# PODCAST Episode 411

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**SPEAKERS**

Rob Mineault, Ryan Fleury, Steve Barclay, Kimberley Parsley

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R **Rob Mineault** 00:09

Hey, and welcome to another episode of AT Banter.

R **Ryan Fleury** 00:26

AT Banter!

R **Rob Mineault** 00:32

Is that gonna be a new thing?

R **Ryan Fleury** 00:34

just mixing it up a little bit.

R **Rob Mineault** 00:35

It's the end of the year, so we're a little bit punchy.

R **Ryan Fleury** 00:40

Yeah, I can't wait. Can't wait for vacation. Six more days.

Rob Mineault 00:45

Yeah, that's I figured,

Ryan Fleury 00:48

counting every hour

Rob Mineault 00:49

I know. Man, I need a break too. I'm wiped. All right. Well, this has been AT Whining. All right. Well, you ready to get started?

Ryan Fleury 01:01

Yeah, I think we should.

Rob Mineault 01:02

Well, hey, Ryan.

Ryan Fleury 01:04

Yeah, Rob?

Rob Mineault 01:06

what the heck are we doing today? Today we are speaking with writer, podcaster, advocate, and probably so much more. Oh, wait, wait, wait, I think she's a lover of bourbon. Welcome to the show, Kimberly Parsley.

Kimberley Parsley 01:19

Hello. Thank you. Thank you for having me.

Ryan Fleury 01:22

So glad you could join us.

Rob Mineault 01:23

And the bourbon.

K Kimberley Parsley 01:26

Everyone should love bourbon. I tell you, it's great. I'm I'm from Kentucky. People think I'm just a lush. but I am from Kentucky. So yeah.

R Rob Mineault 01:36

We don't have that excuse. Here. We just love booze.

R Ryan Fleury 01:38

But not today. We're good.

R Rob Mineault 01:43

Well, Kimberly, listen. We are excited to chat with you, looking forward to learning about you and about the podcast and what you're up to. Why don't we just start with giving us a little bit of background on yourself.

K Kimberley Parsley 01:56

Well, I am Kimberly Parsley. I am from Bowling Green, Kentucky. That's where they make Corvettes, not bourbon, but you know, there's you still find plenty of that. And I've lived here in Kentucky all my life. I am blind. I am a podcaster, like you said. I host a podcast called Demand and Disrupt, a disability podcast, and what we do is, you know, so many of the podcasts are blindness specific. And I wanted to talk with you all and say, why do you think that is? Is it because it's just a natural audio medium, or I wonder if blind folks are just really good at organizing and have a thriving community or something?

R Rob Mineault 02:40

Yeah, I think that, I think the audio format, it has a lot to do with it. I think that that the blindness community really, really embraced the idea of podcasts, and as a result of being really into podcasts, really found it was really sort of a versatile medium to actually podcast, that's my theory, anyways.

R Ryan Fleury 03:03

I think too it's easy to get into, like you said, it's, it's low dollar entry. You can start with a USB microphone, K

**Kimberley Parsley** 03:09

Yeah. A lot of my guests, are blind, and I think that's, I mean, that's sort of the groups I interact with most so, but I don't think it's just because of that. because I really try to find people with other disabilities and we've had people who are wheelchair users, a couple of people who are deaf, one person who is deaf blind, and she's going to actually take on some of the co-hosting duties with me. We have people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We we talk about people's own stories. We talk about current events, things that happen. You know, we talk about those sorts of things on the podcast. We try to give, you know, tips and tricks for navigating the world as a disabled person. I work for a center for in for Center for Independent Living in Kentucky. It's called the Center for Accessible Living. It's based in Louisville, but I work in the Bowling Green office, and I'm an Independent Living Specialist there. Help folks who come in. Gosh, we do a lot of stuff. Help with independent living skills training. We do advocacy, both systems advocacy and individual advocacy. So that's interesting. I get to keep my keep my thumb on the pulse of disability culture and disability laws, which either change or don't change fast enough, you know. But still, there's a lot to pay attention to there. I have two children, so I am raising two, two children, two teenagers, so that's fun. They're delightful. They really, they really are. And let's see, oh, in my former life, I was a romance writer. I actually wrote romance novels. So, yeah, yeah, done a lot of things.

R

**Rob Mineault** 05:12

So tell us a little bit then about about the podcast itself, and how it kind of spun up, how what inspired you to create it was it through, was it partly through the organization. How'd it all happen?

