ADM04- Presents

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Isolation within the disabled community

Contents

INTRODUCTION

Isolation within the disabled community is one of the most important issues in terms of raising quality of life. By reducing isolation, we not only create happier people within the community but also go a significant way to improving the physical health of those who experience it.

Tackling isolation is not a new topic, people have been aware of the issue for a long time and many efforts have been made to reduce the effects of it, mostly in the elderly community.

This workbook aims to rethink the archetypal perspective of isolation: an elderly person sat at home with no friends or family. Isolation goes way beyond that stereotypical model and affects people of all ages. The common denominators are not age but disability, health conditions and/or neurodivergence.

Isolation in its simplest form is seen as a lack of access to people or places. So often that has been the starting point for work on reducing isolation. All these methods focus on bringing the outside world to the isolated people. But what if we turned that on its head and started to focus on bringing the isolated out? What barriers would they face? How can we recreate our culture and society to beckon the isolated out of their spaces to feel safe and welcome again in the world?

To gain a holistic perspective it is also important to consider the physical barriers that disabled people face that increase isolation. This workbook aims to look at these issues and to assess how the COVID-19 pandemic has forced the technological advances forward to the benefit of disabled people who are now able to use tools like remote working or video chats much more as they become infused into mainstream culture. How can we keep these going in a post COVID-19 world? How can we use these positives and design new systems to reduce isolation?

This photograph was taken at Disability Pride festival 2019. I was part of the committee that organised and ran the event, the 3rd year running. Over 3000 disabled people attended this one day festival. Many of those people would not have left their house that day and certainly not ventured to busy public space. We created an environment that not only celebrated members of the disabled community but gave an accessible space for all to attend. (Photo by Author)

"We find ourselves excluded by such things as flights of steps, inadequate public and personal transport, unsuitable housing, rigid work routines in factories and offices, and a lack of up-to-date aids.".""

UPIAS manefesto 1974

Three models that define disability.
Which one i will be using and why?

The medical model of disability is one of the 3 most commonly used models for defining disability. It focuses on the specific needs/deficiencies of the person and how they can be fixed or cured. This model has been heavily criticised as

'over medicalised and individualistic accounts of disability'[1].

Many problematic solutions to disability have come from this model, such as institutions and major civil rights violations for disabled people. But it is important to remember that there have positive outcomes also, such as medical treatments and aids that have helped individuals with disabilities. That being said the main argument against this models still stands ' the medical model of disability is one rooted in an undue emphasis on clinical diagnosis, the very nature of which is destined to lead a partial and inhibited view of the disabled individual'[2]

The Social model defines disability as a social construct. It argues that society itself creates a world that is inaccessible and therefore creates disability, shifting that social responsi-

bility over to those in power to make systemic changes in order for disability to not exist anymore. The main critique of this ideology is that it is unachievable:

'barrier free utopia that is impossible to realise.'[3]

In reality the social model for disability has brought about a lot of change for the disabled community, from forcing change in Media representation, legislation for public building and transport to be accessible, to the Disability Discrimination act in 1995[4]. Regardless of the great good it has brought about, the social model lacks the ontological refinement required to benefit disabled people in more individualistic terms as it excludes the existence of impairments in disability[5]

The biopsychosocial (BPS) model was published by an American Psychiatrist called G.L Engle in 1977, in his medical journal named: "the need for a new medical model: a challenge for biomedicine"[6] . Within this publication he expressed the shortcomings of the current biomedical model within the health

industry saying that it left no room for all the other factor as that affect health. The BPS model aims to be a

"blueprint for research, a framework for teaching and design for action in the real world of health care."[7]

The BPS model aims to take a holistic approach to well-being and takes into consideration all aspects of an individuals life that may affect their physical and mental health. Although the biomedical model remains the dominant healthcare model[8] it is now recognised as a formidable tool in social design, forming the basis of such initiatives as the World Health Organisation's international Classification of Functioning which aims to create a standardised framework of language around health and health related issues.[9]

1 Tom Shakespeare, "The social model of disability," The disability studies reader 2 (2006).

2 Simon Brisenden, "Independent Living and the Medical Model of Disability," Disability, Handicap & Society 1, no. 2 (1986/01/01 1986), https://doi.org/10.1080/02674648666780171, https://doi.org/10.1080/02674648666780171.

3 Shakespeare, "The social model of disability."

4 Mike Oliver, "The social model of disability: Thirty years on," Disability & society 28, no. 7 (2013).

5 Torn Shakespeare and Nicholas Watson, "The social model of disability: An outdated ideology?," in Exploring Theories and Ex panding Methodologies: Where we are and where we need to go, ed. N. Barnartt Sharon and M. Altman Barbara, Research in   Social Science and Disability (Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2001).

6 George L Engel, "The need for a new medical model: a challenge for biomedicine," Science 196, no. 4286 (1977).

7 Engel, "The need for a new medical model: a challenge for biomedicine."

8 Derick T Wade and Peter W Halligan, "The biopsychosocial model of illness: a model whose time has come," (SAGE Publication Sage UK: London, England, 2017).

