

ID, Empowered by Accenture - Roundtable – Are you sitting uncomfortably?

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

[00:28 - 01:03] Adam Pearson: Hello and welcome back this is our second session of the day, thought are you sitting uncomfortably. Some of you may recognize me from the earlier session, I have one of those faces and I am not alone, I am joined by two lovely people Paris and Gavin. So I would introduce them but I think they are far better equipped to introduce themselves because no one knows them better than them. So Paris who the devil are you?

[01:05 - 01:50] Paris Lees: Hello everybody. Who am I, oh that's a good question. I am a writer and I guess a campaigner who is known for writing about transgender people and discrimination against transgender people, sometimes people call me an activist but that makes me feel like I should be handcuffed to the railings outside Downing Street, which is not really my style. But yeah I guess I am somebody who feels very strongly that trans people should be able to live their lives free from discrimination. So if that makes me an activist I guess I am.

[01:52 - 01:55] Adam Pearson: Excellent. And Gavin?

[01:57 - 03:44] Gavin Young: Thanks Adam. Firstly, this is a huge privilege for me actually to be here with the two of you. So grateful for the team to have me join you. My identity who am I, so many things. I guess I'm part my father and mother and they're kind of Caribbean heritage. I am part a grandfather who -- when I first met him in my -- his Brooklyn home, he taught me how to write like a gentleman as he put it. I'm a big part of my dad who was a truly great man who made his own journey from looking after animals and selling cassava bread in the Caribbean to come over to the U.K., the cold kind of center of empire in the 50s. I'm one of seven black boys in a school of 700 white boys growing up in a Shire county's grammar school learning to blend in.

I'm partly the shame that I felt for laughing, I guess and not fighting the jokes that they told back in those days. Yeah, so many things and now I happen to be the U.K. ethnicity lead within the global I&D

team. But a lot more than that I also happen to be black.

[03:47 - 04:01] Adam Pearson: Excellent. And I suppose my first question and I'm going to throw to you first on Paris. It's a loaded one so strap in. Why does diversity matter?

[04:03 - 06:57] Paris Lees: I think for me diversity matters because we are diverse, right? It's always been this thing that I've struggled with of people saying be normal, you've got to be normal, got to fit in, got to conform. And I do understand that but I think it's really important to reframe this that actually diversity is normal. It's normal within a human given population for a small percentage of people to be transgender for example. So that diversity is normal. So how do we celebrate everybody within society? How do we get the best out of everybody? How do we make sure that nobody is left out and that everybody gets to be who they are supposed to be? And I just feel that when we close things off to people just because of a perceived difference then it's not only unfair to that individual, we're all sort of poorer as a society, so that's why diversity is important to me and really for me it's about equality of opportunity, because we're not all equal and sometimes we don't want to be equal because we have different needs from one another. But everybody deserves a seat at the table or at least a shot of getting a seat at the table based on their merits. Everybody deserves a slice of the pie.

And I grew up for instance being told that I didn't have any value that there was something wrong with me. That I was a pervert that I was defective essentially that I was inferior to everybody else and perhaps it's arrogance, deranged self-assuredness but I always felt that I had value and I feel that through my writing and things that I've done in my life I have provided value to the community but there

are so many other people who don't get to shine and I think the quote that really strikes me is, Alice Walker said that she knows so many people from her youth who didn't get to be who they were supposed to be because they were held back by oppression and discrimination and systemic racism and I sort of feel that way about a lot of trans people that I know and a lot of working-class people that I know. And I just think it's so desperately sad when it doesn't have to be that way.

[07:00 - 07:49] Adam Pearson: I really like what you said about equality of opportunity and taking it away from a quantitative outcome because as you say we aren't all the same. And there's this myth that exists and it's something I try and break down all the time if you treat everyone equally, you see everyone fairly. Well that isn't true because it assumes everyone has the same needs and has started from the same point. If I have two dogs, a Chihuahua and a Husky and I treat both those dogs equally. One of those dogs will die or be taken away from me. I mean Gavin you said earlier you were one of seven black boys in a school of 700. So diversity must be something that you've wrestled with from a very young age?