K

**Kimberley Parsley** 05:26

Well, I was approached by someone who was, there's a publisher in Kentucky, a non profit publisher called the Avocado Press, and it's like, it's both like advocate and like avocado. And they were putting together a book about parents with disabilities. And ultimately that book did get finished, and it's called a celebration of family stories of parents with disabilities. And the reason for that was there are so many books about parenting children with disabilities, but very few at the time, we couldn't find any now, there have been a few more that have come out since a celebration of family, very few geared toward parents with disabilities. So we wanted to rectify that. We wanted to tell those stories. And so I was approached, you can get that book on Amazon, by the way, and I am Chapter 23 in that book. And in talking with the person who was editing that collection of stories, one of the things that the Avocado Press had done was published a newspaper back in the 80s called the Disability Rag. And the Disability Rag, tiny little newspaper out of Louisville, Kentucky, was where you would go to get all of the information about things happening in the movement, the independent living movement to work, working toward event, what eventually came to be the Americans with Disabilities Act. Lots of the organizing came via the Disability Rag. And you know, this would have been in like 2021, 2022 starting up a newspaper, just not feasible. You know, that that's not a thing. And we thought about like a website, magazine sort of thing. But I, and, you know, they wanted me to be involved, because I had experience writing and stuff, but I said, you know, what I really want is to do a podcast. That is what I would really like and so that's how it was born. And I wanted to be inclusive of all people with all disabilities. We've actually had one person on who's Canadian. Her name is Frankie James. She wrote a book called Freeing Teresa about the effort to get her sister, Theresa, who has Downs Syndrome, out of an institution that a family member had sort of put her in without really consulting with Frankie and other members of the family. So we've, yeah, I've got to talk to lots of people. It's been very exciting. I love it.

**Ryan Fleury** 08:33

The comment you made, Kimberly, about there not being a lot of books portraying adults with disabilities, it made me stop to think for a second how accurate that is. And even in media, TV, movies, we don't see a lot of representation of disabilities in adults. Most of the time it seems to be in young adults or children. Why do you think that is or do you think that that there's a shift happening now?

**Kimberley Parsley** 09:00

I hope there's a shift happening. Why it is? Well, I think, I think part of it is that, until very, very recently, and still in some states, you can have your children taken away just by virtue of being disabled. In Kentucky, that's not true anymore, but it is, I believe it is still true, or was, until very recently, as in months ago, still true for people who had intellectual, intellectual or developmental disabilities IDD, as we call it, you could still have your children taken away just for having an IDD. Now there, there was a change to the rehabilitation section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, this is some legal stuff that will make that illegal. Like, no, you can't, you can't discriminate on against parents for that, of course, that that, you know, there will be, that whole thing will have to work its way through the courts, and who knows where, how it'll end up, and everything. But so I think there may just been some parents who just did not want to draw attention, you know, they just wanted to do their thing and be on the down low. Another thing that I and you guys tell me what you think, just in general, I think people who are not disabled, they look at say, someone, let's just use blindness, because that's what we know about here. And then look at someone like someone will look at their job and say, oh, I could never do my job if I was blind. And so they automatically think that a blind person can't do that job right, right? And I think parenting is a lot that way. They look at their own parenting experience and say, my gosh, I could, I could not have parented my children if I was blind. And so they naturally think that blind people don't parent, or disabled people don't parent. And of course, we know that's ridiculous. And I mean a spoiler alert, we also have sex, right? I mean, shocking, but yeah, I think it's just a it's just one of those attitudinal shifts that we haven't we haven't quite gotten to yet.

**Rob Mineault** 11:28

I think that's that's really valid, and I think that parents fear the judgment of other parents the most. I mean, aside from Child Protective Services, I think number two is is being judged by other parents. And I think that that plays a big part of it.

**Kimberley Parsley** 11:45

That is so true, that is absolutely so true. That fear of being judged, and especially, especially in

That is so true, that is absolutely so true. That fear of being judged, and especially, especially in the parental arena, it's, it's a lot.

**Rob Mineault** 11:55

So when you first launched the podcast, then what was the initial, the mandate, what was your mission? Did you always really want to open it up to sort of all the disability communities and what were you kind of hoping to accomplish?

**Kimberley Parsley** 12:09

At the beginning of well, at the beginning of the podcast, my little intro is here. We will learn to advocate for ourselves and each other. So what I really want to do is building a community. And that's kind of the legacy of the Disability Rag, is building a community of of not just blind people, but blind people and people in wheelchairs and the deaf community, and, you know, people on with autism spectrum disorder. All those things I want us to be proud, to stand under that umbrella of disability and know that we have a community. And so that's, I mean, providing information to that community and resources. You know, that that was that community is sort of the crux of it. Is what I wanted to do with that.

