

StreamBox

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>> Marina: Hello and welcome to day three of our five day webinar series called life made accessibility in honor of national accessibility week which takes place from May 31st to June 6. National accessibility week is a time when accessibility and inclusion are promoted across communities and workplaces. And the time to celebrate the contributions of Canadians with disabilities. It is an opportunity to recognize the efforts of Canadians who are actively removing barriers and ensuring persons with disabilities have an equal chance to participate in all aspects of Canadian society.

My name is Marina Doste I work for the city of Kitchener as an inclusion services coordinator and today I am your host. Our event life made accessible is an opportunity to see an opportunity to lives presented to you. By listening and learning we hope it will give you an understanding of the paths some individuals need to take. With understanding we hope it will lead to a world more accessible. Today's webinar we will look at the labor of living with a disability. But before we begin I would like to mention that the spirit of this eefrpt is an opportunity to listen, ask and learn. Our panelists will be sharing personal experiences and perspectives, this is their story, they do not speak on behalf of all individuals living with a disability. We encourage you to connect and ask questions to our panelists throughout the webinar using the Q&A ochgs at the bottom of your screen. The last 10 to 15 minutes of our time together will be dedicated to answering your questions. Please remember to be appropriate and courteous. Video interpreters are available for this event please change your view to gallery view to see them. Captioning is also available which you can select at the bottom of your screen. A very big thank you to the city of Waterloo and city of Kitchener for sponsoring our interpreters captions and transcription services for today. If you're using a computer with a screen reader you can navigate your webinar options using the tab key. If you're joining us from an iPhone app using voice over your webinar options are along the bottom of the screen to activate the buttons use a single finger double tap. I would like though introduce our moderator Ashley Shaw. Ashley works for the Canadian national institute for the blind as coordinator and

strategic writing and accessible community engagement. She's passionate about community information and information accessibility and she loves curling up with a good book and cup of coffee over to you.

>> Ashley: Thank you Marina and welcome everyone. Living day-to-day with a disability can mean countless additional steps for the person with a disability, their family and caregivers. Making special arrangements for tasks of daily living, attending medical appointments, managing workplace and educational accommodations, purchasing special equipment. These are just a few examples of the numerous additional considerations that living with a disability presents. Our panelists will discuss these extra steps and focus on the digital and systemic hidden barriers in our community. So let's meet our panelists for today. Joining us today we have Karen lord. Karen lord lives in Kitchener and is a certified yoga teacher with a specialty in laughter yoga. Karen also has two part-time jobs in the hospitality industry. She lives in a housing co-op and has a rich network of family and friends she loves music and plays drums. In the Waterloo community band. Karen is joined today by her facilitator Tanya Williams. An independent graphic facilitator with Waterloo region facilitation community network for facilitation. Tanya Williams has been using person centered sorry Tanya has been using person centered planning and facilitation with individuals to realize their dreams and offer unique contributions to their community since 2006. Tanya is currently an artistic associate with multicultural theater space a context artist with a liminal space agency and monastery and founder of the Ontario region improvisation jam. KW contact jam and friends of the floor dance theater. Amy Ross is a resident of Waterloo and a public service professional. She has a postgraduate degree with her Ph.D. on hold and volunteers her time in the community. She is also a wheelchair user, service dog handler and employer of personal support workers through direct funding program. So thank you so much Karen, Tanya and Amy for being with us today. So I'm going to kind of ask some questions to facilitate our conversation and my first question is for you, Amy. Advocacy is a never ending cycle for people with disabilities and their allies. Can you talk about some of the extra work you do to make employment and the workplace accessible so you can do your job?