9 World Health Organization, "Towards a common language for functioning, disability, and health: ICF," The international
   classification of functioning, disability and health (2002).
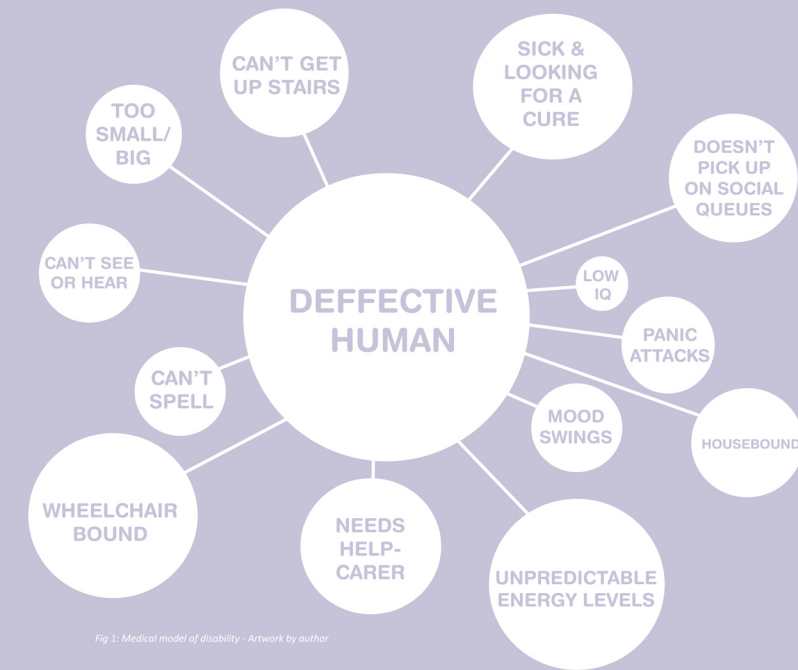
Fig 1: Medical model of disability - Artwork by author

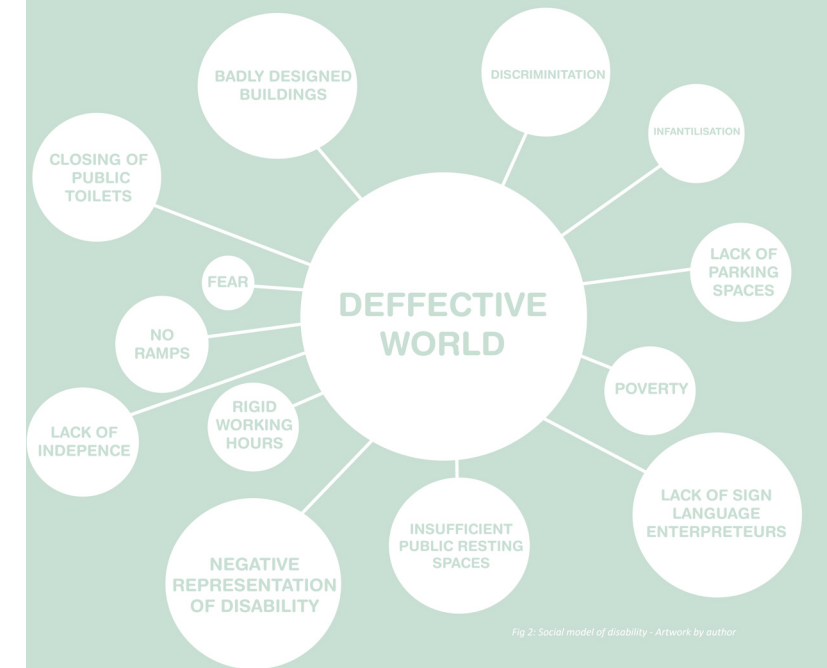Fig 2: Social model of disability - Artwork by author

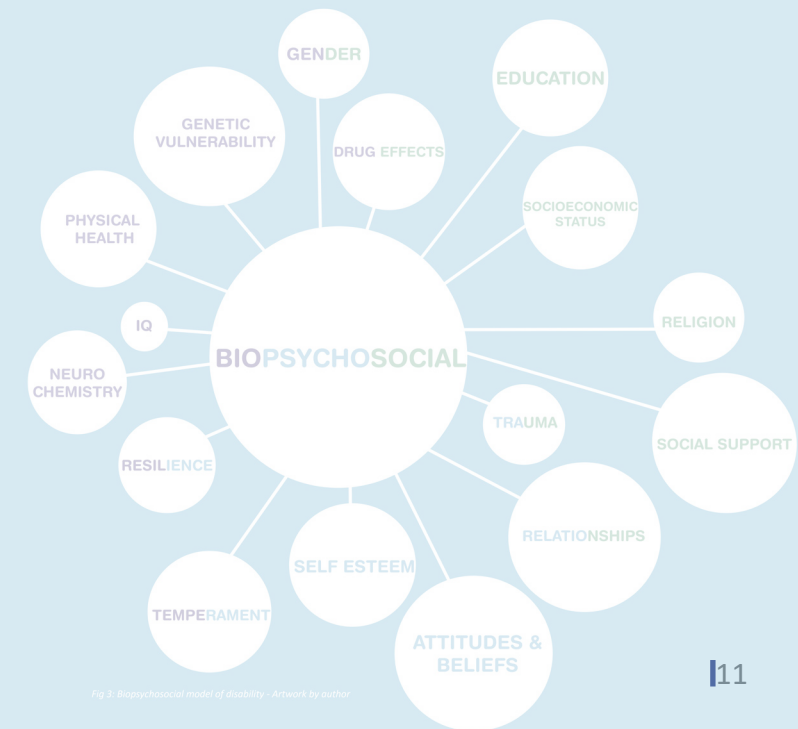Fig 3: Biopsychosocial model of disability - Artwork by author

How is Isolation in the disabled community related to sustainability?

To understand the relationship between Sustainability and isolation in the disabled community it is first important to look at the factors that cause it and the outcomes that come from it. When we understand causality and effect, then we can begin to understand how Sustainable Design includes isolation in the disabled community.