**Rob Mineault** 13:04

You know, when we started the podcast, you know, we kind of thought, well, where do we find people to talk to, or what do we talk what do we talk about? You know, what do we know? We sort of know our own wheelhouse. But when it comes to say, other disability communities, or even other really heavy topics, we don't know anything about that. And so did any of those thoughts cross your head and ever like make you think, oh, I mean, who, who am I going to talk to?

**Kimberley Parsley** 13:30

Oh, they keep me up at night. I mean, I don't know if it's this way for you, but it seems like it's feast or famine, like I will have five episodes in the can, you know? And like, someone has told me about somebody, who's told me about somebody, and all these people were ready to talk, you know. And then I'll have those times where I finally get somebody lined up and like, they don't show, or they cancel, and you're scrambling. So, I mean, I bet it's the same way for for you all, it's just you always have hope that you'll find another lead, right?

**Ryan Fleury** 14:12

Sure. That's why we try to have a couple in the can, like you said, right? We try to book the show a month out and if a guest does cancel, so then at least we've got something to fall back on.

Rob Mineault 14:24

Yeah, for me, it still surprises me, because I remember having conversations near the beginning of our run and being like, yeah, we're going to run out of people to talk to in like a month, and here we are, like, eight years later, doing a weekly podcast.

Ryan Fleury 14:42

Well, I think that's because we were able to pivot. We weren't just focused in on assistive technology or just one disability. We decided that we were going to broaden our scope and talk to everybody and anybody who was willing to talk to us about disability and their lived experience. And, you know, like Rob mentioned here, we are eight and a half years later, doing a weekly podcast, and there's still unlimited people to talk to.

Rob Mineault 15:09

I mean, there's just, there's, there's so many people in all these disability communities out there that are, that are doing, you know, cool stuff, or they're or they're advocating, or they've started a podcast, or they're doing things and they want to. Getting out there and capturing those people's stories, I think, has really kind of been our particular mission. And I kind of get the sense of of listening to a few of your episodes is that that's partly what you're sort of trying to do, too, because you're really attacking a bunch of different disability communities that you aren't a part of, and I think that that is really impactful. Because for as for as nice as staying in your own lane and doing, you know, doing what's comfortable to you, I think there's a lot of stories to be told right across the spectrum.

Kimberley Parsley 16:00

Yeah, thank you for saying that. And I agree. I think about, you know, the ADA, how it was passed after the, what we is known as the Capitol Crawl. You know where people in wheelchairs came up to the capitol and got out of the wheelchairs and crawled up because there was no, there was no way to the accessible way for them to get in the building. And that was, I mean, just thinking about, I still get chills, you know, thinking about that. And I, as a blind person, benefited from that. I actually lost my sight in March of 1990 and the ADA was passed in July of 1990 so, I mean, that means a lot to me, and we all benefit from the work that other groups do, and so anytime I can promote the work that other people are doing, I definitely want to do that well.

Ryan Fleury 16:55

And I've said on this show before, I think the more we can get outside of our own disability communities and talk to other members of other disability communities and learn from each other and share our stories, the louder the voice we have as a disability community, being the largest minority group in the world, right?

Kimberley Parsley 17:15

**Kimberley Parsley** 17:15

So, right.. Yes, that's that's absolutely true, 100% and and I think every, every person that we let tell their story, how many people does that touch? You know, maybe they don't listen when I talk to a blind person, because they're not interested. But maybe someone I interview who has, you know, a different disability, they're like, Oh, I know someone with that. So they listen. And suddenly we've, you know, made a lot more than just one ripple, right?

**Rob Mineault** 17:45

It's a great way to look at it, and that's where I think podcasting is really, it's really a great medium because it's outside of a format. You don't have to follow a format. You're you're free to do whatever. You're free to release whenever you want, and you're free to talk about whatever you want. And so you know that really gives the audience that that option of, yeah, like, if they're interested in that that particular episode, they're going to listen to it. And if they're not, that's fair, they'll come back and maybe they'll listen to a different one. The way that, the way that people consume podcasts, is so outside of other mediums that why I really think that people really get into podcasting.

**Kimberley Parsley** 18:35

Yeah, me too. And, you know, you can look at your feed and, I mean, I subscribe to tons of podcasts. I bet you guys to do too. And some days I will just listen to, like, 10 episodes of one podcast that I haven't been in the mood for, but I let it, you know, the feed is kind of piled up, and so I'll just binge that one, that one podcast. So it's great for that. You know, getting to do that.