>> Amy: Sure. My disability has changed over time and as a result my experiences have also changed too. For the most part through website I present disability Canada and as a result I believe I've had significant amount of interviews over the years. Generally I have not disclosed my visible physical disability in advance because I don't feel that's necessary. Although disability is part of my identity it does not fully define me. Not disclosing my disability has been a learning experience for interviewers and for me. How do I feel both the candidate and the employer are being interviewed during the process [unable to hear] many of those interviews I've had over the years have resulted in second interviews but no job offer. And so for the eight employers that I've had in my career so far in the public and private sectors and one of those [unable to hear] access, appropriate bathroom space as well as support workers. A lack of door openers and implements for independent operation of elevators [indiscernible]. Each request to go down requires a request to go up. Also experienced significant challenges when I've been requested to travel for work to attend a conference or meetings of the city that kind of thing has often been inconsistent processes where I've been required to [indiscernible]. Outside of that, I typically manage okay.

>> Sorry to interpret Amy your voice or the recording is a little bit hard to hear. Is it possible to maybe speak up or move a little closer to your mic there seems to be we hear you and you disappear. So the connection is there but something is happening. Is there a way to move closer?

>> Amy: Sure I'll try and speak a little bit louder is that better Marina.

>> I think so, thank you very much.

>> Amy: For the most part other than having a laptop instead of a desktop computer I use my telephone to take notes as well. Other accommodations are about the physical space that I'm in and not necessarily about the projects and things that I'm working on.

>> Ashley: Thank you. And would you say how much extra time when you're changing positions or when you're duties at work change and things like that, what's the process like in terms of trying to figure out what you might need or if there are different things you need maybe in different spaces or if you're going to be working in a different physical space, what's that like in terms of just kind of the extra tasks that involves on top of your existing workload?

>> Amy: Sure. For the most part when I have been changing employers, I have had to be a bit of chameleon and sort of adapt to varying situations. I definitely need a desk to be at a specific height or at least be a little bit adjustable to be able to use it. But outside of that, I have fairly positive experiences with the actual like desk office spaces. In my current employment situation, I have changed roles a few times. Sometimes within the department. It's already very much known what my needs are and it's just been a shift. I have transferred between departments, I have had some issues with where my colleagues work not being accessible to me and there have been some transition adjustments that have been rather challenging more recently.

>> Ashley: Thank you so much and Karen and Tanya, I'm just wondering if you can talk to a little bit about when you first met and started working together and how has working together changed over the years?

>> Karen, Ashley was just asking.

>> Karen: How I met you?

>> Tanya: Yes.

>> Karen: I met Tanya at dance.

>> Tanya: That's right Karen came to my dance class and that's how we met. And there's a second part of your question.

>> Ashley: How long ago was that that you guys first started since you first started working together.

>> Tanya: I think it was a long time ago, right Karen.

>> Karen: Yes it was a long time ago.

>> Tanya: It was probably in the realm of 13 years or maybe 15. I actually can't remember.

>> Karen: Actually I don't have two jobs I just realized I have three jobs.

>> Ashley: Oh, wow sorry about that it's hard to keep track hey with so much going on. Can you talk, Karen, a little bit or Tanya as well maybe about how working together has changed over the years? Have you maybe gotten used to each other or gotten kind of certain strategies that work well for the two of you?

>> Tanya: So when I started working with you, Karen, it was different the things that I did, right.

>> Karen: Yes, it was different.

>> Tanya: That was a time when independent facilitation was just like a glimmer in some people's eyes just beginning of the movement and so I actually started off more like --

>> I'm not going to answer that.

>> Tanya: Yeah, so I started off more like a two worker to you right.

>>.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: What sort of things did I do with you. Do you remember what we did together at the beginning.

>> Karen: I don't know what you mean.

>> Tanya: I used to come over and I would to like cooking or grocery shopping with you.

>> Karen: Yes, when you came over we used to do our planning, we do planning for my week and then we also do cooking as well.

>> Tanya: And it's really changed like now I meet with you, right or you will call me.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: What do we do now together? With a sort of things? We still do planning, right.

>> Karen: We also still do planning.

>> Tanya: Sometimes you will call me with different things right.

>> Karen: With different things I usually call Tanya when I have an issue or something I have like an issue with my boyfriend or anything I talk to Tanya.

