much club, really intense abuse.

I came to one of the first places to politically organize, the Psychiatric Survivor Movement, a group of people living in states medicalized as madness, also prison abolitionist. This was my first opportunity being involved in a radical movement. As a survivor activist, I'm a writer and storyteller and I have done a lot of work not in just a nonprofit or one collective.

I coedited the scene that became a book called The Revolution Starts at Home and I helped out with this book in terms of survival strategies. I've also taken a lot of phonecalls, talked through a lot of processes and talked about how do we support survivors. I think of myself as an archivist, collecting and sharing the stories of the real deal to outgrow or replace the state is how I contribute to this work.

[switching transcribers]

Did you want me to intro the goals for our time together?

Speaker: That would be lovely.

Speaker: These are our very not ambitious goals. But this will be a space where people can learn and think about the intersections of where transformative justice and disability justice come together. We want to create a space to talk about initiatives where people in movement spaces are saying that prisons and the police kill us, so we need more psych institutions to help us as people who have been affected. We want to push back on that! We want to create alternatives to policing and forced psychiatric care for those who are experiencing emotional crises and hard times.

We want to create a space to look at how ableism is in the stories as abled survivors, and how ableism comes into our experiences of violence. Whether that's police brutality against disabled people, especially black, indigenous and people of color, or imminent violence in our families and relationships and institutional violence.

We also wanted to talk about the solutions. Lots of different strategies people use including something I like to talk about which is disability justice principles when applied to transformative justice work can make the TJ work feel less stressful. What I put in the book was "not a hot mess of hell and death" for example.

I'm getting the notes. Sorry I speak to fast. I will slow down.

That's some of the stuff we will cover. Know we will go to around an hour from now and then take a break and then we will come back and do Q&A stuff.

We want to encourage you to be as disabled as you need to be. If you need to take a break, or step out. If you are stemming or doing whatever at home, please do that. Please use this multi accessible space.

There's a link to the live captioning on the event page I think.

Speaker: The handout.

We made a little handout with some definitions that might be helpful and I think these are posted on the webpage and under the youtube video. So we have done definitions and how to get in touch with us.

Speaker: Were we going to read those out loud?

Speaker: Just take a look!

Speaker: Can I say two just to help my brain?

When I come together in a space and we talk about disability I do this thing that a lot of us do in the disability justice movement and I like to say, what is disability and what's disability justice?

Lots of people are like, "I feel bad but I don't know." So it's important to start by naming the definition

we use of disability, because it's really broad.

This is from the Showing up for Racial Justice disability Justice caucus.

"When we speak of disability we celebrate the brilliance and vitality of a vast community of people of a community with non-normative bodies and minds whether the disability is visible or not."

This includes though is not limited to, folks who identify as disabled, chronically ill, deaf, mad neurodivergent and more.

I wanted to say that, period. I think it's important for me to name as a chronically ill neurodiverse mad person. There are lots of ways to be disabled. Our experiences are not the same. We have to learn stuff from each other. And when people hear that definition, they might ask "I'm chronically ill. Does that count?" "Does mental health disability or madness count?"

We are a huge conglomeration of peoples and we don't fit into society's idea of normality. We have different experiences. But we all face ableism and the powers that be and the oppression that's thrown at us as people with non normative body and minds.

What's disability justice? Disability justice is a movement building framework invented in 2005 by Patty Burn, Leroy Moore, Lia Mingus, Eli Claire, and Sebastian Margaret. These are all black, Asian, poor white, queer and trans disabled activists. They were sick of black and brown abled movements that were forgetting "disability" and disability rights movements that were really white and had a single issue framework. They wanted to create an intersectional framework that centers the desires and issues and demands of multiply marginalized disabled people.

You can't get rid of ableism without also getting rid of capitalism, colonialism, racism, transphobia, trans misogyny. All the bad things.

I encourage you to look at Skin Tooth and Bone, the Basis of our Movement is Our People. It's a disability justice primer. It's the collective that Patty and Leroy created with its second edition online.

I want to make sure to say this. Black and brown people invent something and then white people ten years later say, I'm going to put that on my cornflakes. They don't say it's by black and brown, queer and trans people. It's a lot of things. But I want to say it's not just the flavor of the month. It's a really deep framework.

Thank you for letting me do that.

You want to go into our first thing?

Speaker: Do I really though?!

We broke this up into different sections to have a conversation with each other. The first thing we wanted to address was Care Not Cops. To minimize the harm of police involvement in emotional crisis we should invest in psych care models.

If you haven't had a lived experience of having 911 called out being put on a 5150 during an emotional crisis or don't understand how dangerous this can be for folks, I want to call this the crime of feeling. And how that in public, particularly for those of us who are racialized, low income, who are houseless or perceived to be, having a feeling is a criminalized act.

It's dangerous out here to have feelings in public. Our police force across the country is not trained to deescalate people and they are not designed to do it. And they don't WANT to do it.

