

Changing the narrative: Equity in HLS podcast 6

00:08

Hello everyone, welcome to another episode of our podcast series, Changing the Narrative, in which we're exploring and sharing insights from various human learning systems and samples of practice that have what we think are interesting and helpful insights into embedding equity practices and principles into work. My name is Onika Winston from Collaborate. And I'm Gabriel Eichsteller from Thempra. We hope this series was valuable for everyone interested in relational approaches in their work, but particularly for practitioners.

00:36

who would like to better understand how human learning systems practice can intersect with intentional equity and inclusion practices. Today, we're joined by Barty Mistry and Rob Hunter from Reaching People, who have been involved in the Marginalised Older People and Social Prescribing Projects. Before we start, it would be really helpful for our listeners if you could share a bit of context about the areas the project took place in and what your contributions were to the work. We got this grant from

01:05

independent age and mediated by the National Academy of Social Prescribing for 11 months to address issues of marginalized older people and social prescribing. And we chose to work in two areas of Leicester, Belgrave, which is an area that Barty had been working in before, heavily South Asian population.

01:35

And considerable, but not particularly severe financial hardship in general. think that it was one of the 10 most challenged areas, according to the national statistics. And also new parks, which was a new area to us, which again was one of the 5 % most challenged areas, which we hadn't worked in and which had no particular work with.

02:04

older people. We both had a history. We'd been working together with Leicester Aging Together, which was a big lottery aging better program. It was 17 voluntary sector partnerships addressing loneliness and social isolation among older people. So some of the examples we may be giving emerge from that, but also in the

02:32

reaching people, pilot, if you like. Thank you. And what was your role in the project, Barty? I was in the ground working with people. just to take you back, when we started the project on Leicester Aiding Together, it was a test and learn project, which

03:01

which was very empowering and liberating because although we had targets like any funding that we had to meet this, it just gave me so much freedom. Oh, let's try this or somebody suggests something. it just, it opened doors that I don't think I would have if I was told this is what you need to do.

03:29

So looking at the structural inequalities, you have to look at the area that you're working in and seeing what the community is like. working with the South Asian community, you've got to appreciate that language could be a barrier for some people. And also what happens is, as you get older,

03:58

and you're in a community where it's predominantly, let's say, Gujarati speaking, then what happens is you tend to forget the English words because you're not in the work environment. And although they spoke English fluently, now it's becoming harder. And it's just recognizing and just accepting them for the journey where they are now.

04:28

and not assuming, you've worked here for the last 20, 30 years, you know, know, but things change. Thanks. That's, that's all really helpful context. And so it sounds like you've, you've been embedded in that community for a long time. You know, the people there, the organizations that are active, you know, what, what the key issues are. Rob, you mentioned New Park being a community where you hadn't been active.

04:57

if before, and if I remember correctly, that's a predominantly white working class community. how did you across the two communities, how did you consider equity within your project at Reaching People? I think we had the brief to work with people, with older people, which who are often underserved.

05:26

by statutory services, but also by voluntary sector services. And our history had been largely, but not exclusively, working with older women. And so in a way, we had the freedom to focus on a fairly disadvantaged community in both physical areas. The brief from Independent Age was largely about financial affairs, energy security, digital inclusion.

05:55

So we had that brief for the Reaching People Project. It was quite a narrow brief at one level. And we decided to hold that brief at the back of our minds, but not to hit it head on because we had to make relationships and understand networks and develop partnerships with local organizations, statutory and voluntary, in order to build the infrastructure on which we could then...

06:23

add specific initiatives like Barty ran eventually with the adult education service, but very much a co-produced model for digital inclusion courses, for example. And constantly on chit chat, her forum, her weekly forum on Zoom, which we'll talk about later, but had almost a current affairs focus.

06:50

issues of finance, issues of relationships with banks, issues of relationships with the DWP, issues of health, as well as many other topics came up regularly. so the party managed to bring, say, 7 Trent Water, doctors, adult educators, environmentalists into that forum so that people could on their own terms.