>> Tanya: Yeah, that's right and then we will talk about like what are the things that you really need and what you want in the situation, right.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: We'll talk about what's happening. Yeah? In the situation.

>> Karen: Yeah.

>> Tanya: Sometimes you'll call me if you have ideas of things that you want to do, right.

>> Karen: Yes. I also call Tanya if I have any ideas.

>> Tanya: It's probably changed too because Karen she calls me more.

>> Karen oofrj I call Tanya more.

>> Tanya: You'd to be I would call her now she just tells me what she wants.

>> Karen: I just realized I have to turn my phone off.

>> Tanya: That's probably a good idea.

>> Tanya: Karen now you facilitate a lot more for yourself than had we first started.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: Just makes my job pretty easy.

>> Ashley: That's wonderful. It's so interesting to see how things change over time, right, as we especially if we kind of work with the same people a lot. You know we get used to working together and we get kind of a pattern going for the tasks that we want to complete and things like that. So thank you guys for telling us about that. I have another question for you, Amy. I'm wondering if you can talk to us about accessing and kind of advocating in community spaces so like transportation and access to medical services that you would need and kind of your experience in terms of advocating for accessibility and in some of those areas.

>> Amy: Sure. I think for myself but for many people that travel with a support person, whether it's locally or in the community, the rules vary by provider there's different identification

required. For example, if I want to use GRC and take my support person with me, I have a GRT plus 1 pass. If I'm going to use [indiscernible]. Over time I had to make the time to get all of those things lined up so my travel is less and also pay for a second time. I find traveling on transit locally pretty okay . I don't use mobility plus because I'm not able to book my life that far in advance. And I also think because I am able to use conventional transit [indiscernible] Better access to it. I do find it tricky sometimes sometimes on the conventional busses certainly if there is another wheelchair user or someone with a scooter or walker it does make it fairly crowded especially because I take my service dog with me. It is often a challenge in some tighter spaces. In the Windsor especially more recently I definitely encountered numerous situations where bus stops have been plowed or cleared from snow so getting on and off has been extremely difficult. I was very excited about the ion coming to this community I like to ride trains. I find them exciting to travel. I found it's implementation to be a little bit more challenging. It certainly was great when in the first everyone was trying to get to know what it was like and the doors would open automatically. However it has a requirement that people be able to push the button to get on the top and there's definitely been times [indiscernible] Ant platform or trapped on a train because in a no one nearby to ask to push the button. Now the pandemic has arrived the doors are able to be opened. And then in terms of healthcare, I guess I think when you're a child with a disability, everything seems a little bit easier. Perhaps that's because of the life experience or because parents or caregivers assisting with ad advocacy but I would argue because there are systems and structures in place for people less supports for adults. That transition between services that you might receive in specialized pediatric clinics they don't exist in the same way for adults with disabilities. I found that particularly challenging. It was also incredibly difficult to access specialized disability specific practitioners in smaller communities. To travel requires more planning. I also feel very strongly that access to facilities locally is not great. Certainly if you need something outside of what your general practitioner can offer you, many smaller or independent practices like gynecologists don't have accessible offices for getting those types of needs are fairly challenging.

>> Ashley: Thank you. That's -- it's an interesting process isn't it all the elements that have to go into planning which services you're going to use, which you can use, and things like that. You know when you're talking about the differences between conventional transit and adapted transit so something like what we have as mobility plus in Waterloo region, can you just briefly tell people who might not know kind of what the ditches are in terms of the process, so you know the requirement to book travel on adopted transit like mobility plus versus being able to just kind of leave and take public transit when you choose to.

>> Amy: To be really honest I probably haven't used mobility plus for 8 to 10 years and that is mostly because my don't quote me you needed to call two days in advance if you wanted to book trips that were not trips like going to the mall or shopping if you wanted to go to work or if you had like a medical appointment or something like that you could book those further in advance which is great but sometimes your schedule changes and that makes it a bit unpredictable. The other part of it and totally understand why this is necessary is that you need to be, you need to pick a time when you need to be picked up so let's say it's 8:00 in the morning you have to be ready 15 minutes before or 15 minutes after. So half an hour to get your pick up time and sometimes that isn't always great.