Causes: Access issues, Mobility, Energy levels, Lack of work, Poverty, Access to education, Prejudice and lack of awareness

Effects: Mental health deterioration, Physical health deterioration, Unemployment, Poverty, Lack of social mobility, Discrimination

Using the 21 UN Sustainable Development goals as a benchmark, we can see that these issues fit within almost all the categories. The question that remains is how well represented is the disabled community in some of the more obvious goals that relate to the issue of isolation.

NO POVERTY

Target: reducing poverty by half in line with national poverty lines. This is extremely relevant for the disabled community as 'it remains the case that half of all people in poverty in the UK either have a disability themselves or live with someone who does, compared with just a third of people in households not in poverty.'[10]

Target : nationally appropriate social protection system. Some would argue that the UK already has such a system

in place but the reality is that the system is heavily criticised for its handling of people within it, such as: 'inaccuracy, lack of knowledge, and additional evidence not being considered.'[11] Will the current goals look deeply enough into the system from a person first perspective? If we already have such a system, then why is it that we have such high levels of poverty in our disabled community?

GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Target: reduce illegal substance and alcohol abuse. An issue within the disabled community that is often overlooked is the level of prescriptions of addictive substances for pain relief and mental health. These lead to people becoming addicts and can cause just as much harm to a person's body as those that are illegal. More needs to be done to de-medicalised long-term therapies and focus on sustained support and complimentary therapies such as hypnotherapy, acupuncture, physiotherapy and unlimited sessions with a trained therapist (current limit is 6 weeks of therapy sessions on the NHS).

QUALITY EDUCATION

Target: adaptive infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities. How far will this go? In light of the new remote learning strategies that education settings in the UK have adopted, will that continue post pandemic for students with chronic illness/symptoms? 'More than 6.5 million children in the United States, approximately 13% of all students, miss 15 or more days of school each year due to chronic illness or disability'[12]. Being unable to attend school or participate in lessons is a big factor in isolation. Not only

does it create isolation when it is occurring it also affects the persons ability to achieve the grades that they would otherwise be able to have which could then impact on their employability in future,which could then cause more isolation.

SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Target: provided safe and accessible spaces for those with disabilities. This target in and of itself is of course well needed and will help towards reducing isolation as it will allow disabled people to not only access more spaces but feel that they are welcomed in those spaces. Unfortunately, though the reality is that outdoor spaces are often called accessible but are in fact impractical and sometimes dangerous for certain types of mobility aids. The definitions of accessibility need to be redefined and looked at very carefully. There is a very big difference between a path that is accessible for someone who is being pushed in a wheelchair to a person who is moving themselves in a wheeled device. Steep inclines and rocky paths often break wheelchairs and puncture mobility scooter tires, leaving the disabled people stranded in a spot inaccessible to cars or help.

DECENT WORK ECONOMIC GROWTH

Target: Full and productive employment for those with disabilities. This is a toxic and ableist perspective of the world. Some people with disabilities struggle just to stay alive day to day. We should not be working towards full employment, we should be looking carefully at attitudes towards this kind of thinking and helping people feel it is ok to just exist as a human, and they do not need to work to be considered a worthwhile member of society.

10   Joseph Rountree Foundation, UK poverty 2020/2021- The leading Independent Report, Joseph Rountree Foundation (2021), https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2020-21.

11   Disability Rights UK, "Disability Benefits reduced by 35 billion over the last decade," (2018). https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/2018/september/disability-benefit-spending-reduced-%C2%A35-billion-over-last-decade.

12   Mandy A. Allison and Elliott Attisha, "The Link Between School Attendance and Good Health," Pediatrics 143, no. 2 (2019), https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2018-3648, http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/143/2/e20183648.abstract.

Positive Narrative of Disability

'Disabled' is an immense term, that can mean an infinite number of things. Mostly those things are portrayed as weaknesses and deficiencies. Even when disability is being discussed in a somewhat positive light it is most often served to us in the form of 'inspiration Porn'[18]. Descriptions and tales of how brave a disabled person may be for living with their condition. This is a false positive narrative of disability; it reinforces that disabled people are defined by their disability and undermines that disabled people can be just as successful and influential as an able-bodied person. Each of the articles, within the above images, describe some inspirational disabled people who have achieved a huge amount in their lives. These are the people who have managed to navigate the able bodied world and through them and their perspectives people can gain a much better understanding of what each person's journey is like. The overarching theme of these people's lives seem to be that the able-bodied world largely misunderstands their disability and underestimates their abilities.

These people's stories highlight the fact that it is not just that disabled access is required into public spaces, but that public spaces need to be infused with disabled culture as well as creating physical access.

18 Jan Grue, "The problem with inspiration porn: a tentative definition and a provisional critique," Disability & Society 31, no. 6 (2016/07/02 2016), https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2016.1205473, https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2016.1205473.

The term "inclusive" and why it is problematic.

The term inclusive is problematic in some areas, as the term itself connotes that a person/organisation is including those who would normally be excluded. Peter Slating, *(founder and president of Slatin Group LLC, which provides education and training to the hospitality and tourism industry on service to consumers with disabilities)*[19], names these as the 'Includers'[20].

The 'Includers' are those in privileged positions that claim to create spaces and workforces that generously include a diverse range of people. Somehow this language speaks more of the generosity of the includer than the valour of diversity and inclusion in itself. Slatin goes on to remark that these large corporations are finally realising that a less homogenised workforce is in fact a more productive and creative one. He argues that this is in fact the driving force in creating more inclusion in the workplace and not the altruism of the "Includers".

'as awareness grows that these groups are actual a market segments worth mining' [21].

One could argue that the word is not the issue, that it is attitudes and a bastardisation of a concept created to help people, and that it's the disingenuous people who

'proclaim diverse practice, whilst privilege reigns on'[22].

