



## SEASON 4

### EPISODE 05

[INTRO]

**[0:00:05.8] ANNOUNCER:** Welcome back to Happy Porch Radio. The digital agency podcast for progressive agency owners and web professionals. Season four is an exploration of diversity in our industry. Especially gender diversity.

This season, your host, Barry O’Kane is joined by some wonderful cohosts. For conversations with agency leaders and diversity and inclusion experts.

[INTRODUCTION]

**[0:00:32.2] BOK:** Welcome back to Happy Porch Radio. In this episode, Erica and I speak to the amazing Molly Watt. Molly is registered deaf blind due to a genetic condition called Usher Syndrome. She uses her passion and experiences to specialize in accessibility and usability in the world of design. Now, Molly’s story, presentation, and videos are truly inspiring and in this episode, we have a fascinating and wide ranging conversation about inclusion and diversity.

So let’s meet Molly.

[INTERVIEW]

**[0:01:05.5] MW:** Hi, my name’s Molly and I am an accessibility consultant. I have a genetic condition called Usher Syndrome, which forms deafness and blindness. So I was born deaf and then later on found out I was going blind. So this is one of the main reasons really why I’ve fallen in trap to this ability and why I’m so passionate about inclusion and trying to sort of persuade lots of people in all industries to think similar to myself in terms of designing and, you know, just creating all-inclusive experiences for everybody.



**[0:01:39.8] BOK:** Awesome, thank you so much for joining us on the show. Also, as we know, we're doing – I have a cohost with me for every episode and Erica is joining us this week.

Hi, Erica.

**[0:01:49.7] EQ:** Hello, how are you?

**[0:01:52.1] BOK:** Yeah, really good thanks. I reckon we should just jump in, Molly, and I have seen you present and read some of your stuff and you do a really good job of summarizing your own background and as you've done there, why that has sort of led you down to being so passionate and being so involved in accessibility and assistive technology and so on.

But maybe that's a good place to start, if you just wouldn't mind sharing a little bit more of that back story and what led you to where you are now.

**[0:02:19.1] MW:** Sure, yeah. As I just mentioned. I have this condition called Usher Syndrome and one of the early challenges I think was really the adjustment in living from being born as a deaf person, access in the world through my eyes and through hearing aids and then losing my sight and figuring out how to actually access the world around me without having my vision and that's when really, I talk a lot about how privileged I feel to live in a day where we actually have access to better technology that can actually help me on my day to day life.

For instance, I use bits of mainstream tech and I have used all of it and every aspect of my life, so in terms of GTSE, so when I was doing my exam when I was 15, I could not have gotten through it without a kindle or an iPad because I could not access the text books or anything like that. All the material, I had to modify myself using technology, otherwise I would not have been able to succeed in education.

In the midst of all that, was really trying to adjust to kind of the technical strategies as well as also trying to accept that society hadn't quite gotten up to speed where kind of, I would say diversity at that point because I had a constant battle of trying to prove to people that I was actually capable of doing these things and that I was only capable unless I had the right tools and support.



One of the things about having Usher Syndrome or be it, I was born deaf and I knew everything there was about being deaf. Going blind was a whole new story because it was progressive and I lost a lot of my sight in two years so I've registered blind by the age of 14. I was given my first guide dog at the age of 16. A lot of things changed really quickly. I probably say that one of the hardest parts was actually accepting that yes, I was a bit different and I could access things differently, but the people around me weren't all fully understanding of that.

Teachers for instance, they kind of didn't want to believe that I had this condition, "Oh, but you look okay so you must be fine." So I often found myself constantly trying to explain that actually, I'm only so capable because I have the tools, I have this technology that allows me to communicate and be as independent as I am.

So it's really, for a series of experiences, being deaf blind but also with the tools I've been able to have, I really learned more about myself and how to really shout about what is needed and actually how we could try and get society more understanding and actually changing the way we think about accessibility because while a lot of companies talk about accessibility, which is great, I think they address it too much being that it's for a minority group and actually it could be as direct as a majority kind of training so that people could actually be thinking more inclusively.