The literal words out of officer Bryan Vasley's [sp?] mouth who murdered Keith Videla [sp?] who was 18 years old, during a schizophrenic episode was, "I don't have time for this shit. I am here to kick ass and take names." This was an officer that shot Keith in front of his own family in his own home. We see these stories all over the country.

This is systemic in a way that we don't have quantifiable data for. Most policing modes of accountability or tracking are self directed. These are internal investigations and things.

I found this stat from San Diego. This studied all officer involved shootings in 358 cases. 81% of the people were impaired by drugs or had mental illness or both.

I think we have to have this conversation about madness in our communities. We are literally being slaughtered out here left and right.

When we have these conversations the idea is that we need more psych intervention, more psych inpatient units for folks. I want to push back on that. Very much so!

As I mentioned I spent a very solid amount of time between the ages of 12 and 19th in day treatment programs and special education classrooms. During that time I was on over 13 different meds. And I was on drugs like abilify, atavan, kolopin, etc. These kept me sedated and sick and left me with side effects that might it impossible for me to be a person at all.

When we think about how we can work with folks who are mad, or are experiencing emotional crisis I want us to think about the spot between DJ and transformative justice. First, I think people think DJ is slow. I don't think we are slow. I think we are intentional. And I think we are intentional and methodical and proactive. We have all this experience of not having our needs met and getting the resources we need, some of us are far more prepared to deal with crisis than neurotypical folks!

So what can you do to show up for movements? That's excellent. But we don't need help.

[Switching transcribers.]

The last thing I wanted to say before passing back to Leah, the more we are proactive, the more we can allow for folks to have agency and whatever the response is going to be to those incidences. The more we think proactively about our madness and how we would like to receive support, the more we can prevent. The more we can prevent police interaction or the need for psychiatric intervention. Justice is a practice and a perpetual process and can only move at the speed of each person in that work, that's what Leah talks about, how do we understand and move from a teaching framework and how does that create access and accountability.

And I think we have some solid things.

What do you think Leah?

Leah: One thing I wanted to say, when you talked about people getting shot and in crisis, we need more beds and hospitals, it is true that there aren't enough fucking beds anywhere. Whether in physical or mental health beds, there is a shortage of doctors and healthcare. It's also like people are like are you saying I'm bad for calling 911? I was hearing the person next door getting hit, screw you.

She talks about a moment where she was supporting a black gay man who had been assaulted and someone called with tips and someone was like how can you support this? Aren't you an abolitionist? Sometimes people feel bad for calling 911, but in the essay they talk about doing the best we can with what we have. I think some people might be watching this and saying shit are you saying I'm a bad disability justice person because I thought about 51 50'ing a person? We are all trying to use the resources we have. I have questioned bringing someone to the hospital myself before because I was running out of options. We are building a plane as we fly it.

Adjuris [jsp?] talks about creating alternatives for calling 911. There's private ambulance companies, going to an outpatient program with someone, doing different harm reduction programs. Then we have someone saying I'm scared someone is going to kill my loved ones. I want us to push for something bigger.

Eli Clareon has written about this gap in the movement where you have movements of psychiatric survivors who have been fighting against institutionalism for years. Thanks, I'm seeing someone requested trigger warnings and I'll pay attention to that. With some of them, majority white, ADAP which is an organization that does not necessarily jump up to that. People were comparing nursing homes to jail. Then you have anti prison and policing movements that aren't always aware of the disability movements that exist. And we ask what will it take for the movements to come together and I think that's what some of us are trying to do.

I wanted to bring it back to Earth and tell a couple stories to illustrate what this could look like in real life. Elliot, I know you put in the document, what are some of the ways you and your communities have had to negotiate dealing with emotional crises without calling 911 and the first thing I thought about was a story in my life in my early 20s and a lot of people really looking nuts. You know the person who got whispered about and for me I had just gotten out of an abusive relationship, I was in chronic pain and dealing with my sexual abuse history and dealing with complex trauma.

I didn't look like a good activist. I am about to be 45 and people are like you are in this leadership and I didn't always look this typical. Back then I was crying a lot, really in it, talking about it a lot and afraid constantly if someone would question if I was OK. When I think about what helped me, which is just me but there might be overlap with others, it was 1998, I could afford a basement apartment that was \$450 and I could live by myself. There was an art project in Toronto and the artist was a mad photographer who was photographing people in her own home and she talked about being in a safe space, being able to scream in a pillow, do the dishes or not, so because I was living in a city with rent control, that helped.

I worked at the time at the Womens Counseling Referral Center. We were very working class, we used the words women of color, crisis centered, it was invented for people who need a therapist who is not a white lady from the suburbs. We were like, “okay therapists, if you want to work with us you need to offer a sliding scale.”

I know now people are waiting for Medicaid therapists or have to wait a long time for an appointment. A lot of helpful therapies aren't covered by Medicaid. I had this great therapist and I could also afford it. I also had space within the movement where there were a whole bunch of people who were nuts and we also hung out together and it was okay to be weird. Things like meaningful work and friendships, they weren't a magic pill, but they were things that helped me come to a place where some healing was happening, I was feeling better on my own terms.