However, even if you take the word completely divorced from all human intervention there is one rather large issue, that it is the opposite of the word exclusive. At first sight that may not be an issue, but exclusivity is a highly prised state of being. It means the best of the best, the rich, and famous. Therefore, when considering these two words together the social dichotomy becomes more apparent. If a certain group of people can only access inclusive areas, does that mean that they will never be allowed to become those with exclusive access? Can disabled and under-represented communities be part of an exclusive sector of society?

By using language without problematising[23] it with the people that it refers to regularly, the language can become a parody of itself through its uses and interpretation in day to day culture.

19   "about - peter slatin," 2020, accessed 06/12/2020, 2020, http://slatingroup.com/about#:~:text=Peter%20Slatin%20is%20the%20founder,service%20to%20consumers%20with%20disabilities.&-text=Peter%20is%20a%20longtime%20advocate%20for%20disability%20rights.

20 Peter Slatin, "The Trouble With Inclusion," (2020), https://www.forbes.com/sites/peterslatin/2019/08/13/the-trouble-with-inclusion/.

21   Slatin, "The Trouble With Inclusion."

22   Katharina Fink, ""When Making is Inclusive, Good Things Happen"–Really? Why Diversity is Problematic, and Why an Inclusive Practice Might Re-Politicize the Museum" (paper presented at the Diversity Gains, 2020).

23   Roger Deacon, "Theory as practice: Foucault's concept of problematization," Telos 2000, no. 118 (2000).

"A double bond is far worse than a straightforward damned-if-you-do, damned-if-you-don't dilemma. It requires you to obey two mutually exclusive commands: Anything you do to fulfil one violates the other"[24]

24 DEBORAH Tannen, "The double bind," Thirty Ways of Looking at Hillary. New York: Harper Collins (2008).

Why is Equal Representation important?

FAIRER DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH

GREATER SOCIAL MOBILITY

HIGHER GDP

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

DISCRIMINATION

EQUAL REPRESENTATION ON ALL PLATFORMS

TARGETED UNIVERSALISM

COLONISATION

IMPROVED HEALTH

BIASED SOCIETAL IDEOLOGIES CREATED BY OVER REPRESENTED GROUPS
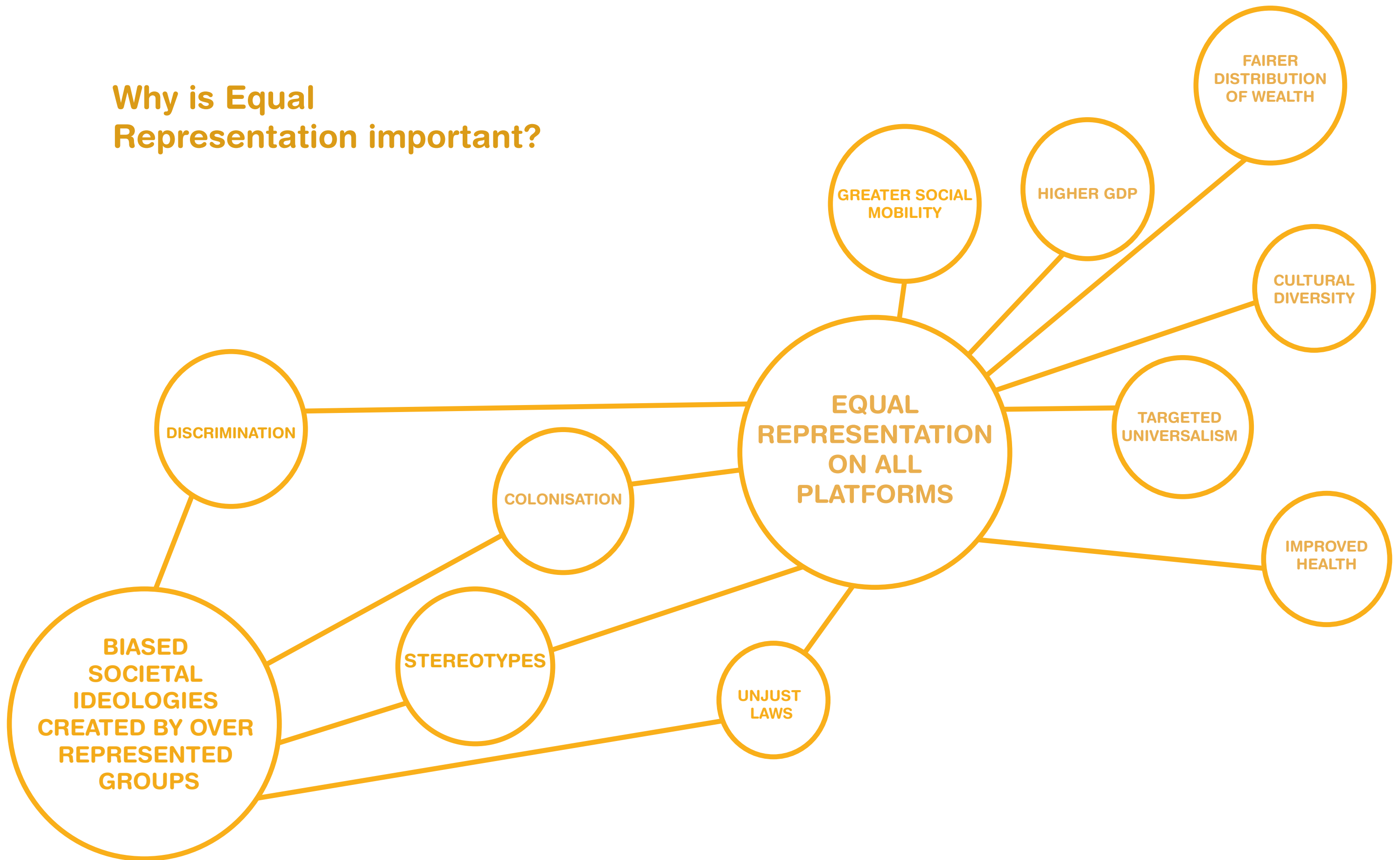
STEREOTYPES

UNJUST LAWS

Fig 9: Diagram :The importance of equal representation - artwork by author

"In a system that generates masses, individualism is the only way out. But then what happens to community -- to society?"