I guess I'm really passionate about that because I've experienced exclusion. I've experienced what it's like to not be able to access test papers in schools and I've experienced not being able to access being part of a group, a friendship group. That's just – it all can be tied together nicely with the right thinking, the right tools and the right support system. I think that's really why I kind of, after I withdrew from university unfortunately, I withdrew again for some of the reasons that I spoke about; ignorance. You know, I had lectures saying to me, "How are you going to be able to do this if you can't see or hear properly?"

I think I was at a point in my life where I really thought, "You know what? Is this really what I wanted to do? Is this a battle that I want to fight?" I was defeated, I did feel quite defeated but in hindsight, I think what I've been trying to tell me was that I needed to do greater bigger things like the degree that I was doing was to be a teacher, a primary school teacher, because I like the idea of educating the next generation on inclusion and you know, well, if your teacher is deaf blind, you can do anything, you know?



But I think I felt that leaving university meant that I would go on to educate larger audiences. So I kind of did my public speaking and I motivate people and I talk about accessibility inclusion, my life story, what I have led to do and what I do. How I've gained a confidence to be able to do so. Then of course, I started consulting in accessibility, usability and inclusive thinking in different kinds of industries. So whether it be kind of holiday making websites or kind of within recruitment. I've had people talking to me about how can we actually employ people with disabilities, what things we need to be thinking, et cetera.

So I find myself kind of advising people a lot now and I've started doing workshops as well. The workshops are more about assisted technology and how we can make everything more compatible with assisted technologies and have a better understanding of how they work because I think a lot of people in the digital field feel that if, to put it lightly, people think that if you have got assistive technology, then designers don't really need to do much more to make their website more accessible, which is just shocking.

So yeah, really, I just work hard to try and change people's perspective on not only accessibility but leading into being more diverse and thinking more inclusively to meet the needs of every end user and not just minority groups. I do that by using my own experiences, user testing, talking to people, and networking.

**[0:08:15.3] BOK:** Yeah, thank you. That's, I mean, both inspirational but also really, I mean, there's so much in there that we could dig into. There's one thing that really sort of jumped out at me that you said a couple of times in that you're talking about not just minority but majority. Can you sort of expand on what you mean by that a bit more?

**[0:08:30.8] MW:** I talk a lot about the aging population. So with that, what I mean is, our aging population is growing, which is great. So we're all living longer. However, the only thing that would change is the way you access the world around you. I talk a lot about my granddad, my dear granddad who I love dearly and probably hate to hear that I talk about him so much in my work.

We recently bought him, well, I say recently, a couple of years ago. I'm not sure if I spoke about it in the presentation that you saw me at, but I do talk about it quite a bit. We bought him an iPad



a couple of years ago and he was a total technophobe. He was like, “Nope, don’t want this, don’t need it. Et cetera.”

But he looked at it and I found myself setting up this iPad exactly how I setup my products. Now, I am a registered deaf blind person and my granddad is just an elderly old man who has got very thick lenses, he needs hearing aids, his mobility is restricted now, he’s a lot slower and it’s just simple things in his day to day life that he could now do on his iPad and it wasn’t hard. It was the usability of it, I made it so easy for him to be able to just do things with a click of a finger.

I use that example because I am deaf blind but the way I use a product is very similar to my 80-year-old granddad and he is just an older man. We talk a lot about acquiring disabilities and temporary disabilities. For instance, if you break an arm, how do you behave with your product using one hand? How can we make that easier? Or if you simply have one arm? The similarities between temporary and acquiring disabilities as well as you know, having disabilities. There are lots of similarities there. So often what I do is I get people to think about where they are going to be in 30 plus years time.

Will they still be able to drive, will they be able to run? You know, they may well have a walking stick or they may well need reading glasses. That’s a common one I talk about. One in four people need reading glasses by the time they get the age of 40. Which that will mean they are wearing assisted technology and so they have accessibility needs. So why doesn’t everything come in large print now? Or why don’t you get a version that is large print should you need it?