I think that one thing we want to talk about that we skipped over was the word stigma that gets used a lot, often I see it in mainstream media and defeating the stigma and I think its used in a narrow way. Yea, there's a lot of stigma for being nuts or having mental health stuff and specifically in black, indigenous communities of color, ideas of that's for white people, get it together! So if you are visibly quote on quote crazy, you may be vulnerable to harm. It's the double edged sword of saying what's going on with me and being judged which makes things harder.

I think of Trans Lifeline which is a support line run by and for trans and non conforming people. They have a rule, they are the only crisis and suicide attitude that they will never call emergency services on you without your consent whereas others do active rescue, which is whether you want it or not.

The reason Trans Lifeline has done this is because they say, we know people won't speak freely about not being judged. They won't trust us with that if we don't respect it. I'm interested to see if there's a study, that says yea we support a lot of people who would not have otherwise called a crisis line.

People often, they have this thing where they are scared for their friend having a hard time and they want to rush in because they are so scared, something that we talked about a lot when I worked at Generation Five, sometimes when people hear of these instances they want to run in and do something which may come from a good place but you may have to pause and say, “Hey, survivor, what do you need at this time?”

We have to remember it's not about you, slow down, hold some space, “Want to get some food, play video games?” In a way, that might not make sense, but I think in the abled world there's a lot of emphasis on, “Must go in and do something, action!” Sometimes doing what looks like doing nothing is actually doing something. And a lot of doing nothing looks like in times of emotional crisis is saying you have autonomy. You are doing something that doesn't thrill me, but you have choices.

I know it's more complex because it might be dangerous, but I know for folks like me that ramping up and have to do this, sometimes that let me sit with you, do you need help going to sleep? Is helpful. I hope that was helpful with the trigger warnings, I know it wasn't graphic but there were mentions of things. I think we will be mentioning things like psychiatrization and suicidality but we can leave out graphic details. Elliot, you froze! Are you there?

I am just going to see if he froze or I froze.

Speaker: Hey Leah, can you see ? I think Elliot is frozen right now, I'm going to give him a minute, if he doesn't come back I'll kick him out of Zoom and invite him back in. Oh, looks like that happened on it's own.

Speaker: Is it OK if I talk a bit while you do that?

Speaker: Yea, talk more, I'm going to mute myself now.

Leah: Thanks everyone. A couple things I wanted to share, heart stories and realities and what are people doing instead and some options. It feels similar to me, I know people have heard of the classic transformative justice conversation, OK no prisons but what about the people who do the really bad stuff? So it's like what about the people who are having a really bad time?

So I wanted to talk about crisis houses or respite houses. I wanted to send out a link about one in London that's been around for 30 years. They just wanted to create a place for women to go to, just have it be this house that's accessible but doesn't look like a hospital. You are not home but also not institutionalized.

A woman who worked there said 90% of what they do is just listening and not being freaked out when people cry. We don't do bed checks, we respect privacy, we have free massage and acupuncture. I think the link is in the resources. This is growing, there's still not enough, but I can think of some in New York, Toronto, San Francisco and some in smaller towns.

The idea is there is non coercive help and support, not just your friends and family. Sometimes you don't want them seeing your shit and also, some people are like I don't actually have a lot of friends and family I'm in touch with. So that's one thing I wanted to name. There's this great group called Alternatives to Calling the Police in Chicago and they have a great infographic with 25 alternatives for calling the police, things like drop in clubhouse.

[switching transcribers]

Safety for Self Advocates is another great resource. There's been push by the police.

****TRIGGER WARNING**** police violence against autistic people.

Because of this, there's this idea of "if we just knew they were autistic they wouldn't be hurt by cops!" So there's now this idea of an autistic people registry and then autistic people get wristbands. That's part of fascism and I don't want the state knowing where I am and that I'm autistic.

As a paradigm of looking at it, the Autistic Self Advocacy Network which is by and for and led by autistic people, they have many resources. Information about dealing with abuse from care givers and others, support areas and ways to reach out to others. Often it goes back to that classic conversation where people will argue, "You want to end prison but what about the murders and rapists? What do you replace the prisons with?"

We aren't pulling out a pin and replacing it with another one, but we are throwing the peg board out. We want to start with a different paradigm. We want human rights and demilitarization of the police.

We want people to have more community with each other. We want an end to ableism. We want to make it okay to date others that are not autistic and we want an end to partner violence with this reasoning of like, well no one else will date you, so you have to put up with this shitty partner.

Was there anything else?

Quickly, Oakland Power Projects has a great toolkit *Maybe You Don't Have To Call 911*. They have broken down stuff in there like a simple guide to being with someone. Like let's say you are walking down the street and you hear someone having a hard time. They are like, okay. Reassess your ideas of what's normal. You could even introduce yourself and say "hey, can I call someone for you?"

Take no for an answer if that's it. You can even ask them if they want to go somewhere more private. But I wanted to say that's a resource. People don't know what else to do. It's hard to think of the alternatives in the moment unless you prep for it.

Hi Elliot. You are back.

Speaker: I am! Sorry y'all.