[07:51 - 09:34] Gavin Young: Yeah absolutely and it's interesting because diversity why is it important, it's as important as our existence. It's who we are as a species, I mean it's quite frankly as simple as that. Our species is diverse. Nature has built us this way and I think it's kind of arrogant I think when one group within our species somehow feels a superiority over others. And so I would put it as simply as that diversity is who we are, it's not an additive, it's not something we should strive for; it's actually our true existence.

Yes, it's something that I did; did I struggle with it, I'm not sure actually I did struggle with diversity. I think when before going

to secondary school at 12 years old, I wasn't even conscious of diversity. I just grew up in a place where everyone was different and you just accepted it and we were kids. So you didn't think about it but then at 12 years old going to that school and having people making jokes about your skin color and teachers as well making comments which today wouldn't be acceptable. It did make me realize that we weren't the same and that I would as I thought then have to blend in to avoid the kind of the slings and arrows if you will but I've managed to get past that I'll say that much.

[09:35 - 09:55] Adam Pearson: And looking how did that make you feel then and now because we're about a year, we moved from Black Lives Matter. Have things changed, are things changing, do we may be over complicate the diversity discussion rather than just I suppose getting on with it.

[09:58 - 11:25] Gavin Young: It's a really good point actually. I think one of the challenges that we face is exactly the over complication of the discussion and the conversations that need to be had. I think people will often come to me and ask how do I talk to a black person. And I assume they're asking me because I happen to be black and therefore I represent black people on earth which clearly isn't true. I can only represent myself. And I think people need to step back a little bit and recognize that first and foremost we're all humans even those people who have been conditioned to believe that they are their protected characteristic, right? If the news always talks about you and uses your skin color first, you start to believe and internalize the fact that's who you are and that's the most important part of your identity and even though it is a huge part of my identity, it's hugely important. It's not the only thing that's important to me.

So when we're having those conversations with people starting off just with a curiosity that wants to learn about them as an individual first and not complicating it first of all on those initial interactions with all of the other difficult things.

[11:28 - 11:57] Adam Pearson: So Paris how can we inject a little bit more humanity into the diversity conversation and how do we do that and certainly there's a lot of infighting within the disabled community as to what best practice. How do we inject a bit of humanity into this conversation and stop this becoming a massive almost a professional impact between everyone because ultimately we all want the same thing, right?

[11:59 - 15:34] Paris Lees: That's a really good question. This is something that I struggled with all the time and have done for many years actually because I think the thing that I've identified as one of the major sort of sticking points like the barriers to sort of progressing is lack of empathy, right? So just as we've got diversity on various different measures within society there's diversity of empathy, right? So some people are really empathetic and they're able much more easily to put themselves in the shoes of somebody whose experience is very different to their own and that's great.

But there are clearly a significant proportion of people who are not able to do that and I think that part of that is cultural and we've got a culture that sort of encourages our worst natures and selfishness and greed. I think some of it is just the fact that some people just aren't wired the same. They're just not able to do it in the same way, these things I can't do very well. I'm not a particularly sporty person. But like being sporty it is a muscle that you can grow but we need to accept that a lot of people are not going to be able to do that.

And I don't really know what the answer to that is actually because I think what made me realize the extent of the issue was, I think I am a pretty empathetic person but when my cat died a few years ago, it absolutely floored me, it was so devastating. And I realized looking back through my life I've actually been really unsympathetic when people's pets had died and maybe a little bit nasty, I wasn't just saying, oh, but it's just a dog get over it, make it into a handbag kind of thing. And then, it happened to me and I was like oh, this is actually really, really, really painful like it's genuinely grief. And if I can't understand somebody's grief fully of losing a pet, how on earth are they going to empathize with something that is so alien to them and the idea that you're in the wrong body you want to have an operation on your genitals to most people is just like, 'what, you know, are you serious,' they're just never going to get it because they haven't been through it.