07:17

engage with them, listen to them, ask them questions. So in a way it was about relationship building into which we fed our more formal brief of some of the more technical and very important but technical areas. Was that right, Marty? Yeah, that is perfect. I think whenever you're working with other organizations, they do have

07:47

a funding criteria and a lot of the time they're not looking at the individual. It's just like, we have to deliver this. This is our criteria. And Rob and I had to negotiate because we're doing two sessions, three hours long. And to me, was like somebody who doesn't know digital, three hours is just too long. So we compromised.

08:17

Ideally, I wanted it shorter, but anyway, we compromised. the delivery was one and a half hours of let's get digital. And 15 minutes at the beginning of the session and 15 minutes at the end of the session, just doing positive psychology in the sense that talked about what the feelings might be coming here in a classroom setting. And people could really relate to it.

08:45

You know, as I was saying things and using, I'm not a psychologist by the way, but I know somebody who, who helped me along and, uh, but I also do yoga. So we did some exercises and things like that and they're ready to embrace this. Last year we did about four or five sessions and this year, uh, we're on our first session of let's get digital and the zoom chat.

09:13

What can I say? It's been a blessing for all of us, people who are housebound, people with disability, people who've just had an operation. It's been an avenue that, oh, I can do this. And whether it's exercises or discussion or singing, knit and netter, we do all of that every single day. And because of demand, even after COVID, people have said,

09:43

Can you please carry on? So we've just carried on. And of course, anything like this, you can't do it on your own, but we've got a team of volunteers. Some of them were participants at the beginning, but then became leader leads, know, of the session leads and doing the admin and things like that. So we've been working in a way.

10:13

that makes us redundant. You can't totally do it, but I feel as if we've done it in the sense that I'm working every now and then if they need support, I'm there. But people feel empowered, that yeah, I can do it. I've got the support behind me and the sessions are happening, the face-to-face sessions are happening, the Zoom sessions are happening, and people are bringing their expertise in.

10:43

It's like the community coming together to help each other. People think, oh, this person is a session leader. They're giving us the service, but actually the session leader is also

benefiting. It's a win-win situation. It's really good. Just to highlight that the success that Barty has had in Belgrave,

11:11

is not mirrored by success in new parks, but it's, I think we put it down to a mix of Barty's own qualities and life experience and personal professional qualities, ability to network, ability to hold values and put people at the heart of what is developing. Plus the fact that she spent five years now in Belgrave and it didn't go.

11:40

particularly, there wasn't much volume early on for the first year. But then we had COVID and suddenly there was a panic. What does a community development worker do in COVID? But gradually, Barty and her colleagues, her volunteer colleagues and connection colleagues decided to try this thing called Zoom, which nobody knew about. Or somebody's son had, I think, been on Zoom at work.

12:10

And so Barty and colleagues tried to experiment with this. And within 11 months, there were 17 Zoom groups and 4,400 logins. So it really took off in a tremendous way, which was quite interesting. The numbers that Barty, during COVID, attracted to her chit chat, often a hundred. When in more recent years, face to face, she's had sessions on dementia.

12:40

dementia awareness, two or 300 people. Yeah. Which is very in community work terms, my experience of community work anyway, is phenomenal. And so the reach was quite strong. you first start, when I go back and just reflect on what it was like at the beginning, it was like, Oh, another person, you know, is here. And I didn't get a warm welcome.

13:10

It was almost like, know, they've got some funding and they want to engage and they've got a funding criteria. Yes, we've seen people come and go and she's going to do the same. And there is truth in that because that's what people do. They don't tend to look at the community and work bottom up. It's always...

13:40

top down, oh, this community needs this. And I was very lucky enough to, I had never heard of asset-based community development, but I did a course as part of Leicester Aging Together and understood it. And so when I first started, I didn't have anything to show for. I'd be talking to people.

14:10

I'd be visiting community center and library and churches and temples and gurudwaras, going around the park with people. initially I just sat in my car and saw people walking around. And I thought, you know, it'd be nice to just see, you know, what they're doing. And in my head, it was almost like,

14:39

ask if I can join and then what if they say no to me? You know, and I had to sort of go across, broaden my boundaries and, you know, approached a group who walking and walked with them. And, you know, they didn't say no to me. And we just walked around.