**Rob Mineault** 18:59

I mean, the only downside as a podcaster, and I'm sorry, I'm gonna bore the audience about podcasting, and I'm sure most of them are just like, who cares? But whatever, it's our it's our show, we'll do what we want. But you know, that's why you don't want to fall into the trap of analytics, because a lot of times you can get all the analytics in the world, and it doesn't necessarily really reflect what's going on and how people are consuming your content. Like you said, people could stop listening for 10 weeks, and then they go back and and they listen to, you know, a ton of your content over the course of a week, and it really skews your numbers. And so when you look at analytics, you'll see, like, really weird spikes going on and and so it can be really hard to gage whether or not you're you're really people are really listening. I think it just takes, it takes time. And I think that for for us, anyways, you just stop, you stop paying attention to that, because it's like whatever, if you if one person listens and are getting some out of. It, then it's worth it for us.

**Kimberley Parsley** 20:01

Well, I'm, I'm two years into this. You all are a lot farther along. I hope I get there right now, I still worry about the analytics.

R Rob Mineault 20:09

Yeah, and maybe we should.

K Kimberley Parsley 20:12

You shouldn't. You're absolutely right. It's pointless, but still a worry.

R Ryan Fleury 20:16

And we, and we do look at them, you know, we do get notifications about month to month listenership, but we have, I think, come to the realization that we're doing this show a because we're passionate about talking to members about disability, or talking to people about their disability and sharing their experience. We're not doing the show for anyone. We're doing it for everyone, and we probably gain just as much out of the show as our listeners do, right? So it's changing that perspective about, oh, it'd be great to get numbers. Our numbers are down this month. Boo hoo, boohoo. That's not why we're doing this, and that's what not why. You know, we've been doing this for eight years. It's because we're passionate about getting the word out,

R Rob Mineault 21:04

And it can be a lot of fun, and so, I mean, and that opens up, actually, another question for you. I know the answer for us, but what do you find that you sort of get out of hosting the podcast, personally?

K Kimberley Parsley 21:18

I just love talking to people. I really do. I love talking to you, you guys, I love that. When I got, you know, the invitation, I was thrilled. I just love getting to talk to I mean, I'm tempted to start asking you questions right now.

R Rob Mineault 21:33

For our format, we like to go in and have a conversation, as opposed to, like, having a big list of questions and you're rapid firing it to a guest. That's kind of the format that we found, which is, again, that goes back to that's why podcasting is so cool, because you can just find your find your lane that you're comfortable with and go in it.

K Kimberley Parsley 21:54

But you are right, the whole talking shop for podcasters can really get down in the weeds about that, you know, like, like, how's discoverability going for you?

Ryan Fleury 22:06

What microphone are you using?

Kimberley Parsley 22:07

There you go. Yes, yes, exactly, yes. What are you What are you editing on? What are you doing? What program are using for editing? We can really get nerdy about that, but thank goodness my husband actually does the sound editing stuff. Yeah. I mean, I go through and do, like, a substantive edit, and I send him things like, cut at an x minute, X hours and y minute or whatever, you know, cut there and then pick back up here. But he does the actual editing. He's a tech guy, so he gets to do that. So I actually have a rare genetic disorder called Von Hippel-Lindau. That's what led to my blindness, and it actually in 2016 I lost the use of my left hand after a spinal cord surgery. So that's actually why I stopped writing novels. Is because, I don't know if you are this way. You sort of think through your fingertips, you know, typing and stuff, and it just, I mean, I literally wrote one entire novel dictating on my iPhone. It was fine. I got that done. It's okay. I never want to do that again. So I am, I'm always like, should I learn to use, you know, like Reaper, or something like that, to be able to edit my own podcast? But it's so much harder with one hand. You know, blindness is one thing, one handedness with blindness. I mean, you know, when you're blind, you're already one hand short, because you need two hands to do stuff with, and one hand to hand to see. So you're already right. You're already down one and so, but I've just decided I'm going to hit the easy button on this, and as long as my husband will continue to do that, I'm just going to let him do that.

Rob Mineault 24:17

So let me follow up a little bit on that, because I do find it really interesting. I mean, is that, is that a rare condition? Because I've actually never heard of it.

Kimberley Parsley 24:24

Oh yes, it's very rare. If anyone wants to visit, you can go to VHL.org, and learn all about it. But yes, it is incredibly rare. It's genetic, but I am what's called de novo, or a new mutation, just, you know, popped up in me. So neither of my parents have it, but I had it, and we did not, you know, you didn't know to look for it. So I lost my sight when I was 14. And yes, it's, it's very rare.