And I'm not here to plug my book but the honest answer to this is that I'm kind of all out of ideas and for me one of the greatest ways of increasing empathy which seems to me with the trans-ing in particular seems to be the missing element is literature. And so I've written my story not as a sort of a polemic or a sort of straight up autobiography but it reads as fiction because it's one thing for me to tell you that I was bullied every day at school and I was bullied violently and I didn't feel safe at home. And it's another thing to actually viscerally take you back there as though you're speaking to me at that time of my life and I'm actually taking you back into that world and recreating it. So that's my best shot really at injecting some empathy into the conversation but I'm afraid I don't really have any more comprehensive answers than that.

[15:36 - 17:53] Adam Pearson: Well, I think sometimes as I alluded too earlier,

the more comprehensive answers can over complicate things and perhaps muddy the waters and I think disability has a lot of parallels with what you just said in that you don't get it, when you get it, right? And that everyone can sort of try and empathize a little bit and put yourselves in those shoes as much as possible but until your site starts to go or your hearing starts to go or your mobility starts to go, you don't truly appreciate how inaccessible some areas of society are. And a case in point, if you -- there's a London -- if you look at the London underground map and then compare it to another copy of the same map but that's had all the inaccessible stations taken out of it. It's literally half the size and you lose access to half the underground, if once you simply add a wheelchair or crutches into the mix.

And I do think empathy is the answer and I think the only way we can do that is to have really difficult and uncomfortable conversations but that matter and there is an excuse a story and because often people in my experience have a lot of questions but are afraid to ask them because they don't want to want to offend or fear of saying the wrong thing and being cancelled online or called out by their activists. Is a real threat, particularly with the trans people in the grand scheme of things very new and incredibly nuanced. And even I have loads of questions, I'm always thinking 'oh, is that the right word, is this the right word,' if there is x number of genders how many pronouns are there and what have you. How do we cultivate that landscape where we can enable these conversations without making it really fearful or on the other hand innately hostile?

[17:55 - 21:52] Paris Lees: Well, again, it's another really good question. And I think that a few years ago since we've -- it's certainly not perfect but we do have a legal framework and rights for trans people in this country, so it was always clear to

me that winning people's hearts and minds was the bigger battle. And a few years ago, I was going around to places like the BBC and the Press Complaints Commission and Ofcom and all of these different institutions and organizations. And we were sort of doing like a trans 101 where we sort of like explain what trans is to people. And actually we found that that wasn't working. And, well, it wasn't that it wasn't working but at the end of the meetings you'd have people coming up to you and then you'd always do this, does anybody actually know a trans person and they'd just be like tumbleweed. And then, occasionally you might have one person if it was a big room and they said well actually my uncle is now, my auntie or something. And we'd have people coming up to us at the end saying, wow, wow, I've never had a face-to-face conversation with a trans person before like. Wow, like you're a human being kind of thing.

And we were like, okay, so this is the level of ignorance essentially that we're dealing with. And I don't mean that in a pejorative way necessarily because trans people are less than one percent of the population. So why are people going to be clued upon it, if you've never spoken to, I mean, there's lots of stuff, I don't know about. And I think that from that we formed 'All About Trans' which is a project to connect media individuals work with young trans people so that they can look into the whites of our eyes. And actually see us as people because it's clear to me that a lot of the coverage and the hostile coverage that we're experiencing at that time simply came from the fact that they didn't know who they were writing about and they didn't realize the harm that they were causing.

And it was really important to us in those meetings that we created a space where we would say look ask a stupid question because if nothing counts that gives us

some information about what your starting point is.

So even the bad questions were good because it helped us identify what we needed to work on. And I do think that's really important and I do think that that's one of the limitations of social media but I think I don't want to walk along but just a quick point, I think that it's changed slightly now in the sense that I think a lot of the hostility that we're seeing for trans people for example it's not because people haven't thought about these issues it's because they have thought about the issues and they've come to some rather unpleasant conclusions.