15:06

And we found out things about each other, what they liked about where they live, what was missing, just questions. They wanted to know what I was doing and I'd see them again. So just being consistently there and people knowing that you're going to be there was that first part of it where I didn't have anything to show for. And a wise person.

15:36

said, that is community development. That was Rob. And it does take time. And as people got to know me, trust me, and the doors started opening, you know, we did our first trial session. One of the things we found out was that a lot of

16:06

The women wanted to have exercise classes, but the exercise classes that were running were full. So a few months went by and a couple of them, you know, when I used to see them, they used to say, if you can't do it, don't worry. It's, know, but I was working on it. But I was building a model whereby it was sustainable.

16:34

You know, I can start it off by needed people who could continue. I wanted it to work so that it was cost effective. People made a contribution, but even if I'm not around, things can carry on. So I got in the existing groups. They worked really well. So why reinvent something that is really working well? So that's what I did. I talked to them initially.

17:02

I wasn't well received because it was almost like, why do you want to do what, you know, do you want to take over? The assumptions were very wrong. So we talked, told them what I was doing and this sort of warmed up to me, found out how they're doing. And I said, you have, you've got the perfect model and I want to replicate it because it works. That's what we did. We did it like a membership.

17:31

20 pounds per year, weekly classes. So it doesn't cost much. When we did the trial sessions, was overwhelming. had 30, as more people found out, 40, 50 people just in the three trial sessions. And we thought, yeah, that's, we charged, think, 50 pence or a pound or something, very nominal. And then...

18:00

We started the sessions and they took off. We took 60 members and we had more than enough money for the whole hire and to do extra activities. And it's still running now. I have three volunteers that run. If they go on holiday, we've built in contingency.

18:26

So it's trying to work in a community so that you're working with them. They know what you're doing and that's what they want. So when you're doing something like that, it's a

win-win. Yeah, and it sounds like you've really built trust. You've kind of really understood that just doing a quick initiative that might look good for the funders, but doesn't really...

18:53

kind of provide anything sustainable that's meaningful and kind of held by the community wouldn't really build that trust, would kind of just disappoint people who've been through these kinds of cycles of having somebody who comes in with their own agenda engage and then parachute back out. I think what's also striking in all of this is that you take a very broad perspective of

19:22

how to support people within their communities. When you were mentioning earlier, Rob, that your funding criteria was mostly about addressing financial hardship and energy poverty and digital exclusion. And yet I hear something that speaks much more to understanding people's full humanity. What kind of role does that play, you think, in terms of addressing equity that we're not just focused on?

19:51

sort of a narrow view of human beings, but that we see people as their full selves. I think that's absolutely at the core, really, the relationship building. And even with statutory social prescribers, know, in the best schemes, statutory social prescribing link workers are given the space to build relationships and help the individual see themselves in their own network.

20:20

their own personal system, but also in their community system. we worked or Barty in particular worked with individuals in both areas actually, along those lines. And as she's implied, we had a positive psychology coach to help us sort of break through the normal relationship building phase. I think there is in some communities,

20:49

They have almost given up on statutory services, seeing them as people, whole people. And it's not only statutory services, some voluntary agencies are essentially service deliverers rather than community developers. that they have services which they are trying to make accessible to different communities, but they don't have the time.

21:18

all the funding to spend time getting to know those communities to understand what is the ideal mix between their service and the needs of the local community. So I think it's the community base that Barty had built up, which was so important. The trusting, the knowledge of different networks, the gentle assertiveness to

21:46

challenge existing statutory and voluntary agencies to pay attention to her client group. She made some very interesting partnerships across the voluntary sector as well as the statutory sector. I think what Chit Chat did was to show the statutory services how co-production might work in that by bringing in health professionals, adult educators.

22:16

into chit chat to talk with 40 or 50 local people from a community made some professionals realize that they could learn a lot from that dialogue as well as give important information, et cetera. So it's building up that co-production, which was, I think, at the heart of what

22:45

Barty was doing, I like personally the definition of community development, which is that of opening up systems to each other with the community development worker Barty as the connecting system. And I saw many examples of her doing that with individuals who were in financial hardship, had particular problems and Barty opened up the system of the individual to their banks, for example, to the DWP.