Rob Mineault 24:57

How were you able to sort of manage that? Because I would imagine, like, like, you said, like, you already feel like you're down a hand when you're in the blindness community. Like, did it impact, sort of your Braille reading? Did it how did it impact, sort of your mobility skills? How long did it sort of take to really, sort of train through that?

K Kimberley Parsley 25:18

Yeah, it impacted everything. I don't know how much you know about like spinal cord injury, but my tumor, the VHL, causes tumors in various parts of the body, the retina, thus the blindness. I've had. This sounds, it sounds like I'm bragging. I've had, I've had 10 brain tumors.

R Rob Mineault 25:37

Wow.

K Kimberley Parsley 25:41

And I had a spinal cord tumor at c2 which is not really a place you want to mess with, you know. So after I had that surgery, I was in a rehabilitation facility for a month, and probably should have stayed longer, but I had to relearn how to walk, relearn everything how to feed myself. I could talk. I mean, I didn't my ability to talk or or cognitive skills weren't impacted, but everything physically like I'm my I can't use my left hand, and my right leg is numb. So my my balance is, is kind of garbage also. So I mean, that certainly impacts my mobility. I'm using a cane is very, very hard. I even you mentioned Braille. I even have a lack of sensitivity in well, decreased sensitivity in my right hand. So I thought, Well, I'm just not rails, just not going to be a thing I do anymore. And I never, honestly was that good at it to begin with. But I've recently for whatever reason, because, you know, life was just going along so easy, right? I mean, things haven't been challenging lately at all. So I thought, why not take up a hard time? And so I have decided to relearn Braille. And the part of my hand that is the most sensitive is like, like the pad of my right thumb. So I'm actually learning I'm reading braille with my thumb, which is sort of hell on my wrist. But, and I find that I have trouble reading braille on paper, the refreshable braille displays are much pointier. Yeah, yes, crisper. Oh, that's a good word. I say pokier, but yeah, CRISPR is better. So I'm working on that. I am working on that. And it's slow. It's slow going. It really is. But, you know, I'll keep at it.

R Ryan Fleury 27:54

Is it a degenerative disease, or is it just boom and the lights are out?

K Kimberley Parsley 27:59

You mean, with the blindness part of it, yeah, I say that I went blind all of the sudden, very slowly. So it's like I we found just a regular eye checkup when I was 10 years old, we found that I had the the tumor, and then I had many operations, and this was pre, this was in the 80s, so this was pre laser. Now, if you have those tumors that just kind of zap them with the the lasers, it's not a big deal. But this was, like, put you to sleep operations like cryotherapy. I had many, many of those. Ultimately lost the site in my right eye when I was by the time I was, like, 11, and then I had a lot of tumors all at once. And long story short, Retina detachment, go in to fix the retina. Haven't seen since, and that was when I was 14, you know. So, so, yeah, really slowly, all at once, and then it just sort of, you know, it's at different times, you'll just get the tumors will pop up. Sometimes people have tumors and they never grow. It's like, you'll just watch it for decades on the scan. So you get scans, like every six months or a year.

R **Rob Mineault** 29:14

So now I'm kind of interested, because it's really, it's really, it's kind of like, you've, you've entered into the disability community twice.

K **Kimberley Parsley** 29:27

I mean, you're right, that you're right that, yes, it was like going into the disability community twice. I guess, I did. I guess what I what I learned from the blindness was that this is not the end of everything. What do they say? Resilience is a muscle. You know, the more you use it, the stronger it gets. So, I mean, there's definitely it's a cliche, but, you know, cliches are cliches because they're true, right? And but yes, having multiple disabilities was very hard, very hard to come to terms with, very hard to very hard to deal with, very hard to wrap my mind around. And, you know, it's hard enough explaining blindness to people, right? Like so when it's like, I'm blind, and so I can't use the left hand, and my balance is crappy. So yeah, that's hard. But you know, the the community that I looked to a lot was people with cerebral palsy often have many of those same challenges, and they are resilient, and there are lots of ways that they have found to work, work things out like that. So I've, I've gotten a lot of information and really a lot of hope from that community.

R **Rob Mineault** 30:55

The title of podcast is Demand and Disrupt. What's, what's the story behind the title?

K **Kimberley Parsley** 31:00

We aren't going to ever be given the things that we need. We have to demand them, and we can never stop demanding full inclusion and accessibility and everything. So we're demanding and we have to disrupt the current systems that are benefiting, keeping us, keeping disabled people in poverty, in fear, we have to disrupt those systems. I love it. Thank you.

R **Rob Mineault** 31:11

It took us forever to come up with a name.

R **Ryan Fleury** 31:35

And it still sucks.