And I do worry and perhaps this is an unpopular thing to say and probably doesn't chime in with what a lot of people in the trans community think. But I do wonder sometimes if the sort of conversations that we're having online is actually now making it worse, I don't mean that to victim blame because there's a lot of very hurt people that are out there and I'm fairly privileged in 2021 but if I was still living in a bedster on a council estate getting messed about by my GP and the benefits agency and I was getting abused in the street, would I be able to be so calm and gracious online possibly not. So again, I don't have all of the answers but I think I can sort of see the problems without quite seeing the solution. So I'm not sure how helpful that is really.

[21:54 - 22:07] Adam Pearson: And Gavin what is the solution, where these things like accountability and allyship split in this entire, I suppose flat flyer that is the diversity conversation.

[22:08 - 26:06] Gavin Young: Yeah. Well, it's interesting, what, first of all, Paris, I think the whole engagement with these conversations online is a disaster. I just fundamentally think it doesn't lead often to any productive conversation. And

it's very, very difficult to have a nuanced conversation online. So I often try to avoid it. But, if from an Accenture perspective, we have many, many thousands of super clever people who I think from the conversations I've had, are often battling like this persistent imposter syndrome and that makes them fearful of exposing their blind spots and their vulnerability, right? So, they're coming at these conversations often from a place of being very smart in one domain and being a knowledge God and so it kind of is sometimes a blocker to learning. And I think that, I don't know if you remember there's this diagram like I saw recently and there's one circle, it's a small circle and it's labeled your comfort zone and then there's a much larger circle a little away, little distance away it's called where the magic happens. And I think it's really difficult for people to make that transition between the two because of this fear as you said of getting it wrong, or being exposed of anything you say being taken down and used against you the court of public opinion.

In terms of some simple ways and I don't have the solution but some simple things to just help start where to start is just to read a bit first to educate yourself first before jumping in. There are some questions that Paris has probably had where you think look that would have taken you 10 minutes just to educate yourself a bit first, right? And I think that people need to do a little bit of investment because it just shows respect to the person they're talking to.

The second is then to get to know people a little bit, I talked about the fact that your gender identity, your ethnicity, your sexual orientation all these things are just one part of your identity. And so starting from those other things, I think is always a good place to start. And then, I think like being like a child if there are any children listening by the way, stay where you are and do your thing. I remember, I was in

the Caribbean many years ago, when I was a child. And I was walking with my cousin, I'm thinking he was around 12 years old at the time. And we're walking along and one minute he stopped and he looked at me as though like he was multiplying two really big numbers and it was like this. And he said kind of conspiratorially, he said Gavin do you see white people every day in England? And I felt like the kid from Sixth Sense because I was like, 'Yes, I see white people every day.'

But it was wonderful because it was coming from that place of being like a child and it was innocent. And I think one of the important things we can do is talk to our children now, have these conversations that seem difficult they're not difficult for kids, right? So, and that's a super important thing that we need to do is make sure we're not going to raise another generation of people who are going to oppress others they see as less than.

[26:08 - 29:02] Adam Pearson: I really like that. I'm a big fan of getting to kids while they're young as well. That's why I do a lot of assemblies, I'm very fortunate -- a lot of my friends are teacher, so every Tuesday or in the week approaching I know I'm going to get loads of WhatsApp mates going, 'Hey are you free on Tuesday,' and it's just like I want to celebrate you with a genetic condition, what do you think?

I had one friend once, on duty Tuesday for me at 7 00 A.M. saying it's Tuesday, we all forgot. We've got nothing. Are you free today? And I was like yes, I am free. And then, she just looks good I'm outside in the car. So and I was too impressed to be angry, I was like the balls on you to drive to my house and then ask me, like massive respect but I do like the nothing about us without us mentality that Paris is alluding to. Very often when you're writing about people, also trying to speak for people, you

to your own gentlemen forget to include their voices and that's setting not only you up from massive failure but that very community on case of point, music the love letter to the autistic community. That has been universally packed by the autistic community which then feeds back into what you said Gavin, and I really like. This would have taken you 10 minutes to Google or to do a bit of research.