>> Ashley: Yeah I think services like that are really helpful for a number of people but there's a lot of extra work that goes into planning when you're going to do things and you know waiting for windows of time to be picked up or dropped off. You know waiting on hold to change a booking or to make a booking and all these things and so you know this is an extra time commitment for someone if they are needing to access adopted transit instead of conventional transit. Karen, I have a question for you about support circles. Can you explain to us what a support circles is.

>> Karen: A support circle is that we meet with lots of people and because we usually do like hospitality and we usually do it, we do it with food as well. And that's what we do is in a support circle is mostly talk about is about my life.

>> Tanya: It's often really important to you that people feel welcome so you like to provide food and refreshments for people and then people can connect with each other.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: It's like very homey. And then we sit around in a circle, right?

>> Karen: Yeah and we have like a talking object.

>> Tanya: What do we do with that?

>> Karen: We do just like go around and then you just say like your name and how they know me and stuff and what's your favorite fruit.

>> Tanya: Yeah, so everyone says something about why they are there, right.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: Why are people there.

>> Karen: It's because that was a support circle is like we usually talk about my life as well and saying that if I want that is about that I want to live with my boyfriend as well and that's we mostly talk about as well.

>> Tanya: Yeah. We talked about that and the last two support circles you had.

>> Karen: The last two support circles that you had,.

>> Tanya: That was your support circle meeting, right?

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: And support circle are all people that you choose that you want to kind of be your like your network of support, right?

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Ashley: That's really helpful because I think that's something that a lot of us aren't aware of. Karen and Tanya, can both of you talk to us about how a relationship map works and how that can help somebody to develop their support circle?

>> Tanya: Do you remember the relationship maps that we would do together?

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: Do you want to talk a little bit about that what's on the relationship map.

>> Karen: Like on the map is like dreams, goals, and yeah.

>> Tanya: That's actually even another tool we use I like that you're bringing this one up too. That's a tool where we do a map it's called but it's a map of what your dreams are, right.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: Then we look at your dreams, your goals, your gifts.

>> Karen: My gifts.

>> Tanya: Super powers that Karen has. Like hospitality, connection, and yoga. And so we will look at -- and then we'll look at.

>> Karen: And potlucks.

>> Tanya: And potlucks and food. So there's all these, we map out what it is that all the amazing things that you do and then all the things that you want and then we look at all the people that are in your life, the resources, all the amazing things that are already happening and then all the maybe challenges too like some of the things that maybe we need to work on more.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: We do this all visually on a big piece of paper.

>> Karen: Yeah.

>> Tanya: So the relationship map is do you remember also we would do something on a piece of paper where we would put you in the middle.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: We would put in the next circle around you we would put all the people that are really close to you, right?

>> Karen: Yes people that are close to me.

>> Tanya: And you decide who those people are.

>> Karen: I decide.

>> Tanya: Then we do another layer like who are the people that you know you're not as close to or maybe they are people that you pay you know. You might and then there's people that are even maybe -- you know even less. There's different kinds of relationship maps right Karen.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: Sometimes we do one with pay you pay, people who are in your family and people who are friends. It's all just ways so that we I think for myself when I've done a relationship map it's really surprised me like how many people I have in my life and how they are connected. It helps me to think of ways in which I could grow those connections more, you know strengthen them or maybe there's questions I could ask them, right Karen.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: You sometimes say oh, like I, when you are looking for a place for you to live.

>> Karen: Yes that I'm looking for a place to live.

>> Tanya: Do you remember we looked at your relationship map who are the people that actually you could ask about roommates, places to live.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Ashley: Thank you Karen and Tanya for describing that process to us. It sounds like a really good process that anyone could go through but I think maybe a lot of us just don't -- don't take the time to think our relationships out that clearly and you know what we need and want to do and who might be able to work with us on those things. So I think that's really important. Amy I have another question for you and if I could just ask you to speak really close to your microphone as well and kind of increase your voice volume a little bit so we can hear you a bit better, Amy if that's all right. Can you talk to us about advocacy and accessibility in education and what your experience has been with that so you can talk about post secondary or educational experiences from before that just kind of what those processes are like for you.