R **Rob Mineault** 31:37

Yeah, we still hate it, we are just too lazy to re-brand. I love your name, and I love that attitude too, because it's so true. Whenever we sort of talk with other advocates on the show, one of the too, because it's so true. Whenever we sort of talk with other advocates on the show, one of the things that inevitably comes up is like, you know, the disability community, it's the largest minority and that there's so much work that needs to be done, yet the disability community is one of, one of the only communities that really hasn't had their moment, that hasn't really gotten a lot of traction. Even though there's other equity seeking communities that that have managed to make some traction. So I guess my question is why do you think that is. Why is change really slow for the disability community?

**Kimberley Parsley** 32:25

Well, I think here in the in the United States, we sort of think of the ADA as our moment, but I don't I think any of those big moments are the culmination of little moments and lots of work, right? So I always say we gotta do the work. We gotta keep doing the work, and it's exhausting and it's not fair, but that's what we do. What is the saying about the the tree and the shade? How does it go plant a tree under whose shade you will never sit, or whatever So, yeah, that's, that's what we're doing, that's what we're doing. We're, we're planting those seeds, knowing that we might not be the beneficiaries of the work. But you know, my kids might I think that the the other civil rights movements, you know, gay rights and trans rights movements and black and indigenous people, you know, those movements, I think we all, we're all looking for the same thing, which is just to be seen. For our humanity and treated equally. So I think anytime that there's a gain in one of those areas, I think we all have to cheer because I think it helps all of us.

**Rob Mineault** 33:54

I think that just even just the general climate of of inclusion and diversity, all these things, I think really adds to this, the social conversations that can happen. And we have talked to it to younger folks in the disability community, and they do have a very different attitude than the older generation. I think that for a lot of the older generation, the attitude is kind of like, well, we just got to be happy with what we got, because we, you know, we managed to get something. Don'twe rock the boat maybe, maybe we might lose it. The young folks don't have that attitude. They're a lot more fearless, I think, in a lot of ways, in terms of bumping up against the the norms, the social norms, and saying, you know what? This isn't acceptable. You know, we're not going to just, you know, accept ableism on its face, even if it is well meaning. And I think that that fills me with a lot of hope.

**Kimberley Parsley** 34:52

Me as well, absolutely. A lot of people, you know, because older generations are always going to play a complaint about. Young people these days, right? The whole Get off my lawn sort of thing, and they'll say, well, these kids these days, you know, they were born with the protections of the ADA here, and so they don't know what it's like not to have that. And I think that may be true, but I also think they were born with with those protections, and no way in heck are they going to let them go. You know, I think they're willing to fight. I think they've got, they've got energy there, at least that's what I see. I have hope.

**Ryan Fleury** 35:39

**Ryan Fleury** 35:39

And they still have their barriers and hurdles as well their lived experience. It's imagine yourself being like, possibly a quadriplegic or paraplegic trying to go to some big rock concert and there's no ramps to get up to your seating area, or the hallways are so narrow that you can't get your chair down to get to the accessible washroom. These are still things that people are facing today. Yes, so, Ada, accessible Canada Act doesn't really matter. Yes, they're victories, but there are still battles being fought today that those that those don't cover, sure. So the younger generation still has a big fight ahead of them, and all we do is support them.

**Kimberley Parsley** 36:27

Yes, they do, and they've got the energy to do it.

**Ryan Fleury** 36:32

If we can get them off their phones for a minute.

**Rob Mineault** 36:38

I work, I work for a blindness organization here, so we talk with a lot of young folks, and, you know, one of the things that's a big deal for them is, like Uber denials for Guide Dogs, yes, yes. A huge problem with that. And even though it's all on paper that it can't happen, it happens all the time, all the time. So that's a good example of of you know what the kind of challenges that you have to push back against that, because if you don't, well, then it's never going to change.

**Kimberley Parsley** 37:11

And it's, it's interesting, isn't it? Because I remember in I got my in the 90s, I got a guide dog in New York, and there had been a huge legislation against the I think then it was the New York Taxi and Limousine Commission for not letting not not stopping and picking up blind people with a guide dog. And I'm like, my god, I thought we left these things behind, but here we are. You know, yeah, essentially the same, yeah, essentially the same problem. And I, I mean, I wonder, how do you all because I told you I was going to end up asking a question at some point. How do you tell people to stay vigilant and stay hopeful in the face of those things?