Speaker: I just talked about deescalation and the self advocacy tip. WWW.AUTISTICADVOCACY.ORG. Or if it's not ORG then it's COM. You wanted to talk about some things?

Elliott Fukui: Yes! Firstly. Speaking to diagnosis and how that's a form of policing and barrier in lots of ways, for me as someone with multiple diagnoses, and I will be open about this because I have been open about it, I have diagnoses which are stigmatized and criminalized. I am a person with identity disorder and bipolar disorder. I am a person with PTSD and I'm someone with agoraphobia.

This combination in particular makes lots of different things difficult for me to access in life. Because of how I was treated in psych facilities and how I was treated in other organized spaces I didn't talk about my diagnoses for many years in organizing work.

Finding the Icarus Project and finding community organizing, it got me out of the woods. I don't think I could have gotten to non-med complaint if I hadn't found these folks first.

There are differences in how me move through the world and I found so much inspiration through cross-disability research. I looked at how others did it that was a critical piece for me.

Through using a combination of mad-mapping, which is creating a template you can offer to folks saying "this is what's up" I have been doing that and wellness planning with folks for over 15 years. It's how I am able to stay off meds and out of psych wards.

Everyone is in their own process. But for me, the beauty of my safety team is we have figured it out together. It wasn't about just me and my disabilities, or me and my episodic states, but it's about us as a community and supporting and protecting each other. That values me as a disability person who doesn't just need care constantly but recognizing that I have care and resources to help and offer others.

Our healing process and my team's healing process is combined. I can't separate my wellness or accountability from the people I built this with. That takes work. Thinking about crisis response we think about reaction. The fastness. How quickly can we do something?

We are successful though because it takes a long time. It's about trust building and triggers and trauma responses and having these difficult responses and discussions around privilege and class. Talking about these hard things. It has taken a long time. It takes time to talk about these things that we feel shame around. But removing that shame and stigma means I don't find myself waking up outside or in the back of a cop car or waking up on a bench. I would experience these things frequently before I asked for help.

Then asking was a community building tool. And it helped others be honest about their experiences. Or like my mom had that. Or my father did.

At that level of communication people get down to sit with you when you are triggered, but then if you start yelling, that's a trigger for me, so I have someone else move in. When you meet each other in those different places and do it from a place of agency, my team has consented and we have written documentation. There's a clause for if I need to be institutionalized, where would I be okay going to. That's in advance. So when we arrive in a crisis moment we know who is communicating with who. What places are okay to go to. What types of treatments we feel good about. These things are communicated.

Having that reassurance in my life allows me to be a part of the world. But there are others who weren't able to escape. People are being held against their will, and being forcibly drugged. I am not dangerous just due to my diagnosis. I can become dangerous if my baseline needs to not met and if I am terrified and that's true of all!

I think also too, if you are abled, you have feelings. You just as well can have an emotional crisis. Maybe not as many as we have! But we all experience grief, anger, loss. We all have triggers that come up that we didn't know about before.

Anyone can move into that emotional crisis. So as communities if we create these things like wellness plans and mad-maps it allows us in those moments where we can't communicate, like if I'm disassociated, then my team knows what's okay. Then we check in afterwards. What worked? What didn't work? Who is mad at who? What would we do different next time?

Creating that infrastructure and making it collective. Know you have each other for lots of things. Like if you have to go to the hospital. Or if someone's parent passes. Can we show up?

Thinking about the intersection of disability justice and transformative justice it's from a reactive place. The shit went down. We have to respond immediately. But shift it to if we are proactive. Everyone takes a self examination. What are my boundaries? What are my triggers? What's the healing work I need to do so I can arrive more for my people and for me?

A way I did that was before COVID-19 for about a year, and I've been unemployed for over 2 years, which is typical for most of us living with my diagnoses. But I started every Monday I would open my house. It was called Magic Box Monday. Hello, Buffy the Vampire Slayer Nerds. But it was a space

for those who were unemployed could go and chill out. We would help each other with forms like for benefits and food stamps and pass along job listings. We shared food, made music together, etc.

Doing stuff where you build intentional community through what you are passionate about is important. It's about living for something. When you take control as a people, where you realize you deserve this and deserve to live your dreams, to go to school, to have access to the same things. The ADA passed 20 years ago. We still don't see it happening. The more you can lean into our communities and the less it's about psych care and more about how we all deserve to live our best lives, to do that I have to look at my patterns and my triggers. Then when there's conflict it's easier.

Thinking about the intersection this is the creative visioning master space. We are at a unique opportunity to expand that further now. It doesn't have to be about the response but what can we do to build? Sorry. I just talked a lot.

Leah: You are good! I saw you put down "magic box?" Oh my god. I wanted to know what that was. It's so cool.

Heads up. We have 14 minutes before a break.

I want to go through something things quickly.

Elliot I love Magic Box Mondays so much. It's a powerful example of how a disability community comes together and how it's life giving. I know there are people on the call who are like, "yeah, but I don't have that."