— *Jeanette Winterson, Why Be Happy When You Could Normal*

25　　　Jeanette Winterson, Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal? (repr., New York: Grove Press, 2013).

"While the coronavirus pandemic has led to unprecedented restrictions for billions of people, for many with disabilities, the lockdown has paradoxically opened up the world" [26]

The disabled community have been experiencing some unexpected benefits as the world has gone in to lock down. This has meant a massive increase in online and virtual communication, which has in turn lead to disabled people being able to participate in many more activities that would have been impossible for them to do before. In this next section, I look at some of the key factors in this and the impact of them using the Biopsychosocial model as a reference point. Additionally, I will be looking at the dichotomy of reduction in isolation during lockdown from a subjective perspective, recounting personal experiences and those relayed to me by others from the disabled community.

26 Ryan Frances, "Covid lockdown opening up world for people with disabilities," The Guardian (uk/web) 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/20/covid-lockdown-opening-up-world-for-people-with-disabilities.

Positive Outcomes of Pandemic Life

The Biopsychosocial model gives us a holistic view of disability. By using it to measure the theoretical impact of how the increase in virtual culture has affected the disabled community we can gain a well-rounded view of the issue.
A recent report by the Law Society of Cardiff University, reports

remote working as 'historically the most requested (and most refused) reasonable adjustment' [27]

and goes on to describe the shared experience as a catalyst to the reshaping of thinking behind what was previously believed to be a lesser version of office working. They go on to highlight that their findings suggest that

'The vast majority of disabled people have welcomed home-working (…), in particular the benefits of it having been a shared experience.' [28]

For some people with disabilities, even the journey to work would exhaust them. Being able to manage self-care in public places is another huge barrier for those with disabilities that is totally removed when they are able to work from home. The everyday lives of disabled people differ hugely but being able to manage their own environment on days when they are most affected by their disability can increase someone's ability to work or live a productive life. From being able to change a colostomy bag often during a bad IBD flare up in your own bathroom

to being able to manage sensory inputs on days where mental health is challenging. The ability to choose to work from home for disabled people on those days could make a difference between being employed or not.

Work and employment are not the be all and end all of life, being able to visit cultural and ceremonial places that may have previously been more difficult to access or impossible in some cases, has enabled in a not insignificant way, disabled people to take part in their lives and regain some of the aspects that they may have lost or always wished to be part of. Being able to attend medical appointments via phone or video chat creates an additional route to accessing health care. That, in itself is always a positive for the disabled community who may struggle to attend face to face appointments for a wide range of reasons. It has even been reported that the increased availability of GP's has led to a decrease in non-urgent accident and emergency visits [29] .

The ramifications of these pandemic life work-arounds are abundant and significant.

How can we keep this discussion going? How can we navigate industrial, medical and cultural progress to incorporate the virtual world in tandem with face to face life once the pandemic is over?

27 Hirst Natasha Foster Debbie, The impact of COVID-19 on the employment and training of disabled lawyers in England and Wale: Opportunities for job-redesign and best practice, Cardiff University (The Law Society, 2020), http://legallydisabled.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Covid-report-TLS-Oct-2020-FINAL.pdf.

28 Foster Debbie, The impact of COVID-19 on the employment and training of disabled lawyers in England and Wale: Opportunities for job-redesign and best practice.

29 Pariza Paris Clarke Geraldine, Wolters Arne, "How are total triage and remote consultation changing the use of emergency care?," The Health Foundation (03/12/2020 2020). https://www.health.org.uk/news-and-comment/charts-and-infographics/how-are-total-triage-and-remote-consultation-changing-the-us.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