>> Amy: I found my elementary and secondary school processes to be fairly straightforward

because there are processes already in place and my parents were a large part of making sure that I had the physical accommodations that I needed in those spaces. Post secondary though when I applied for undergraduate programs I thought that would be a good fit for me that was sort of my focus and I learned very quickly that finding the balance both my program desire or interest and the combinations were super important. I ended up going to the University of Waterloo and I had an amazing experience there but they were not my first choice. I had to pick a different program but I did find that they had services available that I couldn't get at the other schools I applied to. The things that were helpful to me during my undergrad were having extended time to write exams because my [indiscernible] is not the same as everyone else so it takes me longer to write or did at that time. Having computer access was really helpful and to be able to write exams as well. And having a scribe for Scantron cards because I couldn't accurately fill in the little bubbles, having some trouble and I know lots of people have trouble with that but I have a particularly difficult time with that. Also having good on campus housing that was close to where I would have classes and access to a vehicle in the winter that would come and pick me up from campus housing and drop me off to where my classes were on a schedule was really important. For my masters program so it's probably pretty unusual but all of my classes were in the same location every day with the same people. So I didn't really feel like I needed a whole lot of different accommodations outside of extended time to write exams and computer access. And then with my Ph.D. program I had applied and requested I be able to participate remotely. And that was a real struggle for the faculty of the program. I completed half towards that degree but will need to go back and complete the rest and hopefully now there's been a bit of a leadership change that will be a more positive experience for me and I won't be told that it can only happen if I come to campus because I like living in this community and the program I'm taking is in another city.

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>> Ashley: Yeah so there's all these considerations that you're talking about even in terms of how you pick an educational institution, things like that, all of those are kind of maybe some extra processes on top of all the other reasons that anyone would select a program or select an institution. And it will be interesting to see kind of how the educational accessibility landscape changes with COVID-19 and everyone doing their coursework from home and things like that. So that's very helpful. Karen, I have another question for you since we're kind of thinking about how things have changed during this time of social distancing and COVID-19. How has your support circle been important for you during this time of COVID-19? And social distancing.

>> Karen: I'm a little bit scared about this anyway and I hate staying home and I want to get back to work anyway and that's why I don't want to keep staying at my boyfriend's place as well. Because like I need to come back here to my place after this stuff is over as well. So I think I have a friend and named Juliet my friend, she's helping me to make food for us as well.

>> Tanya: Julie is on your support circle.

>> Karen: Julie is on my support circle as well.

>> Tanya: She's been oh on your support circle for a really long time.

>> Karen: Yeah.

>> Tanya: There's other people too on your support circle who have been helping you out, right.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: Like Kathy what does Kathy do.

>> Karen: Also my friend Kathy she's on my support circle as well. She's helping me to get some groceries as well. And from a farm.

>> Tanya: She brought you fresh eggs from a farm.

>> Karen: Yeah.

>> Tanya: What about your friend Amanda.

>> Karen: My friend Amanda because I'm a yoga teacher as well and my friend Amanda she's, she also helped me to do, she -- I did a video for, a video of me teaching laughing yoga.

>> Tanya: Karen teaches laughter yoga and she's a certified.

>> Karen: I'm a certified yoga teacher as well and I'm also doing laughing yoga as well. And that's why I want to send, to show that video to Ashley Shaw.

>> Ashley: Yeah thank you so much for sharing that with me and it's so great to hear about kind of the whole process for you when you want to do something like make a yoga video or get certified in teaching yoga that you have a great system in place for figuring out how you're going to do that and who is going to work on that with you and those sorts of things. So that's you know I think those are really helpful for a lot of us, right. For me as well to be able to think about what resources do I need to be able to do this and how might -- sometimes when a person with a disability wants to do something they will do the same task or accomplish the same goal but it might look a little bit different the path to get there, right so your path to get there might look a little bit different from mine and those things. It's always to interesting for all of us to hear about each other's journeys as we try to finish school get jobs and get what we need to do done at work and things like that. Sorry.