Menus, they’re always tiny; why are they tiny? You know, just simple things like that and that sort of think — Actually, if we think they’re having large print, not only benefits me as a blind person, it benefits a lot more people that need glasses that might turn up to the office and forget their glasses. My granddad, I’ve been out for dinner with him, he’s forgotten his glasses and I have had to read the menu to him because I practice it more than him. That is because people have this shallow understanding of what accessibility means and what being blind means. For example, people think that if you are blind, you see nothing at all and you use auditory techs like voice over and things like that. But I am not an auditory tech user, I use large print. That’s exactly the same with lots of people. Like my parents, their email has large print. That’s the sort of thing that that’s actually more of the universal tool. Like lots of people will benefit from that



like things to do, things like that. Everyone uses it. Why can't it be seen as more of a mainstream feature, approach to your accessibility?

So I try and link it all up to the aging population where are you going to be in several years' time. You will still be working, you'll still be doing this because we are all more than capable of doing so but the way you interact with the world around you will change, because that's life. Everyone ages. I just got there first, you know? Yeah, that's what I mean when I talk about that.

**[0:12:29.0] BOK:** I find that really interesting because I mean, coming from the – I was working on teams or working with people and we're creating products or websites or digital products. I think you talk about this as well like quite often, the first thing is just to get the priorities clear. It is important to think about these things, which is why I picked on that sort of seeing, you know, the accessibility for example in the website as it's just a minority. There's just a few people, it's a kind of – that directly correlating to the time and budget and priorities that we put on those sorts of thinking.

So I think that was really interesting when you were sort of talking about saying, "Well, it's not a minority or it's not sensible to think about as a minority but there's this broader thing." Even that example you said like of a broken arm or a temporary issue on top of, you know, just kind of changes that mindset a bit. I think that's really interesting.

**[0:13:20.2] MW:** I think it is certainly a case of perspective because I'm training, especially where accessibility is concerned. I know everything comes back to budget, et cetera. But if you're going to include accessibility, you've got to make it accessible because when this is the problem I have with the check list that we have vision, hearing, motor, and cognitive.

Now, we just spoken on vision for example and what people think is if they — and they tick as they go along. But my website is compatible with screen readers so therefore, my website is fully accessible to the blind. Totally incorrect because out of the blind community itself, there's only a very small percentage between three to 5% of blind people that see nothing at all.

All the rest of them have got vision and they want to use it. If they can utilize it by having larger text or a change in the colors and like that, you're actually – you're meeting so many more people. Whereas it's like people have this mind set that accessibility is just a tiny little



percentage and it's almost not worth addressing it and it's kind of like, "Well no, if you're going to do it, you need to meet the needs of everyone," and actually whilst you do that, you realize that you are helping more people than you realize. Because it's not necessarily for the likes of people like myself. But it's the likes of people like my granddad who just has a really strong prescription or people that, you know, wear glasses or people that have blurred vision due to medication or something, you know?

There's always something that could happen that could impair vision and it's more common than people realize. So it is a matter of perspective and prioritizing, like you said. So if you can prioritize that actually you want your user experience to be right for everybody. Well, you need to put more money into accessibility because if they can access it, you're going to have more clients. It's just more customers, that's just how it works. So yeah, it is a matter of awareness I think ultimately. A lot of people don't realize that about the blind community, how some people actually see nothing, and that's just one example, you know? Out off all of the owners.

**[0:15:29.8] BOK:** Just to step back a little bit, so this season of the podcast is, our sort of broad topic is diversity and the reason I'm really interested in this topic and talking to you Molly, is I guess where I'm coming from is the hypothesis that diverse teams are having more diversity and understanding within the teams that are working on products, meaning that they'll be stronger and more aware of things like accessibility and the inclusiveness stuff.

So I guess, I just want to put that out there as a question mark to you or something, is that a fair statement and how closely related are these sort of the challenge of prioritizing and doing accessibility and inclusiveness and when we're building products and thinking about the diversities of the team, doing that work?

**[0:16:15.7] MW:** Yeah, I think that is a really important factor because by having a more diverse team, you're bringing in a diverse amount of perspectives and experiences, which I think it's not just about, if you can't user testing for example, it's not just about getting a group of blind and deaf and disabled people in to test your product to see how accessible it is. It's actually about getting a group of people all diverse for whatever reason, whether it be a disability or something else and getting them to test it because I often see sometimes accessibility more as a preference.