But then, getting back to the children very often I think parents are with good intentions trying to shield their children from these difficult conversations or loaded subjects, which in the short-term seems like a great thing but in the long-term it's super dangerous. Whenever I'm out and about kids will ask questions just to, like a bird, it's a dog, yes, the sky is blue, my child is a genius, what's wrong with that man's face. And then, the mood changes. No, no, let them ask and I'll happily answer it and then we can avoid that awkward moment you're feeling happening again and again and again but either the rest of my life, your life, or their life, whichever one of us leaves fast and yeah it's all about mastering the art of having in these difficult conversations which I suppose leads me on to my final question and it's the same question to both of you, obviously, through your own lenses and life experiences. How do we have difficult conversations with people? Paris?

[29:05 - 32:29] Paris Lees: When we have difficult conversations, oh, I mean it's difficult, isn't it, you have to be uncomfortable and I think respect is really important, I think the minute that you start criticizing and shaming somebody else it can quickly go downhill. I know that I've been having a lot of difficult conversations over the past year about gender, about race, about class, about what we're going to do about all of these things. How we're going to make things better? And I think -- it's -- you can have these conversations

with friends who you trust and respect but when you have skin in the game literally, when it's something that's emotional for you and it's not just a debate, it's actually your life that's being discussed, it's almost impossible to have those conversations on online and for them to be useful. So I think we just have to keep trying and recognize that it won't be comfortable. And I think as well, I think maybe we need both, I think sometimes we need the sort of the soft touch and people to come in and be nice and gentle and we're here to listen. And sometimes you do need the raw anger actually to sort of wake people up to the fact that there's a problem. So I think there's actually a space for both.

I do worry in the sense that I feel that in some ways I feel like we're making progress because we're having difficult conversations. In others, I feel like we're more scared and we're more divided than ever in some ways. So I don't know really but I do think that it's really important to have a conversation in good faith because if somebody is determined to see the worst in you and assume the worst intentions in you and they've got an agenda and a motive, I do think that it's appropriate to shut it down sometimes. It's like I'm open to having uncomfortable conversations with people and I've spent the past 10 years doing that.

I've basically devoted my life to doing that and it's always interesting to me if I've pulled out of a panel or something or I've pulled out a discussion that just looks like it's going to be an opportunity for somebody to imply that I'm a man or a rapist or something. People say you're not interested in free speech. You are not interested in speaking to people who have got a different opinion than you. And it's just not true but I do think that within this you have to draw healthy boundaries as well because if somebody just wants a platform to abuse you and insult you and

spread misinformation about you which could genuinely cause harm to you and your community down the line then I think that having healthy boundaries and saying no to stuff is also really important as well as having the difficult conversations.

[32:32 - 33:37] Adam Pearson: No, I completely agree. The old free speech brigade do my head as well I recently -- I don't like it with a couple of comedians for making a very forte joke about disabled women and cat fishing. And the amount of people that came up -- oh it's a joke to me, it's a joke. And I'm like yeah mate, an ableist joke is still ableist you're focusing on the wrong word there like Jim Davidson told jokes or voice sincerely held the least depending on what you're thinking of that. But I think and free speech legally rock and roll but just because something is legally permissible doesn't mean it's societally beneficial. There's nothing in the U.K. law that says it's illegal for me to eat my lawnmower. Do I therefore go, yes, get in, get a time and eat my lawnmower, no I don't because it's a stupid idea. And so yeah I think just because you can legally do it doesn't mean that you should.

And same question to you Gavin, how do we have these difficult yet important conversations.

[33:38 - 33:40] Gavin Young: Yeah, by the way thanks for the image Adam.

[33:41 - 33:42] Adam Pearson: No problem.

[33:45 - 37:22] Gavin Young: First thing I agree wholeheartedly with you Paris on this question of anger. Anger is sometimes absolutely valid, I get so frustrated, have done particularly over the past year with people telling me that or asking me why are they so angry, right? I mean why all this protesting? And as though the centuries of violence don't warrant that,

right? I've seen people who are told that they have to wear a mask and they're willing to do crazy things to fight people because they're told to wear a mask and yet when someone sees their brother or someone who looks like them getting shot or beaten.