NEURO CHEMISTRY

DRUG EFFECTS

DIET & LIFESTYLE

DISABILITY

PHYSICAL

RESILIENCE

STRESS REACTIVITY

PEER RELATIONSHIPS

EDUCATION

LEARNING/MEMORY

GRIEF

TRAUMA

SOCIAL SUPPORT

RELIGION
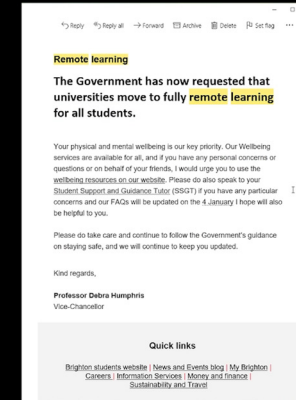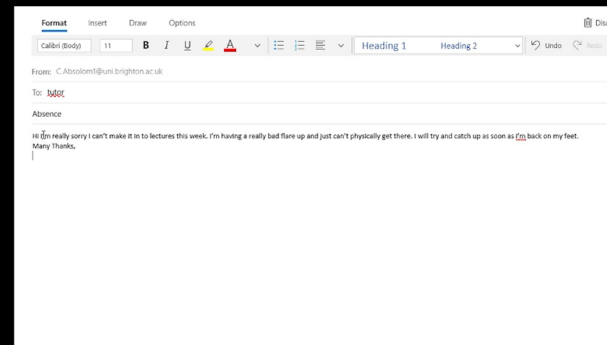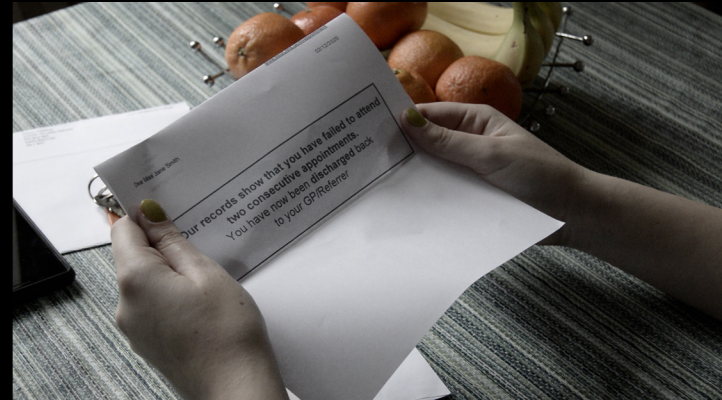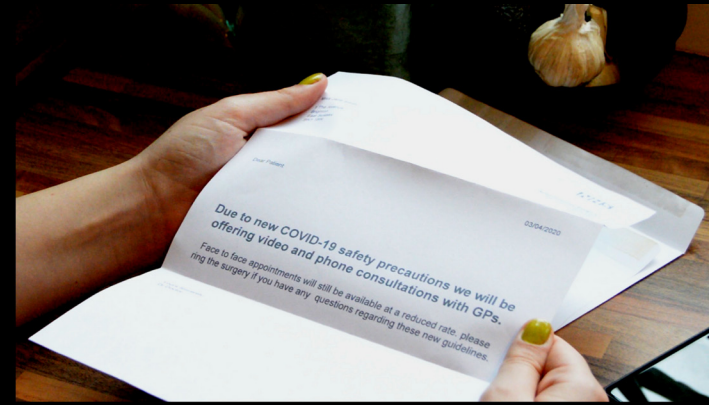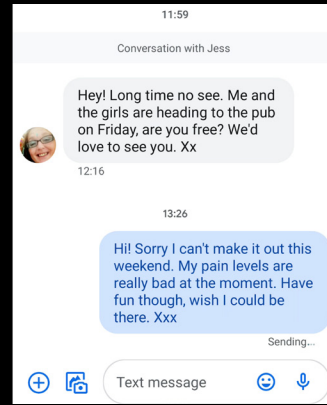
BEHAVIOUR

SELF ESTEEM

TEMPERAMENT

Fig 10: Interactive Diagram outlining the positive outcomes of the latest pandemic virtual life work arounds in relation to the Biopsychosocial model of disability - artwork by author

The film that I produced tells the story of common issues that people in the disabled community face and how remote and virtual communication has help change people's lives for the better.

It demonstrates how the COVID-19 pandemic has opened up some of the world to disabled people that was previously lost to them.

An interesting learning moment for me was to understand where my personal experiences overlapped with other peoples and to find the line where they went from being solitary experiences into cultural knowledge. The **standpoint theory** argues that under-represented groups have a different type of knowledge that is often overlooked and substituted by other more well represented voices.

Haring writes of the production of knowledge and practice of power[30] , this theory reinforces how important is to hear individuals' stories.

The film itself isn't entirely autobiographical, but I would say that it is **autoethnographical**[31] , it describes not just my own personal experiences, but also those of my peers.

30   Sandra G Harding, The feminist standpoint theory reader: Intellectual and political controversies (Psychology Press, 2004).

31   Carolyn Ellis, Tony E Adams, and Arthur P Bochner, "Autoethnography: an overview," Historical social research/Historische sozialforschung (2011).

Changing the Negative Narrative of Online Communicaation in The Media

Many disable people depend on online communication to make friends and stay informed.

'Research into Internet-based support sites has found that social support and an online sense of community can be developed through computer mediated communication channels'[32]

and yet the media is flooded with negative associations with online usage. An example of this was a campaign created by a Phd student Ajit Johnson. He produced a series of 'hard hitting' illustrations designed to make people feel negatively about their online life. His aim was to promote people putting away their phones and, as he put it: 'you Need To 'Live' Your Life Well Because It's The Only Life You Have'[33]. This sentiment in itself is a good one, getting people off their phones and living their lives to the fullest. However, this kind of message shames those who are not able to go out and live the life that society deems an acceptable way to spend your existence.

Having these types of black and white narratives are divisive and damaging for the under-represented.

I feel this is an important position to take when thinking about how my ideas and concepts are to be communicated further down the line.

Scroll over the images on the right hand side of this page to see the edits that I created as a response Johnson's #thisgenreation campaign.

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32   Patricia Obst and Jana Stafurik, "Online we are all able bodied: Online psychological sense of community and social support found through membership of disability-specific websites promotes well-being for people living with a physical disability," Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology 20, no. 6 (2010).

33 "You Need To 'Live' Your Life Well Because It's The Only Life You Have," 2015, accessed 01/12/2020, 2020, https://www.indiatimes.com/lifestyle/self/you-need-to-live-your-life-well-because-its-the-only-life-you-have-244463.html.

"The only important thing about design is how it relates to people."

-Viktor Papanek design for the real world.