**Rob Mineault** 38:00

I mean, man, it's tough. It's hard. I think back to so many examples of of just up and up, blatant ableism, from, from, you know, big corporations, like the Domino's lawsuit that you you guys had down there is a great example of that. I mean, they've, they fought that tooth and nail, just to make their goddamn pizza website accessible, like they're just to make the process accessible. And they would rather have fought that rather than just make the website would make their their system a little bit more accessible for people. And those are the things that that are discouraging. But then on the flip side that you do talk to other corporations that are doing the hard work. You know, we talked to the folks from Hilton a few weeks ago, and they had partnered with the Be My Eyes app to try to make that whole process of staying in a Hilton property, no matter where you're traveling easier for folks who are in the blind community, for example. They didn't have to do that at all, but they've chosen to, and they really have embraced that process. So I guess it balances out. You have to pay attention to the the organizations, the individuals that are doing the good work, and give them accolades, and then call out the ones that aren't. And yeah, the only way to really fight that fight.

R Ryan Fleury 39:33

And see that you're not alone. We've got Procter and Gamble who have tactile shampoo conditioner bottles. You got Lego putting Braille on their bricks. You got helping hotels making their their stays more accessible and inclusive. Around the world, you've got the what's the cruise line? Rob, is it Virgin?

R Rob Mineault 39:59

That's right.

R Ryan Fleury 39:59

Right? Sir Richard Branson is working with one of our local British Columbia blind people to make their ships more accessible and inclusive. So if we pay attention to these world recognized corporations, the conversation is is taking place that didn't 10 years ago, 15 years ago. So I think the generation now, the 20s, the 30 year olds who have that energy, who are being denied the Ubers, all they need to do is look around and see the successes, celebrate the wins, and just keep shouting from the rooftops that, look this is illegal. What you're doing is wrong, and this is how you can do it right. I think we need to give them a means to correct their their actions when they're wrong. If we just yell at them, it's not going to do anything.

R Rob Mineault 40:55

You know, it's, it's funny. I heard a term recently that I really liked. It was the idea of calling somebody in instead of calling somebody out. And I think that's the one thing in the disability community that we have to be careful of. I think that there's a time and a place for calling out an organization and, trying to sort of publicly shame them. But I think that that should really only come after you try to call them in, because when you call somebody in to try to facilitate change or correct some behavior, or to just tell them, hey, look, you did something kind of shitty and I didn't like it, and let me help you make it right.

K Kimberley Parsley 41:33

Yeah, call somebody in instead of calling them. I like that. I'm gonna, I'm gonna, I'm gonna steal that. Also totally steal it. I also did not know you could cuss on this show. This would have been a totally different show.

Rob Mineault 41:43

Oh we forgot to mention that in our caveats, we don't care. So, so I think that that's the one thing that that that is kind of hard to balance, especially in the advocacy world, is that you know you want to make sure that you the community just doesn't get painted with this picture of oh, but they're so they're always so angry, even though we have a right to be angry.

Kimberley Parsley 42:07

Oh, yes.

Rob Mineault 42:10

But so that's really, there's a balance there.

Kimberley Parsley 42:12

But it's a tough needle to thread. It is tough because, as I say, you know, you might be the only blind person someone comes in contact with in their entire life. And if you were an asshole, then they, you know, because you're the only person they've ever met from that community, then you have become the ambassador of the whole blindness community, and now they think that you're all assholes, and that's not, that's not true.

Ryan Fleury 42:53

I'm totally blind myself, and how many times have I said, I don't want to be an advocate today, but because you're part of that disability community just by default. You're an advocate, whether you like it or not. And sure, we all have bad days, right?

Kimberley Parsley 43:07

We do, we do. And I guess you have to, as an advocate, give yourself some grace when you, when you have a bad day where you just your best self just did not show up, and that's okay, you know? That's just okay.

Ryan Fleury 43:22

But again, you're still not alone anymore. There are so many Facebook groups and different community groups that you could probably get to rally with you, right, so that you have a louder voice, so you have more united front. I've said, I don't know how many times the disability community is so fragmented. That's why we're not being heard, because we can't agree on anything, right? We're all bitching about language. Well, I'm blind. Well, no, you're not really blind. You're visually impaired, like, suck it, you know, like we're having a conversation, right? I'm allowed to identify the way I want to be identified. You can identify any way you want. That's on you, right?

**Kimberley Parsley** 44:05

Exactly. I mean, I people say they have the right to be offended, you know, by stuff, and that's true, but you have a choice not to be also, you know, you have the choice not to be offended, just just you do you let someone else do them.

**Rob Mineault** 44:18

And big picture, you know, I think picking your battles is important too. Like, like even with, what is the percentage of people with a disability who are living the live below the poverty line? Like, whatever that ridiculous percentage is, it's way too high. Like, way too high. Let's worry about that and not language.