When I'm arrested at 12 years old for the first time, there's a reason why I'm angry when I see the police. However, I had two older brothers and they were the fighters in our family. They were the ones who got brought home by the police. They were the ones who fought physically with skinheads in their time and I was a bit younger. And so because I had my first arrest at 12, I kind of realized my dad was telling me, you need to be calm, you need to breathe, you need to be smarter than them. And so that's how I've raised my son. But the fact that I'm more measured than my brothers were doesn't mean that I'm not angry inside. I'm just as angry but I think that there's as you said there are different ways to approach this.

To answer your question Adam, I love movies by the way. For some reason, I love movies with blue people and I used to love the Smurfs and I love the 2009 film Avatar. There is this character, the main character in there is, this guy Jake Sully, I think his name is. He is hanging out with his new 10-foot blue girlfriend. And they're having a moment and he says something which is really powerful. He says I think he says from memory anyway 'I see you' is what he says 'I see you.' And I don't think he means, hey Neytiri, I see you and I notice you're blue. I don't think he's saying that. I think he's saying, I know that you're blue and that's amazing and I see your struggle, I see your history, I see that you're the product of your forefathers, I see your connection to this land and she hears that and she receives it, I think as it's meant and it forms this, I don't know that she feels then safe right to move forward with this guy and then the rest of the film

is their growing connection and loads of courageous kind of heroism where they kind of kick ass and they beat the colonizers.

But the point is, this concept of being seen is hugely important there's been some great work done in Accenture actually by our global employee experience team about what it is that makes people feel like they belong and makes them feel included and it begins with this concept of being seen a feeling that you'll listen to that you matter that your whole self is understood. And I think when people are saying, when you're asking how do we start those conversations that's what you're aiming for. Forget all of the other big stuff and the challenges just try to see Paris, see the person who you're talking to and really actively listen. So I'll pause there.

[37:24 - 37:44] Adam Pearson: And thank you so much. This has been a really great conversation. I could talk to you both like all day for several days but there's some questions coming in from the audience. So we will shortly be hearing, the Voice of God asking us questions that have come in from the audience.

[37:45 - 41:00] Voice of God: Thank you, Adam. I am the Voice of God. Thank you everybody for the great conversation today. It's been incredibly interesting to listen and to feel a little bit uncomfortable and to actually make a difference. So yeah, we've had some questions come in from our audience. And I think on the topics that you both mentioned people can educate themselves a little bit before they even come to have these conversations and it can just help along on that journey. So is there any books, TV shows podcasts and things that you listen to that you would recommend for people to just kind of get that starting point.

[38:31 - 38:36] Paris Lee: I mean I would recommend just following trans people on

social media and a range of trans people, because I mean I just struggle with this because I have always I have never really ended kind of -- I do, I agree with your point Kevin about reading and I think it's important to understand the history of how we've got where we are today and for race, I'd recommend Rennie's book, why I'm no longer talking to white people about race for example. And I could recommend transpose, if people really wanted to understand the ins and outs of that.

But I think for me, I've never really understood that argument because if I meet somebody who's blue, I don't need to know why they're blue, I just need to treat them with respect, right? And I don't need to have seen a Channel 4 documentary on that or read a book on the history of blue people in order to treat that person with respect. So I think that I'm not really used to sort of recommending people to go to resources. When people say what can I do? I know I'm probably supposed to do the work or something like that but I'm like just like be nice and just treat people as human beings.

But I do I really do think that I can't speak to other diversity but for trans people I do think a lot of the problem is people don't realize that we're actually human beings. And I think if you follow people on social media, if you're on social media, sorry. If you follow if people on social media, you see that we like baking or I like French Electronica which sounds really pretentious, but it's like the point is, it's like we're not -- I'm not just a trans person, so I would say read people's social media posts and see that they are human beings. And people never -- I talk about this sometimes and people don't believe me but I don't really talk about being trans in my personal life because it's just not relevant. I only really talk about it because I want things to be better for trans people. So I talk about it publicly but in my everyday life I don't talk about that. And that's the

thing that I want people to know about it not that you have to understand trans or understand why people are trans or in some history of it but just understand that we're people.