34 Victor Papanek, Design for the real world: human ecology and social change (St Albans: Paladin, 1974).

"I was forced to accept a life in a
wheelchair for four years.
The first thing I noticed was the
gradual loss of many of my
friends of long standing"

Humanity's proclivity for choosing the path of least resistance can translate into
a decline in socialising with their disabled friends. Similarly constant barriers to the
outside world can lead to disabled people avoiding going out as it can be emotionally and
physically draining to overcome barriers constantly. I'm interested in how good design can
overcome the barriers that create this type of task avoidance behaviour.

UX/UI Design

This field is more commonly associated with industry as a tool used to promote economic growth. However, if we substitute the end goal of industrial growth to growth in human interaction then it becomes very relevant for tackling isolation in the disabled community.

'Every software product has a user-facing side that was built for people to interact with. That interaction becomes an experience they go through when they use the product. It's the UX designer's job to make that experience a great one.'[36]

UX and UI design is used in industry to create products such as websites, apps or even physical objects that are interesting and enjoyable for the consumers to use. In terms of my research, this is interesting as it is a direct attack on barriers and therefore would be a vi-

tal part of my project moving forward. The UX/UI principles go further than simply eliminating barriers, the idea is to create designs that

"design for pleasure rather than for the absence of pain"[37].

Meaning that the aim is not only to overcome barriers but to add in incentives where they once were. I find this particular idea compelling and feel that it would enable a design to be longer lived and more sustainable, making connections with isolated people desirable and rewarding beyond the connection itself. They would then be comparable to going to the pub to see friends or a nice restaurant on a date. The atmosphere and activities that can be found in the locations where people socialise are all part of the draw to connect with people. Would a Friday night outing to the pub with friends be so popular if people were not experiencing additional benefits in addition to the interactions with their friends?

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36   Palmer Alex, "what is UX really?," Design and Development, 09/12/2020, 2016, https://thenextweb.com/dd/2016/08/11/what-the-hell-is-ux-design/.

37   Marc Hassenzahl and Noam Tractinsky, "User experience-a research agenda," Behaviour & information technology 25, no. 2 (2006).
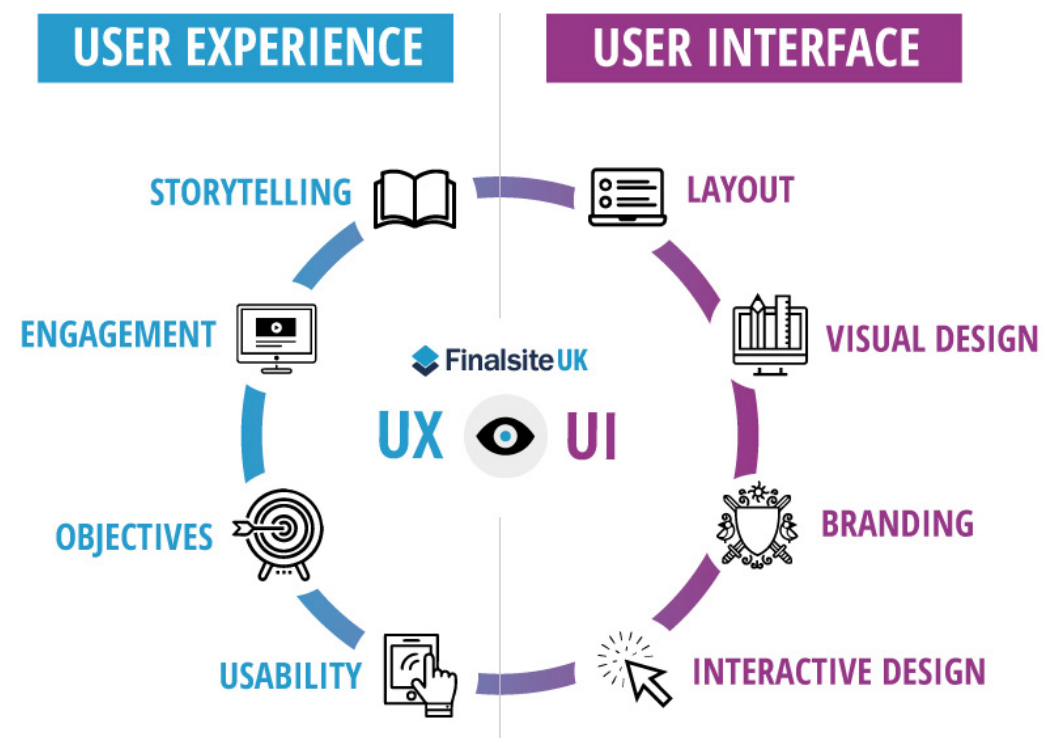
Some examples of UX/UI Design in the real world:

UX designer Ian Hamilton reimagined the London underground tube map for people with visual impairments [38]. Whilst widely revered as an accessible design the was a point on which the map fell down as the original map is colour coded. When one considers that an estimated 8.5% of the UK population suffer from some sort of colour blindness disorder it becomes unusable for over 5.7 million people in the UK [39]. Transport for London's solution to this issue was to produce a black and white map which was very difficult to read and lowered the usability of the map in general. Hamilton's version of the map considered several different visual impairments and tried to retain the usability of colours wherever possible. This type of UX design seems to be a more effective way of working with impairments. Adding diversity to the options available and working within the intricacies of the impairments rather than trying to produce a one size fits all.

Fig 19: Ian Hamilton : redesign of the London Underground maps for people with visual impaireement : How the blue/yellow high contrast version helps those with cataracts. www.brilliantmaps.com/colour-blind-tube-map/

UX/UI design on brighton and hove buses is a good example of how one object can affect the user in multiple ways. The button not only functions as a way to get on the bus, by alerting the driver that a ramp is required, but also as a signal to the user that this is a space where they are welcome and is accessible for them and their wheelchair. It is also designed to be easily seen and read as black type on a yellow background is the most legible for those with visual impairements. One thing it may be lacking in that is style, it is chocked full of function but has neglected the social aspect of the design. Does the user feel proud to press this button? Does it make the user feel good or is it simply a means to an end? And if this button had been designed for able bodied users would that element have been considered more thouroughly?