So let's talk about COVID-19 and disabled intimate partner violence and risk. I have a cute slide that I use a lot with the Spice Girls on it and it reads -- "if you wanna be my lover, you gotta get with my meds, sweat pants, pain flare, weird sense of humor about everything." I did a talk about TJ and DJ where I had that and then I had this thing from the disability justice center at the university of Arizona. They had a campaign about domestic violence a social justice issue. As disabled people we are more at risk and there are no great stats around intimate violence.

It meant a lot to me as a disabled survivor. They were like, yeah, that abuse can look not typical. It can look like, "you don't have that disability." Or, "I'm not going to do your care. I'm going to isolate you" or lots of other things.

The intersection of ableism and desirability politics is something I want to talk about. We don't get to talk enough about one of the many places we are oppressed is this place where people get the message that we are not datable. Or friend-able. It's not just about sexual relationships, but --

Elliott Fukui: Or not hireable.

Speaker: Yeah, or not swipe-right-able. Sorry, I'm not on Tinder.

I have been in relationships where at the time I was like, well this isn't abusive. But then that person literally laughed at me when my hips went out and I fell. Or they laughed --

****TRIGGER WARNING**** for ableist abuse.

Sorry, I'm not tracking as well. I apologize for but being better about the TWs.

That was a long time ago. Then 4 years ago, I was like, that's ableist abuse. There are a million different examples.

Lots of us are in these small rooms of our friendships, loverships, or partnerships. And because we are intimate with these people, we are more open about our disability needs. Turns out that person is not cool with it, and they lash out. Or vomits their ableism on us.

I am an ex hotline counselor. I know the power and control wheel but I didn't see things like "my partner laughs at my access needs" on the wheel. So I'm like, oh, they are just jerks.

Sorry we didn't have the resources but it's a PDF. Look up "Disabled Power and Control Wheel." There's an accessible version of it. The first one though is a PDF that has tiny type so that's ironic.

But it's something to look out for in your relationship.

[Switching transcribers.]

There's often a nexus where there's this message of you're lucky anyone will date or hire you, and it gets complicated. Or dynamics around caretaking, unless there's stuff like proactive, we have time to check in about how this is going? Sometimes people don't know how to set limits and resentment builds up. I don't see that being named a lot as something we deal with. To offer, not a magic solution, but some things I have seen that changed that, where I have seen the growth in the disability community, especially online, as complicated as social media has been, various platforms have become places where lots of progress happens. We can be in bed because events are not accessible and I've seen the breakdown of that isolation and how it's been so key and people noticing, I deserve better than that.

A forum for when people are like I don't know if I'm making too much of a big deal about this and people show support. Or total strangers showing up to say I can send you this extra shower chair. I think we have already altered our relationship with these words to say what is beautiful and ugly and that's a lifelong process. I've witnessed this online community showing up for each other and coordinating to help people get groceries. I got brought into disability justice in 2008 and it's both beautiful and complicated.

You can start where you are, one of the first disability justice gatherings I was at, me and three other chronically ill femmes of color were whispering to each other about our illnesses but we weren't out and proud and one was like, "want to come over and just lay on heating pads and talk?" You can be like hi, I'm the one person I know, anyone else in Omaha Nebraska and have a supper club or hang out online? And I think that's one thing the disability community is irritated with now, like all these zoom hangouts and dance parties that aren't accessible.

I want to add two things, one of which is I promised I would talk about how do we bring DJ to TJ. I think the thing about disability justice is moving at the speed of our body minds. A question I've got a lot is that people say this is going to take forever and for TJ specifically, something I saw happen a lot,

was people hearing about an incident of violence and people are like we gotta fix it! Then everyone crashes and burns. Also, people who cause harm, it's going to take more than two weeks for them to acknowledge, I did that. Also survivors don't always know what they need right away, maybe they just want to be in a small room for a bit. Instead of running towards the fire we need to walk towards the with intention.

It can be as spoons allow, or as we have the capacity to do it. It doesn't have to be a four year slow process but being like here's what I have the spoons or energy to do, it's just this much and that's my boundary Or I just did this small intervention. I think there can be everything in the middle. One of my friends told me when she tells someone to calm down, that's TJ, it's harm reduction. In the ten principles of disability justice, we all contribute as our body minds can. Can I say one more thing?

That's one thing I wanted to say and then ... I wanted to go back to the stigma abuse. I have been thinking a lot lately about something I have seen in my own life, I think there's often, we live in a world where people with disabilities are stigmatized as monsters and we push back against that. Normally serial killers are white fascist dudes.

Then when someone who is disabled or causes harm I see a lot of stigma get deployed or a lot of us come up with, well you know your parent has that condition so they can't help it. But what's the line or space in the middle when we cause harm to not be stigmatized in the worst way in the world but also be accountable? Sometimes people are like just stop being that way! And the person is like I can't just snap my fingers, it's normally the lack of support and tools. I'm really lucky that it just took me a year on a waiting list to speak to a real expensive lady who has skills, it took about 10 years to be like if anyone knows about this, I will lose all my friends. I have been so ashamed and freaked out at times with no deescalation tools and I was surrounded by people who were like *gasp*!