23:16

adult social care, but also by bringing health professionals into chit chat, she was opening up systems between the general public that she was working with and in this case, statutory services, the health services, and in helping them not just interpret one to the other, but helping them meet and talk with each other and understand each other better. And that is where

23:45

I think the major work challenging inequity was. Thanks. I want to just pick up one point before we're moving on to the next subject area, but you were writing in the example of practice in particular, that a lot of older people had kind of withdrawn from the world, kind of seen themselves as being a burden on society and that

24:14

part of your project was also about kind of helping them change their own narratives. Can you say a bit more about that? Yeah, I'll just briefly about it. I'll say that I think we found not only the issue of older age, that what do I deserve, but also it was particularly in the South Asian culture. I've just got to get on with it. I've got to accept that there's an acceptance of life's challenges.

24:44

So the empowerment, individual empowerment and collective empowerment that Barty worked to was trying to contradict that? Yeah. Give you an example. Before COVID, if I had suggested, oh, there's a digital course here, the response I would have had was, what's the point? I'm 70.

25:12

What am I going to need it for, you know? And I wouldn't have got anybody interested. And then COVID happened and people realized these Zoom activities that we were doing. By word of mouth, people started joining. People who were lonely, they couldn't see their children, couldn't go out, whatever the reasons.

25:42

Uh, they were stuck during COVID because they were vulnerable. Um, they, I know one lady, would say that I would get up, I'd make my tea and I'd take an hour, two hours, you know, because what am I going to do for the rest of the day? So she would just take her time so that the day would pass. And then when she got introduced to zoom, she said,

26:12

10 o'clock. I had to be ready. I had to have my breakfast because I wanted to do the exercise. And I had to have my lunch because in the afternoon there's chit chat or the singing or whatever. And it gave them a purpose. It gave them something to look forward to because it wasn't just about learning. It was about socializing as well. Meeting people, new people, as well as

26:42

people that they knew. it, it, it became such that we all wanted in a, in a, in a situation that was beyond our control, we all wanted, and we became a family, a big family wanting to help each other and doing that. in 2021, um, I can remember this.

27:11

Um, one of our ladies said, my mom does knitting. She does little squares and then she passes it on, um, to somebody. Somebody comes and collects it. was 90 or something years old and, um, they make it into blankets. So, um, I said, anybody know knitting and, um,

27:40

something. Oh, I used to knit when I was young. Don't know what I can remember. And just from that conversation, we started the knit and netter group. And in the end, we knitted six blankets, very nice, colorful blankets, and we gave it to Action Homeless. And then 21 blankets to the Ukraine appeal.

28:09

five blankets to Mama's children's charity. the money just came in. People just donated to start it off. The lady who suggested put in 50 pounds. And from that 50 pounds, we bought the wool. People who had lots of knitting needles and whatever, they just donated. And we just started.

28:35

You know, when they did it, was like, here's, look, this is my little square. And people felt so proud that they made something. And, you know, as you get older, you lose that sense of purpose. You feel you're a burden to society. And this Nitta Nitta group, it actually gave them the, I'm doing something. It's going somewhere. It's, I'm contributing to it.

29:05

And people shared, they learned how to do knitting, those that knew, thought. And we just made it work. I have images of being in the park, social distancing, and people showing, no, go like this, do it like this, masks on and everything. we did it, and the group still exists.

29:35

So when things started opening up, I did back out. I had a few volunteers. And I said, just continue. And the group continues. They meet every week. And they're doing different things. feeling that they're doing something that is helping, but they're learning, they're socializing, it gives a new lease of life.

30:05

I think it does raise broader issues about equity and older age. There are people who have not got good health, who've not got sufficient income and who sort of lost sight of themselves. And as Bart is hinting, we had another example also of somebody who didn't get up till midday, because if I do get up earlier, the day is too long. Yeah. So it's an issue in terms of equity. It's an issue of

30:34

I think age class history, yeah, which are, and because people are not in the workforce, they are less, less important than people who are in the workforce to government and policy. And so we've got an increasing population of older age, people in older age, who, for whom meaning in life is fragile.