[41:01 - 42:12] Gavin Young: God can I come back on that real quick. Since God hasn't stopped me. I agree 100%, Paris, I think the one thing that I would say on from an ethnicity perspective from being a black man is, I don't think that anyone's going to learn about me from reading, it's not going to happen. The challenge is that people somehow think that this is a black issue. They think that they're trying to learn about what it is to be black and it's not. What it is, is learning about why it is other people see me the way they do? Why is it when a police officer sees me, he sees a threat? Why is it that just by being black I am perceived as dissent or aggression? So it's really about understanding yourself. It's really about understanding that all of the negative images that have flowed into our lives, you need to see them for what they are and you need to undo them and it takes a long time. So people need to read to understand themselves more than they need to read to understand me. They want to understand me then just come talk about, I'm ready for that.

[42:20 - 42:52] Voice of God: Thank you so much. Sorry, Adam. We just wanted to finish off quickly with just sort of a final, what do you want people to take away from this, I mean action as we said from your answers there Paris, it's not about necessarily going to read and following people on social media could be a good point. But is there anything that people can do to start having just more conversations and be nicer actually. What is the one thing that people can do to be nicer?

[42:56 - 44:05] Paris Lees: Just be nice and it's such -- I feel like that's such a rubbish answer but it for me it's just not that complicated and I think that is my big

takeaway please just know that people are -- I think when it happens all the time, it happens within the trans community. So it's like I'm just seen as a trans person and it is so boring and it's why if I go to a new hair salon or something I don't really tell people because then it's -- then you are the trans woman or the transgender. So I think just recognize that people are our people and while their identity may seem very exciting to you and interesting to you. It's probably the least interesting thing to them. So that that's my takeaway. I'm not just a trans person, Gavin's not just a black man. It's like I'm a northerner like that that's as much as an important part of my identity as anything else and be nice.

[44:07 - 45:27] Gavin Young: Paris, it doesn't stand you can repeat that so many times, I agree with you 100% just be nice. Also don't try and change the world, right, you're not going to end racism, you're not going to make everything good that doesn't happen. But you can plant a seed where you are. You can lay the first block where you are. My uncle he grew up in the same village as my dad. He spent his whole life there, he didn't leave the Caribbean.

When I was a kid, he proudly took me along the beach just a hundred meters away from his home and he showed me these, I think there were eight of these coconut palms that he planted. When he showed them to me they were tiny, I was looking down on them. When I went back and took my son to the Caribbean, my son -- my uncle had died many years before. And I took my son along that same beach where my dad and my uncle had grown up. And we stood under those same coconut palms and they were many meters in the air, meters high. My uncle never got to see those palms grown but he did plant the seed and me and my son we enjoyed the shade. Just do the work where you are, make small changes where you are, be nice as Paris said, the rest will take care of itself.

[45:29 - 46:30] Paris Lees: I know we're running out of time but I wanted to add as well. In terms of practical advice, if you can resource us, if you can give somebody a job and you can actually help them practically because a lot of the oppression that people experience is simply not having enough of what they need in order to be happy and okay and be stable and have a good life and have a good shot at a life that is, that we would look at and say is worth living rather than a life that we look at and say is pitiable. So for me, yeah, just if there's a way that you can practically help somebody and help them up the ladder to sort of undo that systemic racism and transphobia and everything then that for me, I think is useful. Without being a white savior as well because I know that that is also an issue. Just transfer money into my bank account.

[46:34 - 46:37] Adam Pearson: buy her books, go on Amazon God damn it, she won't flag it, I will.

[46:38 - 46:39] Paris Lees: Yeah, buy my book, yeah.

[46:44 - 46:45] Voice of God: Thank you, Adam. That was really useful.

[46:47 - 46:47] Paris Lees: Thanks. Bye.

[46:48 - 47:01] Adam Pearson: That brings us to the end of our session. So thank you all for all your questions and your engagement. And now we are going to have a little bit of a break for you to all go and be nice to each other.

[47:04 - 47:04] Gavin Young: Thanks, Adam.

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