Speaker: DID is survivorship. People develop –

Speaker: Right! You get it because you survive!

Speaker: It's not biological, there's something we have to pull apart. If I had access to TJ as a child, how different would mine or my family's life had been? That's the other part. We have to talk about that, a lot of people with diagnoses are trauma survivors and then we are criminalized and pathologized.

Speaker: It's my pleasure. More support, I have a longer story about being yelled at and talking too much and someone said I was abusing my privilege and I was like no I'm autistic! I don't know what time it is ... it's pretty much hey you are not understanding that I can't track time. What helps is me getting a watch and being like it's five minutes. Or direct communication like hey it's five minutes.

Speaker: Yea, let's take a pee break and take questions.

Speaker: Thanks for hanging out everyone. There's a bunch of resources in the slide deck on the event page. If it's not accessible, do you know if it's screen reader compatible? This email brownstargirl@gmail.com, it's up there, will get you on Microsoft word.

Speaker: BCRW will also be putting together those links in the slide deck, we'll add the other ones

mentioned to that list. Over the next week we'll go through the transcript and add them.

Speaker: Wow, thank you! I was like I'll just do it! Then wait, support!

Okay, we'll be back in 7-10 minutes and attempt to answer your questions!

[Switching transcribers]

[Break.]

Leah: Hey. Welcome back.

Elliott: Back again!

Leah: We got a bunch of questions. That's great.

Elliot, could you read the questions?

Elliott: You want me to read the first one?

Leah: Is it too big? The lessons one?

Elliott: Yeah.

Are there particular lessons, strategies, from disability justice organizing that you would recommend that campaign organizers draw on to ... in our work.

Leah Lakshmi: Yes! [Laughing.] Can I start?

You answered your own question. Make space for grief and pain in your work. One big thing that DJ has been doing for a long time that's different from able organizing is our bodies and minds are not separate from the organizing. So if you have to take a big poop, or change your colostomy bag or cry, it's not like a boohoo go home and do some self care. We have meetings around someone who is in bed, we Zoom in.

Access check ins, like asking about what your access needs are for the day as a grounding space where the work comes from FIRST and then work from that.

Access check-ins, like starting your meetings with checking in and asking what people's access needs are and about their access realities, as my friend likes to call it. Have that as a grounding space where the work comes out of, rather than it being an afterthought.

I tell people in DJ 101, who might be new to learning about disability justice, I would say what could your work look like IF you started from a place of where are the disabled people and where are the disabled issues? Do that in all the work you do. Do that first.

Looking at different disabled organizing as models. Like look at how they do it. I think about groups like The Disability Justice Culture Club in East Oakland and the coalition work they do with Fat Rose and those people in The No Body Is Disposable Campaign. Health Justice Commons. We are disabled people who are dealing with incredibly grief-filled things.

Like the power cut-offs by PG & E [sp?] that were going to kill everybody. Possible what we are calling ICU-genics. That's medical rationing and discrimination in triage so that disabled or fat and/or elder people don't get that ventilator.

They were organizing against those power cut offs from the Fall, and an organizer was talking about all these people and how they were plugging in. Like one person was handling fundraising, and this person was answering texts and phone calls from a hotline they set up for the elderly and fat, and disabled people who were worried about losing power from their ventilator and asking if they knew someone with a generator. Another person was cooking food.

There are all these ways to plug in. Unpacking and trying to Cleanse yourself of the super activist with no needs that goes 24/7 as the only good activist.

We see people in these moments who don't give disability justice credit. Make room to ask how people are doing.

Disability justice understands about access. I know when I have a hard time emotionally I don't want to talk about it. I need to compartmentalize and keep going.

I think in terms of this being an issue or a strategy, just pay attention to the fact that disability justice created so many tools people are using now. The zoom call now, with the transcription and the sign interpretation. Ask and pay disabled people how to do this. Because we know how to do this. Give them finders fees, as my friend says.

And look at the disabled people already doing the work. From an issues perspective, join the fight against the pre-planned murder of fat, or elder people that we are organizing against now. They are saying we don't have good quality of life, so they are going to take us off the respirator. Throw down on that.

I see more mainstream social justice people be like, oh is something happening? And I'm like, Yeah, we are fighting for our lives. You can support us campaign-wise, or you can just send us a pizza! We are stressed out. We are worried our community is going to die. So know that! [Laughing.]

We have lots of resiliency. We know about living with the threat of death, so ask us. You are asking us now. I don't have the words.

People ask us if we want to organize with them, but I've been self isolating since early March. I check in 8 hours a day with people. My friend is a disabled elder. She was exposed and she needed us to call her multiple times a day. If she doesn't answer then we have a plan for her.

Just know there's lots of organizing that's going on right now that you don't see. Ask people what they are doing and how they are doing and listen to the answer.

Elliot?

Did you have something to add? You are muted. You are back!

Speaker: We can go on to the next one.

Speaker: I just did lots on that one.

Speaker: Can you talk about what transformative justice and reporting children sexual abuse looks like?