31:03

And so as Barthie is telling us, structure in people's day is very important. And also sense of purpose is really important. And so, and there is an awful lot of skill in older age. And people often want to use that skill for the benefit of their peers. And it's actually seeing older people not as recipients,

31:33

of care, but as active citizens and learners till the day they die, almost, and helping older people themselves see that because that's one of the issues that they have settled for passivity. Yeah. Because they didn't have the confidence, the social confidence sometimes to feel that they have a role to play. So that's what I think Nitin and Nata has been doing. That's what

32:02

sort of some of the environmental stuff that Barty has been doing is helping people feel that they are contributors and benefit to their communities. Thank you both. That was really, really helpful to hear about how, you know, this bottom up approach has had such an impact on, you know, the people themselves, but also on the sustainability of the groups and the activities that took place.

32:32

Barty, you said something earlier, which I thought was really lovely. You said that you were working in a way that made you redundant. And I wanted to ask, how did you think about shifting power in this work? And what did you do to make it possible?

32:53

That's a good question in the sense that to me it just happens. I have to really reflect and say, oh, what did I do? The way I see it is like the people in community, people come, they do whatever the funding needs are, they go away, there is nothing left. There is nothing left.

33:22

that they can build on. And to me, what a waste of money. You know, are we just going to keep repeating these patterns that don't work, or are we going to make a change? And to me, it feels as if let's make things sustainable. There is so much work to be done in this world that...

33:49

let's make things sustainable so we can move on to another area, another group, you know, and there's room for us all. And I feel there's plentiful. So making myself redundant doesn't mean I'll be out of a job. It makes me feel I've been so successful that I can now, other opportunities will come to me and I can do more.

34:18

and thinking of a glass half full rather than glass half empty. And with that thought process, what I found is the universe has helped me.

34:37

But if I thought this is just mine and these are my volunteers, this is mine, then I'm not helping their growth. So, you know, I've encouraged people for the food bank that reaching people started a food bank in Belgrave and we had volunteers and I encouraged them. They've got some interest, go to that.

35:06

There's a gardening club to do that. And that just gives them the freedom that actually, yes, I'm doing this, but I can do other things as well. Being a volunteer is not about, I don't say, you have, once you're committed, you have to do it. It's like you come first, your family come next.

35:36

and then everything else. And I found that that has been liberating for the participants, but also for me as well, because I get more out of it because people give me or show me the commitment that actually I can't do it, but so-and-so could do it. And

36:03

It just opens up things because what you do, people see and it is reflected and you get a ripple effect. think one of the examples that I really like has been how you have taken steps to integrate those volunteers with disabilities into the frontline because still you say that in your community, there is certain prejudice to people with disabilities.

36:32

So you've worked in the spaces in between almost, yeah, some of the issues because that is one of the things for older people. Yeah. In many cases, there is this desert and there's an awful lot of space in between because people are ignored and left on the margins. And you created activity.

37:01

pro-social activity within those spaces. So the decision-making has been more about how do we live fuller lives? Yeah. How do we care for each other? How do we develop collective purpose as well as individual purpose, which is not the big stuff of systems and structures, but it's very important in the lives of the individuals, I think, that you've been working with.

37:28

And I think as soon as you start making little, little changes, so if you've got somebody with a disability, what tended to happen was you'd put them at the side.

37:46

You know, I, I, I rearranged the chairs so they would, they were right with us. You know, you couldn't tell chair, a few chairs, a wheelchair and a chair. And that's how it needed to be. Um, but it made, uh, people with disability that I'm included. I'm not put there at the side and I have this entrance that I go through and I come out through. They were.

38:17

You know, enjoying it and we were doing things together, whether it was dementia awareness day, whether it was international yoga day, international women's day, a Navratri, a festival where we do dancing. And we started dancing with people who were disabled, just watched. And I just thought, how can we do it so that.

38:46

They are included. And I just got a couple of people and I said, let's just do it. We'll move around. They can be stationary and we'll do it. And it worked a treat. And one of the ladies in on the wheelchair said to me, I haven't had this much fun for years since I've been in a wheelchair, but this felt as if I was really doing the dancing.

