

The Purple Influence Campaign – the campaign to P.I.C. up and run with

Introducing the campaign for launching on International Day for Disabled People 3/12/20

Traditionally campaigns go like this. My organisation would research an issue and produce a campaign report with tailored recommendations. The report with its findings would be disseminated amongst the organisation's campaign supporters. They would be asked to lobby their MPs. The MPs would be asked to lobby the Government minister. The minister would bow to this public pressure. A campaign victory would be chalked off and the next action plan for the next recommendation activated. With 38 degrees or Avazz these activities moved on line but it is still the same thinking. Great when it works but what to do when it doesn't? What follows are my answers.

When it doesn't work we need to change the parameters. Instead of using our arguments can we use the Government's, that's called reframing the argument. Instead of lobbying the Government to implement the change could we not identify how we ourselves could deliver the change and lobby ourselves instead? That's called "be the change." Instead of the energy sapping, concentration depleting mantra that change will come why not work in the future. That's known as the eternal now. Lastly let's not ask for the authority but simply assume it, that's called distributed leadership. Instead of the confidence that comes from power let us connect to the self-love that give rise to conviction – that's called self-worth.

Reframing disability

The Government wants resilience. We can give it them. Everyone is born with a measure of resilience that's why we keep getting up and walking no matter how often we fall down. However it is disabled people who continue to be tested by adversity. The Government want innovation but again it is us disabled people who have to keep finding ways to do the things that others are never challenged to do. The Government pays for infrastructure but if the successful tenderers don't recruit a fair share of disabled talent then the Government will pay again through the social security system, they will pay three times if they borrowed the money to fund the investments. Who amongst those of you who join this campaign can help me to do the calculations for the proofs?

Be the change

The Government is committed to a scarcity model of available support whereby almost every form of support is subject to rationing conducted via tests for eligibility. Can we break through these artificial barriers by relational welfare whereby those who receive support help others, 3 D printing whereby aids are customised and printed to order according to need, let us set up the skills exchange and the asset exchange too that begin giving disabled people access to the resources they can learn to make a living from.

The eternal now

It is possible to argue that the Government expects to impose a lockdown in January following the festivities of Christmas and the New Year. So instead of January being a test of endurance they have brought the future forward by releasing people from a national lockdown into what is in the main a tier three or two existence on December 3rd. The question then arises, if the Government can bring the future forward or as in the circuit breaker lockdown roll back the present can we? The answer is of course yes. A good start is the framing of a disruptive hypothesis. The one we used for the AHRC funded project went

like this, “If in 1985 we had taken young and unemployed disabled people and taught them how to use personal computers then I would surmise that by 1990 they would have obtained the jobs first by helping businesses to digitalise their customer records. So by extension what can we teach young and unemployed disabled people in 2020 such that they obtain the first jobs in that or any other sector by 2025? I have recruited as many futurists that I can find to sieve the sand for that gem of an answer, in truth I think that we as a community we already know what the answers are.

Distributed leadership

In conventional campaigning there is a leader who sits down with another leader for some intellectual arm wrestling but suppose instead everyone optimises their own role of leadership to uphold the rights and dignity of minorities in the same way that the teachers in occupied Denmark refused to teach Nazi ideology. Let’s look at some possibilities in relation to the employment of disabled people. If the Disability Confident scheme doesn’t require mandatory reporting of disabled employment nor even their actual recruitment then businesses are free to supersede the award scheme by doing precisely that. If the Government won’t advertise the Access to Work scheme then the voluntary sector is free to do so. Just as the slave carried the Roman officer’s bags not one mile but two we can both radically oppose and radically engage to obtain the same result – change!

Self-worth

In 1906 Wilhelm Voight a convict shoemaker who was refused residency formed an unusual plan. He bought a military uniform, intercepts a troop of soldiers returning to barracks and assumed command of them. He issued orders to them to march on the town hall of Kopernick. There they arrested the Mayor and his deputy for “irregularities”. Everyone he encountered accepted his orders. Unlike Voight’s ending (he went on to steal public money for which he was sentenced to four years imprisonment) I think there is only one take away from the story but it is a powerful one. The lowliest person can have influence but needs to feel that they have the self-worth to deserve what is already their democratic birth right.

The PIC of the bunch of campaigns out there

Justice for disabled people is in all of our hands. My collaborator Jane C Woods has offered an exercise in influence. Use and develop your influence creatively and with respect for the self-worth of everyone else. Tell me your own story of the influence you had on yourself and those you supported. I will invite the artists in our Disability Resilience Network to tell your story, if you choose, to everyone else. Together we will then define the campaign.

References for the campaign and food for the mind, body and spirit

- 1) **United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities**
- 2) ***Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way*, Augsburg Fortress, 2003**
- 3) <https://www.changingpeople.co.uk/personal-development-exercises-7-influence/>

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