I'll do that one.

First, I recommend folks check out the Bay Area Transformative Justice Crew. Those folks have developed some amazing tools and strategies.

I would also check out Creative Interventions. That one too has amazing tools, ideas and strategies.

As someone who did report and had state intervention as a young person, I can tell you what I wish had happened!

I wish that I had known what mandatory reporting was. I was 12 at the time and I didn't know what it was. So I think it's very important especially if you have a child or young adult in your life who might identify with madness that its important to know your rights, including minors.

I wish I had had any kind of adult who was willing to talk about their own experiences with CSA or institutionalization. It was not until I was older and with the diagnoses I had, there were no models for anything outside living in a ward. The only media was Cybil [sp?] There was nothing for me to look to and say another world is possible.

It's scary and terrifying live on youtube to say that I have DID, for the other mad kids out there, we are still here! We are still here! It's not always cute and lie and say it gets better! But we found each other. So the more you are out about your shit the more you will find your people.

I also wish that anything had been centered around me. Everything was centered around the person who caused harm, and the police and child protective services. No adult asked me what I wanted or needed.

If you are an adult with a relationship to children and young people, it's critical. I think I could have moved faster, I could have come to myself and my community faster had I known it existed, and known there was survival beyond. Offer that. If you have resources post them. You don't know who in your life is not telling you about what they are living or experiencing. We are opening doors to others.

If you are afraid, that fear is real. We have to show people that we are worth fighting for and we should be valued. We are worth fighting for. If you don't see your reflection now, we are out here. Put out

your image so you can find your reflection.

Speaker: Two resources.

Look up Generation Five's Ending Childhood Sexual Abuse. We excerpted some of it in Beyond Survival. When a kid discloses, listen to them and do everything you can to make it stop. Work at the kid's pace. Let them know it's not their fault. Do things to help them.

There's a great piece in a book about being a survivor and their experience with reporting. Reaching out to their stepsibling who was also experiencing abuse at the time and the ways they were able to support each other and that's when their sibling was a minor.

There's no magic solution but there are lots of possibilities for intervention. Thank you.

I keep saying "real quick." But the next question, in one of the videos someone said "it's either prison or transformation, so what if the harm doers don't consent to transformative? Is it strictly either or in TJ? "

There's gray area, magenta area, whatever you want to call it. People who cause harm they will just say, that wasn't me. My ex from over 22 years ago is still completely in denial and my parents also.

There are lots of examples out there, but sometimes the person who causes harm stays in denial. So you have to do what you have to do.

Your life is your reparation sometimes. I would say the gray area is consequence. People pay for what they do and they pay for it in the lives they live. I wrote that to my parents as I left when I was 22.

Sometimes evil wins. Sometimes it doesn't. But I think about the examples in communities against rape and abuses where there's an example of someone being called out on their behavior. But they didn't admit it. They were running a music club. So the community outside them said, okay. We want to pull our power back and create our own alternative.

And I have worked on processes and we just decided to work on harm reduction. We told them we were watching them and they needed to stop. They didn't stop being a jerk but they stopped doing the shit they were doing. My ex will never own up to it, but I'm going to keep doing my work. We are all in this mess. We have 11 minutes.

[Switching transcribers.]

What's up?

Speaker: we have a lot of questions coming in.

Speaker: We do. Do you want to take one? I like the college student one.

Speaker: Do you want to take that one?

Speaker: Is there any that speak to you?

Speaker: I can take one. I mean, DJ was invented in prisons. Finding ways to take care of ourselves under extreme duress and crazy circumstances and what we did. We didn't have this language, I was 12, but they never let the eating disorder kids, their diets were so controlled. So I would save all my butter packets so I could give them to them since they weren't allowed to have them. It was the little ways that we could ..

We had regular kids and 3 days kids, those of us there for 72 hours and those there more frequently. One regular, if we were like man no one wants to go we this bullshit therapy today, we would throw a party or act of defiance so would all get to go to our rooms. You would have someone waiting in the doorway if they needed a hug because touching was not allowed. Some kids would get no physical affection. I don't know how you can talk about healing if you can't even connect on a basic level, not that touch is for everyone, but for some.

It was the ways we would take care of each other after people came back from isolation. We would hide candy and share with kids who didn't have families bringing them candy. In any situation, it's always ways to find community and show your principles and values. I could have shut down and said fuck the world and everyone and honestly I don't blame anyone who decides to go that path. But, I want to choose love, care, transformation and we can all do that even in prison. Prisoners are doing that right now, organizing, taking care of each other. People in psych wards are doing that.

We know they have shut down emotional crisis units and cops have been given all different types of powers right now. In any circumstances, you have a decision to make about how and who you want to be in the world and even when they throw the ugliest shit at you and take every sense of self and purpose that you have, you are always worth more than that and when you fight for yourself you fight for all of us and we deserve that, we deserve to be free.