**Kimberley Parsley** 44:40

Yeah, yes, exactly. Pick nit picking about it is kind of a luxury, isn't it?

**Rob Mineault** 44:46

Yeah, it would be, it'd be great if that was the only problem, wouldn't it? Though that'd be great. Well, we could, we could vent with you all day. We're very good at ranting when these mics are off and we're just waiting for the guest.

**Kimberley Parsley** 45:07

I love a good rant,

**Rob Mineault** 45:10

But again, so we have to think of the audience.

**Kimberley Parsley** 45:12

I understand. Hello, audience.

**Rob Mineault** 45:14

We want to thank you so much for coming on. But before we let you go, we will, of course, want to plug the podcast. And we'll, we'll share the link in the show notes. Question for you, do you have a favorite episode that you would maybe want to direct those people who want to check out your podcast for the first time, any any suggestions?

**Kimberley Parsley** 45:43

I don't know what number it is, but there's one called my blindness mentor, and it's with the person who really his name is Jerry Wheatley, and he actually showed me that I could live a life. You know, when I was blind, he and you know those people in your life, you know they are invaluable. You know they go beyond what they had to do. It wasn't his job to teach me how to use a screen reader. You know that that wasn't his job, but he did that, and I called him crying when things didn't work. Back when I was using DOS, remember DOS, you know? And so those, those people, are important. So I always point people to that one. But, you know, lots of good episodes out there, lots of I mean, see what, what resonates with you. You know, read the descriptions see what resonates. It's Demand and Disrupt. I hope you put the show notes, the link in the show notes, because I can't remember what the URL is.

**Rob Mineault** 46:41

No, we totally will. And incidentally, the episode you're talking about is Episode 11.

**Kimberley Parsley** 46:45

Oh, bless your heart. Thank you. See, I'm from the south, so we say bless your heart a lot, but I meant it that time. You know, sometimes you say bless your heart, it means fuck you. But no, that was real.

**Rob Mineault** 46:58

Love it. Thank you so much for coming on please. You know, come on again. Anytime. Happy to have you back, and best of luck with the podcast. Keep up the great work.

**Kimberley Parsley** 47:09

You too. Thank you so much, both of you. I appreciate you letting me come on and and talk with you, and later on I might pick your brains about, you know, discoverability and, yeah, analytics and all that.

**Rob Mineault** 47:22

We're happy to talk shop anytime. Sounds great.

K Kimberley Parsley 47:25

This was this was so much fun. Thank you all so much.

R Rob Mineault 47:32

There you go. Another podcaster.

R Ryan Fleury 47:34

There's so many ways people can learn, educate and inspire better conversations about disability. But podcasting can be such a powerful tool for people to access or get into right there's there's so many choices out there that you can choose a topic of any interest and gain insight from and that's kind of what I like. I don't listen to a lot so much anymore, but discovering them is so cool.

R Rob Mineault 48:12

Yeah, no, it is. And I love the fact that, you know, she spans the entire disability community. It's a really great, down to earth podcast. One of the, one of the things that drew it drew me to it was the fact that it just really reminded me of this show, because she really has just really evolved the podcast, and really just kind of does her own thing, and it's very casual and very down to earth. So it definitely resonates with me. So I really think, if for anybody out there that does like this podcast, for anybody who does listen to the show and is a regular listener of the show, I really would recommend giving Demand and Disrupt a shot, because I really do think you'll like it.

R Ryan Fleury 48:58

Yeah, and anytime we have a podcaster on who has such a great name for their podcast, it just makes me want to rebrand, right? You know, people keep saying AT Banter, is our brand, but is it?

R Rob Mineault 49:13

I get it, it kind of is.

R Ryan Fleury 49:17

I guess eight years in, you know, there's no going back.

R Rob Mineault 49:20

Yeah, we'll have to have her back on now that she knows that she can swear because want to hear Kimberly unhinged, unhinged and unfiltered.

**Ryan Fleury** 49:30

That's right, Kimberly on Bourbon live. Yeah.

**Rob Mineault** 49:38

All right. Well, then, where can people find us?

**Ryan Fleury** 49:42

They can find us online, at www.atbanter.com

**Rob Mineault** 49:45

Hey. They can also drop us a line if they so desire, at cowbell@atbanter.com

**Ryan Fleury** 49:53

Follow us at www,atbanter.com

**Rob Mineault** 49:56

Alright, that is going to do it for us this week. Big thanks of course to Kimberly for joining us, and we will see everybody next week.

**Ryan Fleury** 50:08

Bye,

**Steve Barclay** 50:09

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