>> Karen: I also was saying that I am also going to postpone my birthday until this thing is over.

>> Ashley: Yeah I think that makes a lot of sense right now a lot of us are having to change all of our plans because it's difficult to see people.

>> Karen: It was on May 29.

>> Ashley: Well, happy birthday.

>> Karen: Thank you.

>> Tanya: I'll just add with this time of COVID I feel like it's shown me how important it is to have.

>> Karen: I want to get tested but my dad told me my dad does not want me to do this because he got tested he went to the hospital because he had a, my dad a mini stroke as well and that's why my dad does not want me to get this anyway. But I want to get tested.

>> Tanya: I think a lot of people want to get tested. Yeah. Thank you.

>> Ashley: Thank you both so much. It's been a very different time for all of us for sure. I am wondering, Amy if you can talk to us about some things people can keep in mind if they want to be good allies for someone with a disability and if maybe if someone has a friend or family member with a disability and they see them advocating in a lot of the situations we've talk about today what are some good things for people to keep in mind?

>> Amy: Sure. I think I'll structure my comments a little bit by saying advocacy is exhausting. My experience is that it's constant and disruptive to varying degrees in all parts of my life. On rare occasions if I choose not to engage and others may follow advocacy too, I think it's important

for allies to listen before acting. I also think that structures and attitudes enable ongoing discrimination so inadequate acknowledgment of societal impedes quality of life for people with disabilities and having allies that are --

>> I'm just going to directly because you're breaking up a little again I really want to hear what you're saying.

>> Amy: I'll go back maybe and just say system structures and attitudes enable ongoing discrimination, inadequate acknowledgment of the power of privilege impedes quality of life for people with disabilities. So when people that are willing to be allies, it's important also to engage in advocacy on behalf of someone only with their consent and lend your voice but make sure it doesn't overpower the person that might want your support and developing hyperawareness to environments so considering the spaces you're in or what you're engaged in, I consider people with disabilities could actively contribute and participate in those areas.

>> Ashley: I think those are all really important points and thank you for bringing those up, Amy. A lot of times when one is in a situation and they are choosing not to advocate, the rest of us don't really know what's going on in their life they might have a number of other, sometimes it's a pick your battles type of situation they might have a number of other things going on at present and it does, it can get exhausting depending on what's going on and also we don't really know what someone wants to get out of a situation unless we ask them, right. So we can't assume that we know or that somebody wants the same thing that we want in a situation where they need to advocate.

So I think you're right it's really important for our allies to be kind of behind us and alongside us and the way you've talked about Karen as well, of really bringing your allies around you and just helping everyone to realize that we have the same goals when we're advocating for accessibility. Before we check in with Marina to see if there have been any questions from anyone, Karen or Amy or Tanya does anyone have something they would like to add to the discussion at this point?

>> Marina: I'm going to take the long silence as no there's nothing to be added I'll start off with the first few questions that have come in. A lot of you have talked about the extra steps you need to take in order to make your lives run as successfully as they do. You know Karen you've talked about the support circles that have been created in your life for many years composed of people that help you achieve the goals that you want and Amy you talked about when you went to school you really had to plan in advance to get the services you need with the scribe, someone writing your notes and all that and driving you. That all had to be planned in advance and obviously, these, this planning has probably continued on no your life today. So the first question is if you had to estimate approximately how much time in your day would you say is devoted to arranging and accommodating your needs?

>> Amy : I've gotten adept at it so less time than it used to maybe take me. But I would say I probably devote about an hour combined almost every day. So I have 12 personal support workers with me in better times than now obviously, but, you know, managing their needs in terms of location and when when they are and I can that kind of thing those things and managing on a day-to-day basis doing payroll that kind of thing to support them. But so in the extra planning to do regular things I do need to think it through before I just go ahead and do something because I want to make sure [indiscernible].