Speaker: Wow, you're beautiful. All of that. I want to shout out of a few things about police getting more rights right now. There's a toolkit out right now talking about how quarantine differs from martial laws, etc. and what your rights are in the moment. I also wanted to talk about how do we do DJ and TJ in the moment, people are rioting to get masks. I just did a phone session where the prisoners were like let everyone go who is older, get masks, I think in terms of these institutions and what different coalitions are doing. The Alabama lawsuit that just happened that said no, take that legalized ICUgenics, that's discriminatory, supporting those things are important right now. Giving someone a kit who is going into the hospital or ICU or nursing home right now, what they consent to or not, that's really important right now to prepare on your communities. I was speaking at a committee last week and I was like we need to go outside of nursing home and hold signs and say don't kill our people.

Mad people are organizing and something we did in Toronto was on Queens street outside of the psych ward, people organized and got a patient counsel, people in the institution were on the counsel and got to fight. Push when there's abuse, push against abuse and forced treatment. I also think about those people who are like crazy and disabled folks who got inside to be the one cool art therapy worker. Look where's there people already fighting so we can not die.

Sorry, the [inaudible] Center outside of Boston for kids who have been brutalized, there's been so much movement in the community to stop the treatment of those children being done by youth and supports.

Look it up, check it out, know where that work is happening and support it and support yourself in the process.

I'm looking at that one, right here.

Want to read that one?

The question is how can we support and encourage LGBT people and support people for their gender identity and sexual orientation.

Speaker: Yea. Right, I think it's also important to note that being trans is also still being pathologized. It is important for those of us who are out, to anyone currently in this situation, as someone who has survived it, you are so not alone.

The ways that we can support people in violent situations is like we've been saying, check in on folks, repost resources that you see that you think might be applicable. I think sending messages of love and affirmation and gratitude for our young, especially now in this moment, I'm like wow we fucked up and left y'all a mess! Send all the love you have and if you have money give young disabled and LGBTQ youth your money, this stimulus package isn't going to do shit for a good chunk of us but even knowing, having that \$5 to go get Taco Bell saved me from going over the deep end. Asking folks what do you need and what would you like? Do not say you can do shit you can't do, especially for young people in survivor mode. If you don't have the capacity, let people know, find another resource. But it's better to say you can't do something.

Speaker: Or own it if you fuck up. Being like sorry, I bit off more than I can chew and you can be mad at me. There's also chapters in different cities, ways you can connect, LGBTQ people who are shunned, we can connect through different networks. Going online and finding what feels best.

Speaker: Being a mentor in a good way. Elliot when you said choose love it reminds me of the book Choose Love where [author] talks about being thrown into this role and having negative experiences with mentors and also talking about, there's so many of us who are grown queer and trans who can be here and be like you can have sex, or not, or be your gender, your body is sacred, check out this Instagram or book. We can be in kinship with each other and offer what you can.

Real quick, there's a question about how do we support college students who are psychiatric or trauma survivors and pathology on campuses? Yes! But I want to say real quick, hot tips. Work to create a peer space that doesn't require mandatory reporting or have a social worker. There was a mad group at a college and they had to work really hard and the administration was worried about liability and we pushed and said no, this is peer based, we don't need that.

Creating that space, I support bending the law when it comes to reporting, and if you can't be creative about how we've always been, like if you say these magic words I'll have to drop a dime. But what supports do you need? And we'll keep it there. The thing of students being pushed into medical leave, losing your money and insurance. I think it means systemically pushing for accommodations, pushing for part time, when you are already worked too much it's like OK, it's called independent study and I'm going to see if I can help you with this stuff you need.

Speaker: It's also your right to have reasonable accommodation. I went to three different colleges because transphobia and being crazy at the same time is a lot. At my third college I got the courage to be like I can do this, I can not come in for every class because I am banana crap so if you force me, I'm gonna have to leave. Once you have are ADA letter they get a little shook. It doesn't matter if we have ADA if we are not using it. That's your money, you are worth getting the education you need and if people fuck with you go to legal aid right away.

Speaker: We know in terms of the access center that looks at your proof and decides whether you get accommodations. Some protect the students and others the bottom line of the university. I know many people try and can't get it, I could not get it. I was always let to class and getting penalized and I was like I can't walk this far and they were like where's your proof? And I was like uhhh, some professors are willing to listen and work it out. If you do get the paper and you have three minutes of time, you can say I have an access need and it's this. If you say I have arthritis, they may start telling you what your disability is. Legally, you are supposed to be like this is what I need and you don't have to say it's because of my catheter or schizophrenia or something.

We're getting told we have to wrap up, but hope this hasn't been a waste of your time.

Speaker: Thanks everyone so much and for everyone making this accessible as well. We have a lot more questions that we didn't get to but we'll post more information after the event as well as the transcript, Spanish translation. Keep your eyes on the event page and we'll keep updating.

Speaker: Thank you Elliot, you're brilliant.

Speaker: Thank you, I'm going to unplug now.

Speaker: Okay, we'll stay on.

[End transcript.]

****This transcript provides a meaning-for-meaning summary to facilitate communication access. TypeWell speech-to-text service may not be a fully verbatim record of the proceedings.*