39:15

And it doesn't take much. That's the thing. It's so simple. We can make the changes, little changes. And the thing is this woman, one particular lady, she has grown from strength to strength to strength. She was a participant. Then she became a session lead for the singing. And now she's doing

39:44

By her own initiative, she's doing it at the neighborhood center, encouraging other people to join in and she's just blossomed. know, she is now a dementia community champion as well. And yeah, it's, it's been a good journey for all of us because we're learning from each other. you say, Bertie, often.

40:13

that doesn't really cost much at all. And it's perhaps more powerful because it's about the act of contribution that people can make and the benefits that it has both for them and for the wider community are just really amazing. We wanted to just ask you a question about sort of that connection between equity and human learning systems. And in what ways has

40:42

kind of your insights into your learning systems help you kind of promote equity within your project, of focus on equity or articulate it or kind of develop it further? To me, it's not new. If you like it sort of chimes with where I'm coming from. It extends my thinking. It gives it structure and it has given it support.

41:12

Yeah. In terms of, yes, this makes sense, but it's, I mean, it's also been helpful because yeah, the back of my mind in a rather amateur way, I'm very interested in public service

reform, the broader issue and to know that human learning systems is addressing complexity and equity head on in that human learning and systematic way is very supportive. So it's a soft, soft benefit.

41:41

of having this structure, gathering momentum, even if I don't see it on the ground in Leicester, that it makes you feel that because community work can be quite a lonely path to tread. It doesn't have, after sort of 30, 40 years of NPM, it doesn't have a great deal of traction. It's beginning to have traction through community power.

42:10

Yeah, and HLS and asset based community development. And it's very exciting to see those three threads coming together. But it's another language to me, the system stewardship, in addition to the whole person humanity and the learning has been the most sort of stretching one. That's where I see Barty's system stewardship, which I characterized as

42:39

opening up systems to each other and maintaining systems and developing systems, the thinking within systems, curating systems almost, has been, yeah, very exciting. Seeing what Barty has been doing for last four or five years in Belgrave, plus the beginnings of a broader framework of HLS is to me, supportive and stretching.

43:09

I think just by adopting a strength-based approach rather than focusing on what there isn't, the deficits, I think...

43:28

All the people, they are such a valuable asset to our communities that we just don't seem to appreciate. And yes, as you get older, the confidence does go. You know, there are certain things that do happen. Mobility might go. All of this can happen.

43:58

but they can still contribute and...

44:05

And I think the world is advancing in such a high speed with digital that we need to be, we need to change the way we are thinking. Because if we don't, what is happening now will be happening to us. That's how I feel. Because technology is advancing so quickly.

44:35

And I feel as if this equity and HLS, if we started incorporating it and learning from it, we will be in a better, better place. I think I'd add to that. My concerns are that HLS shouldn't spin on its own axis, that it shouldn't simply

45:05

be the reform of public services. It seems that sometimes it might get an exclusive emphasis on how statutory organizations reform themselves in order to manage complexity.

And that is great. That would be really helpful. But it could be still doing things to communities.

45:30

The outcome still could be doing things to communities. And that's where I would like to see more emphasis, A, on the relationship with communities, but also when you look at the human dimension, I may have got it wrong, but it's not just helping the worker see the individual in the broader context of their own humanity and their own system, but it's help.

46:00

their work with the individual to help the individual themselves see that. And so share their thinking as community development is sharing the process is resurfacing the processes of community development and helping other people see intuitively almost what community development can be doing. Same, I would like HLS to be saying not only with Humant, but also to help the individual.

46:30

learn from experience. Reflexive practice is often the exclusive domain of professionals. But I think what Barty is often doing is stressing about this group of volunteers. What are we learning from our experience? So it's seeing the people that we're working with as humans, as learners, and as people with their own systems, some of which are

46:59

functional and some of which are dysfunctional. yeah, it's ensuring that that perspective, and for all I know, it is there in the HLS thinking, but I think it needs to be emphasized because I can still see a divide between people in statutory services and communities, particularly disadvantaged communities.

47:26

Thank you, Rob. There's something there about, you know, this approach, not just being for systems and not just being for practitioners, but actually the community also. So for our last question, wanted to ask, what can others learn from your example of practice that might help them be more equitable in their own work? think listening at the core, putting listening at the core, putting

47:57

commitment.