>> Ashley: Thank you I think it's good if a lot of people to hear it gets easier with practice, right sometimes at the beginning or the beginning of a new situation or new life circumstance, things take a bit more work. Karen and Tanya did you have a response to this question at all? Do you want to talk about kind of the amount of time that goes into your planning for the things that you want to do?

>> Tanya: How much time do you think you spend planning every day?

>> Karen: I usually don't plan every day. I should be a planner.

>> Tanya: You should be a planner.

>> Karen: I should be a planner because my boyfriend has been has been asking me that you have been doing lots of planning. And you should be a planner.

>> Tanya: Karen has gotten really good at planning .

>> Karen: And one of my dreams I was going to ask that I forgot to ask is I'd like to get married to my boyfriend as well.

>> Tanya: That's a big dream of yours, yeah. And you've actually because of COVID.

>> Karen: Because of COVID it's making me a lot scared.

>> Tanya: Yes that too you've been feeling scared.

>> Karen: And I don't want to stay home. Because I'm a social person anyway and I want to see all my friends.

>> Tanya: I think a lot of us are feeling that.

>> Ashley: For sure it's been a difficult time and maybe with some of the planning tasks we do sometimes people you know try to carve out sometime in the week to do some of those things so you're not having to kind of carry those extra tasks every single day, right. So because Karen and Amy both of you have a good system now that you know works for you, then that maybe makes things a little bit easier in terms of taking advantage of the resources that you have and the time that you have.

>> Karen: Yeah I also have a question for Amy as well. About because my parents are getting older right now and my mom has a special condition that she has and it's going to get a lot worse and she might need, my have to be in a wheelchair as well and might have to be like in that special bus I don't know what that bus is called anyway. But she might have to go in that as well for accessibility as well.

>> Tanya: You were going to ask Amy something about that.

>> Karen: About that, I don't know what that bus is called. What is that bus called that you were is a saying about accessibility.

>> Amy: Mobility plus it's part of great river transit.

>> Tanya: Mobility plus.

>> Karen: Mobility plus sthald be good for my mom anyway because it's going to get a lot worse and she might have to go in that eventually.

>> Tanya: Yeah.

>> Marina: Karen you bring up an interesting point that you guys have had to deal with trying to plan out your lives in advance from a very young age but it's interesting that our abilities to do things can change as we age as well. There's going to be a lot of older adults and especially as our community ages, there's going to be a lot of adults that are going to be learning how to advocate for themselves. You guys have definitely a head start so you know your processes but

I'm sure every time you did it for the first time it was super tricky. Speaking about transportation, Amy and Karen, I have another question for you. You guys talked about accessing actually Amy talked about accessing public transportation. Someone is wondering about when you're traveling outside of the community, are there any extra steps you need to take to plan if a trip or vacation what are some of the things that you think about if you are thinking about a trip?

>> Tanya: You know how you've taken big trips to England.

>> Yes.

>> Tanya: You went by yourself what were some of the things you did to prepare and plan for that? What did you have to do before you went you needed to get ready?

>> Karen: Like?

>> Tanya: Like when you were going, before you went to the airport of course you packed right.

>> Karen: Yeah, I had to pack and.

>> Tanya: Then when you went to the airport were there any, was there anyone who met you at the airport,.

>> Karen: My friend Julie she met me because my parents were worried about me and it was a special thing that they had me, helping me with as well. And so Julie my friend she met me right at the gate.

>> Tanya: To make sure there was someone to meet you.

>> Karen: Yes. And after this stuff it's totally over. I want to travel again.

>> Tanya: Karen loves to travel.

>> Karen: Yeah I'm going to take my boyfriend for his birthday I want to take him to go see my friend Ricky as well. I wrote a book with my parents and I forgot to say that as well that I wrote a book with my parents and it's friends in collusion.