Fig 20: Disabled ramp request button- Brighton and hove Bus Company, 2019- Photo by author.

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38 "Ian Hamilton Design and consultancy," 2013-2015, accessed 04/11/2019, 2019, http://ian-hamilton.com/.

39 unknown, "7 tube maps only the colour blind will truly appreciate," (brilliantmaps.com, 2015). https://brilliantmaps.com/colour-blind-tube-map/.

Social Design

Social design is a subject not easily defined and it is for this reason that it gives space to a huge variety of design styles that are sometimes in opposition. But at the core of all social design is the key factor that whatever is being created has the final goal of making a positive and sustainable change in the communities involved, whether that be through reactive design centred around changing what is already there or planning for a future world that is structured more sustainably from the start.

> "Is a design activity that deals with problems that are not dealt with by the market or by the state, and in which the involved people do not normally have a voice (for the simple reason that they do not have the economic or political means to generate a formal demand).[40]"

At first glance Social design appears to be a self-explanatory term: A design that solves social problems. In reality, it is nuanced in that both the words "social" and "design" are pluralistic by nature. Consequently, Social design opens itself up into a vast, multidisciplinary field. Perhaps only truly described and defined by the designers and work produced under its banner.

The first group of people to challenge the design world popped up almost simultaneously with the emergence of design in the developing post war industrialisation and economic boom of the 60's.

Aparticular group of designers that lived, worked and protested during the 60's began to have their voices heard when Product Designer Victor Papanek published, in 1972, his book called "Design for the real world "[41] . This, his 2nd book, was a scathing review of the design world and its practices, calling out social and ecological red flags that were becoming embedded in modern society due to the proliferation of consumerism and ideas like designed obsolescence and mass production goods. It was heralded as the "Seminal text of twentieth century design activism" and "becoming the most widely read and globally cited design polemic of its time, politicising a generation of design students."[42] .

Victor Papanek, his colleagues and later his students devoted their design careers to solving social problems inherently attached to certain products. Things like reducing the cost of a voice box so that it no longer cost $900, instead could be purchased for $8 making health care more accessible to the lower economic classes.

Some examples of Social Design in the real world:

Holland,2015[43] "Humanitas Denever became the first intergenerational coexistence nursing home" Humanitas Denever became the first intergenerational coexistence nursing home. Ms Gea Sijpkes MBA devised the idea to offer free lodging to local university students in exchange for 30 hours per month of volunteering with the elderly people. They are now in their second generation of students and the scheme has been a huge success. Other care homes around the world have also taken up the model. This intergenerational contact is invaluable to the health and wellbeing of both the elderly and the young people [44].

Social designer Guy Julier[45] lead a project in Leeds he and his team sought to regenerate a run-down area that was hit by the banking crisis of 2008. He talks about focusing on hidden assets, uncertificated skills of the individuals that can helps support the community during difficult times. This person focused, ground up approach enables regeneration without the cost of new buildings and infrastructure.

These community based ideas that thrive from a basis of diversity are interesting examples of how a important it is to diversify our spaces and cultures. The benefits of having a variety of people engaging in a space are tangible and significant.

Fig 21: Map of area in Leeds were Guy Julier and a team of other designers worked on a community project 2008. www.protopublics.org/2015/05/05/a-qa-between-sue-ball-and-guy-julier/

Fig 22: Dinning room photo at Humanitas Deventer. Student resident serves food to the service users. Multigenerational care home. Holland 2015. www.humanitasdeventer.nl/english/73-english/194-the-living-students-of-humanitas

40   "Design for social innovation vs. social design," 2014, accessed 16/10/2020, 2020,
41   Victor Papanek, Design for the real world: human ecology and social change (St Albans: Paladin, 1974
42   Alison J. Clarke, "- "Actions Speak Louder": Victor Papanek and the Legacy of Design Activism Y1 - 2013," - Design and Culture, no. - 2, - Journal Article.

43 , accessed 14/10/2020, 2020, https://www.humanitasdeventer.nl/english.
44 Marlous Elisabeth Arentshorst, Roy Reinier Kloet, and Alexander Peine, "Intergenerational Housing: The Case of Humanitas Netherlands," Journal of Housing For the Elderly 33, no. 3 (2019/07/03 2019), https://doi.org/10.1080/02763893.2018.1561592,
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Conclusion

The issues around how we tackle isolation in the disabled community are complex and diverse. New hope has breathed life into the possibility of creating more accessible work culture through remote working allow more disabled people to work and experiences from the comfort of their home. Creating a positive narrative around remote and virtual communications is also important to ensure that those using them are not marginalised. The importance of getting isolated disabled people out into the outside world whenever possible is not to be underplayed. Creating spaces and journeys that not only allow disabled people to access them but also represent disabled culture.

Disabled Culture needs to be recognised and infused into mainstream society, this will help with awareness and reduce discrimination. We need to view the lack of disabled culture as importantly as a lack of ramps or hearing loops. Disabled people need to feel comfortable to self-care in public places and the public needs to be educated on how to deal with such occurrences.

The ideal is to create a balance between the ability to stay I when need be and feeling safe and supported to go out as much as possible. The tensions between those two elements are crucial. Too much of one and we will have a situation where disabled people are all working from home and spaces and cultural changes become further and further apart as disabled people populate the outside world less and less.

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