Say, when we think of it as a preferences as it seems more mainstream and everyone has a preference. Because of course, I would prefer to have my website more accessible but then the next person might prefer to have more of a higher contrast for whatever reason, they prefer a darker backgrounds of whatever, you know? Some people just like the color black.

But I think by bringing in more, having more input from a diverse team would definitely bring more ideas to the table, what one person thinks the other person won't think and what I'm saying to you guys, you might not have heard before and vice versa. It's all about learning from everyone's experiences whoever they are, whether they have a disability or not.

I think – I mean, I used to work at Apple in retail and one of the things I loved about working there was that it was very diverse and they just – they were just very open minded with people. They took on lots of people, I don't think they went out thinking, "Right, we're going to employ diverse groups." I think they were just open minded and it was like that from the very beginning.

Whereas lots of people are kind of back tracking from there like, "Now we need to think about diversifying our team. Let's bring in some blind people," and you know, whereas Apple were great in that they started off being open-minded and they've just let people in and I think that might just be one of the reasons why they're pretty successful. Because they had that mindset and I think it works both ways. Because in terms of being accessible and inclusive, you need to be aware of the diversities out there and, you know, I think people that are diverse backgrounds are going to think more inclusively because they have been brought up to be diverse and to be maybe different in a crowd and they're like, "Actually no, we're proud to be different and we want to endorse that."

So I think it's really important to have diversity everywhere. I think it's really important for everybody to learn more from other cultures, disabilities, you know, religions, et cetera and I think the only way we can do that by going forward is learning from each other rather than taking orders from people and training and this that and the other. It's actually working with each other and just getting out there, getting more people in as well and just from all different kinds of backgrounds and I'm not just talking about being disabled.



I mean, every background, because there's so many things that people just don't realize and it's like with my – if we're talking about me and my condition, people will say to me, "I just would never have known had I not have met you." It's exactly that because until you've met someone that's talking about it, you're not aware of it. It is literally that. I think it applies to everybody whoever they are, whatever their experiences.

So I think it's just down to society, kind of allowing people to build it, they can also have diverse views and allow more diversity in. It's a work in progress, it's a work in progress for sure I think. I think a lot of people shout about diversity, which is amazing but actually, going through with it, I think we still have a bit of work to do with that.

**[0:20:03.6] BOK:** Yeah, that's really interesting and as you're saying that diversity. There's something you said there that really and now, I would love to have memorized the words you used, but saying that, basically, if I paraphrase that a diverse team is kind of a prerequisite for approaching these problems in a different way rather than coming afterwards and saying, "Oh, we want now to make our thing accessible or we want to make our team diverse," and try to sort of patch it on afterwards and that if you start with a team that's more open and more diverse, then you're more likely to have more impactful or positive products from the start. I guess if I'm sort of paraphrasing slightly there.

**[0:20:37.8] MW:** Yeah. Definitely. I mean, it's like we always say, accessibility is not an afterthought, it cannot be. You cannot design a website and then bring accessibility in, it just doesn't work. It has to be, I know a lot of people do it that way, you know? But often, you find they spend more money doing that because they have to reverse a lot of what they've already done.

It is kind of about creating that base to begin with and having — yeah, just being fully educated. I mean, obviously, no one's going to be perfect, no one's going to get it right first time, that's the other thing. We have to acknowledge that no one is perfect but even I'm still learning in the field of accessibility, there's not things that I – there are things that I don't know, you know?

But I think because I was brought up with this disability and having lots of people would say the same with disability. You are a lot more open minded because you've been through exclusion, you've been put in a room where you felt kind of like you weren't understood. When you're put



in a room with someone else that might be feeling that way, that person – I myself will be more understanding of person feeling that way. Because it's like, "Oh I understand because I've been through that." You know, you have more empathy. Empathy, that's what I'm going for.