>> Tanya: Friends and inclusion. Karen wrote a book.

>> Ashley: That's wonderful thank you for telling us about that and sharing the title of the book with us. And I think we're all looking forward to times when we can travel again as well. Amy did you have any kind of special considerations that you make sure that you look into when you're traveling by trains or flying somewhere or traveling outside of Waterloo region?

>> Amy: I don't own a vehicle anymore I used to have a vehicle that someone could drive on my behalf I choose to move closer to where I work and so if I need to travel out of town then I'm looking either at renting a vehicle which isn't always easy and often very expensive for a short period of time or using go bus or via rail or go train that kind of thing depending where I'm going. But I think I heard that greyhound will not be an option in the future so to travel outside of major areas might be more difficult. But definitely there's a lot of research that goes into anywhere that I want to travel that's a bigger destination to make sure that at that makes it easy to get off the plane in a location but then once you're off the plane you can get to the spaces that you plan to go to and whether it's a tour or you want to explore the sidewalks are actually reasonable to drive a wheelchair along or what their rules are about service dogs. [Indiscernible] Finding accommodations that are appropriate anyone traveling with me.

>> Marina: I'm going to just ask one more quick question because we are rubbing out of time so we can keep our answers shorter still informative but maybe to the point. The question is about how can employers help you -- I should read what it says. How can employers, what can

employers do to help prepare appropriately for meetings interviews classes et cetera so that you're not having to invest so much time in preparing in advance. Is there things that employers can do to train their staff or things that they can share. How can we assure that what you need is being prepared for in advance especially if it's an ongoing thing?

>> Amy: I think having a proactive conversation is really important. I always appreciate when someone reaches out to me instead of me needing to reach out to them. My situation is different from the next person's so I'm not sure that you're going to always be able to predict what will be needed. But in certain environments where you're working with the same person probability predictability. I think just take queues from the person that you're looking to support as well. Maybe check in if this is working or if it's better after you've tried something to show it is on the right track.

>> Tanya: Karen, Ashley was just or Marina was asking about if you are going to go work at a job, a new job maybe what is it that you would like your new boss to do? Like do you want them to have a conversation with you like what kind of things might you want from them?

>> Karen: What do you mean?

>> Tanya: Remember when you applied for a job at the wall per.

>> Yes.

>> Tanya: Your new boss hired you or was hiring you what were things that were really helpful that they did or they could do?

>> Karen: I don't know.

>> Tanya: Do you want me to help a little bit see if I can remember some things.

>> Karen: Yes.

>> Tanya: I remember he really asked you a lot of questions, right.

>> Marina: Sorry to interpret I'm just aware of the time we are a little bit over time right now. What we might do is just maybe take down some of these answers to these questions and we'll post them online when we upload the video so people can hear some of the things that they can do to be proactive versus just reactive to a situation. Just to close things down so sorry for the questions have come in we haven't a chance to respond but we will try and figure out a way to get back to you. But just really want to thank you Karen and Tanya and aim Amy it was pleasure to hear about your emotional labor of having a disability and thank you Ashley for leading the discussion. Thank you to everyone joining us today we hope you found value in hour conversation today. If you wish to learn more about the topic today or provide comments or feedback please do not hesitate to reach out by emailing us as access at Kitchener.Ca there are amazing organizations that are looking for provide you with information that you might need and some of those organizations helped plan this event today. And they are bridges to belonging Waterloo region, Canadian Hearing Services, Canadian national institute for the blind city of Kitchener, city of Waterloo, community support connections, independent living center of Waterloo region. Kitchener Waterloo accessibility. Close captioning video relay and transportation services were provided by the city of Kitchener and Waterloo. This video will be available on our web page at some point so that you can review it again and that will be you can find that at Kitchener.CA/inclusion. We still have two more days of our events life made accessibility from 1 to 2 on Thursday and Friday so for more information or to register please visit us as Kitchener ca/inclusion. Thank you everyone for joining us and I hope you have a

fabulous day.

>>CART Provider: Thank you very much!