47:59

to the people that they are working with at the core because, there are a lot of factors in day-to-day practice which make you irritated with people and dismiss people and whatever. So it's how do we, I think we need to support each other as workers in doing that. And the issue of teams and supportiveness is quite crucial when

48:29

facing people with challenges.

48:33

Yeah. So listening and commitment at the core of the work. What about for you Barty? Knowing your community is key. So what works for one community may not work for another. So what I found in Belgrade or Asian, South Asian community is WhatsApp really worked for me. I could communicate.

49:02

through WhatsApp, we've got two groups, two WhatsApp groups, well over 400 people, of what's going on. If there's an event, face-to-face event, if there's a Zoom event, the volunteers just send it out. So to me, WhatsApp has been a crucial tool for me. The other thing was, WhatsApp, you can do audio.

49:32

So if somebody doesn't have their English as their first language and just need that, you can just do an audio in that particular language and how powerful it is. So if you want to get certain information out when we did the dementia awareness, the first time we did it, we did it in English because all the literature was in English. All the videos that they gave us was all in English.

50:01

The only thing we could implement was case studies. Instead of using the case studies, we used experiences in the community of whether it's a carer's perspective or somebody going through it and what it's like. And that was really powerful. But the second year, when we gave some feedback, some literature was printed in Gujarati and the videos were done in Gujarati.

50:30

And when we did it like that, the response was even more powerful because it filled the gaps for people. knowing that community, the culture really helps get the message across or to work with people.

51:02

Engagement takes time. And sometimes funding doesn't allow that time.

51:12

So yeah, mean, learning is that funding needs to be longer. And also people who are older, old now, it doesn't mean that when the funding finishes, that's it, you know, we're all done. So we need to think of things that are long-term and we don't have, you know, all the solutions, but

51:41

If we just started thinking long-term wise what works, and there's laughter, you know, it should be joyful. Work should be joyful, you know? If you're joyful, then everybody around you is going to feel joyful. And I feel as if, you know, if you're doing a job and you're just doing it for the sake of doing it, people can tell.

52:09

So, you know, it needs to be in your bones. Absolutely. I love that point that it needs to be joyful because I think that's so critical for it being sustainable, right? People are volunteers

with you because they love it, because they feel like it has purpose and it's a joyful thing to do. It gets them out of bed in the morning, gives them structure and it puts a smile on their face and on the faces of the people that they work with.

52:36

I've got this phrase which makes a lot of sense to me from the 1980s about the first task of management is managing the organization's values. And if equity is at the heart of what the organization is trying to do, how do we actually stop that being just another bit of rhetoric, which is stuck on a shelf in a value statement and actually permeates all aspects of the organization? And it just seems that buy in too often.

53:06

Management is just about technical things almost. And sometimes keeping noses clean, keeping the organization's nose clean, rather than what are the core values? What are we trying to service? Who's, yeah. And how do we really try and challenge the more difficult aspects here? And so it's trying to reestablish the importance of values, organizational values, and then managing them into every aspect.

53:35

of the organization. But it's difficult, but it can be done and certain people are doing it by the sounds of things. Yeah, so thank you both so much for that conversation. I'm afraid that's all we have time for today for this episode. Barty and Rob, it's been really insightful to listen to you and to learn from your experiences with reaching people.

54:05

I think that there's so many things that have stood out, not least that sense that when you help communities and individuals within those communities kind of find their own agency in circumstances where often they've been told by society, they've been sent these many subliminal messages of like, you know, we're okay without you, you don't really have anything to contribute. What you seem to have achieved

54:34

through really relentless relational work and through kind of building trust with the community and being there, continuing to show up. What you have achieved is really to help people find that within themselves and really showing not only do they have a contribution to make for their own lives, to find that sense of purpose for themselves and get that structure and find the reason to live, but actually...

55:02

that they have so much to give to their communities as well that they can, you know, really be active contributors. And that sense of real genuine empowerment has kind of come through in so many examples you've given. So thank you so much for all these examples. It's been really fascinating. Thanks also to our listeners for tuning in for another episode. And we hope you'll join us again for more examples of human learning systems practice.

55:30

from other projects in the future. Until next time, take care.