I think that's really important and that's why I start to do in the workshop to try and get people not only to listen to me but actually generate some kind of understanding in empathy to kind of put that into their current work whatever that is, you know? It's like, "Okay, yeah I can see how that would change the way they feel when they're work, how can we change that?" Just little things like that because that person until they have been with someone like I just mentioned, until they met someone with the challenges, they don't know. So it is very much about thinking about it right from the beginning and just letting everybody voice their opinion really before moving forward with a project or whatever, kind of getting people in and listening to them really.

**[0:22:34.9] BOK:** So is that something you find that that sort of educational, the why it is important is almost and then getting into how where you actually make things accessible like you said before, there's endless checklists and there's things we can do and it's not like a one job that is done once but it is a kind of ongoing thing where you need to be thinking about accessibility as you are working on the product.

So that is the how, but what you're talking about there is very much even before starting on the how we need to educate and make people make the decision that they are going to do that. Do you think that when you talk about that education and when people bring you in, is it that part of the equation that a lot more of the energy and effort goes into? Or is there by the time they maybe decided to talk to you or somebody else that they are actually past that and that they are starting to be, "Well how do I do this?"

**[0:23:23.6] MW:** I think that one of the main issues I have with what I do is A, getting into a company and getting them to listen to me. That bit is actually the easier part because I can easily kind of sell why I need to be in and why they need me. But B, actually paying for it. So obviously, I can't just live off fresh air. So I am a consultant and I do presentations, but consulting and things like that is quite hard and that is when I actually that I start to understand what company's priorities are.



Because you sort of think, “Well actually, you talk about budgeting, you talk about this you want to know how to do it, you want to learn more, which is great that is why you are contacting me but you don’t want to pay for it?” And so often that is the hardest part for me to actually even get through the door to actually talk to people and educated them and help them with the how and how we go forward etcetera, etcetera with the workshop and some of the things that I do, do.

I think that is the hardest part. I think once I have actually gone in and I have spoken to them, done the workshops and worked with the team, they are definitely more aware on how they can actually go ahead with, whether it be further training amongst the staff or whether it’s a whole remodel of the website. The thing that I am often saying is not even worth that. It’s literally just little things that can make a massive difference but that I would say is more my challenge, is actually getting in to tell them how. Because a lot of them they sort of think, “Oh actually is it worth that?” and that is my challenge there is to actually way out try and sell it to them, “Actually, yeah, it really is worth it.”

Because if you have a product or a website that you think is going to be really worthwhile, in order to reach every user, you need to be fully accessible, useable. You need to be inclusive in order and recruitment I find really interesting because they are always like, “We want to attract diverse groups.” And it is like, “Well you are not going to if you haven’t got an all-inclusive accessible website. It’s just not going to happen.” LinkedIn classic example. Totally in accessible. I am only on it and I will just copy and paste what I put on my Facebook and my Twitter and all of that. Obviously I am on it because if I can get work from it, great.

But if I get a message from them, from someone, I automatically have to reply saying, “Hi there, I am really sorry I can’t access LinkedIn. Can you email me at...” Because I can’t access it. But then a lot of people like myself, they just want to have that opportunity to be on LinkedIn to network with all the business owners or get work, etcetera. They would have to seek help elsewhere, which is as we all know, quite hard if you are not disabled, let alone disabled.

So yeah, I just think that it is just really key that people are aware they are importance and once they know how important it is, the how part actually isn’t so tough. Because if people like myself out there that can go in and definitely help with that, I think it is just getting them to realize how important it is that is. That is the main challenge.



**[0:26:45.7] EQ:** I wonder, it makes me think, in the design industry I have a hard time selling certain services as well mainly planning. I don't know why anybody wouldn't want to plan their site but anyway it is a different story. But I am wondering if this is an opportunity for people in the tech industry such as Barry and I and we're on that consulting side as well and we think accessibility is really important but we might not know how to sell it to the clients either to make them understand.

So if there is some kind of way that, I don't know, just to form partnerships? Because I don't know where to start with accessibility either because I don't have to deal with those issues like some other people have. So I don't know, it seems like a unique opportunity to help the people who are interested in helping make their clients aware would be an interesting way to look at forming up some partnerships to help further disseminate that information I guess.

**[0:27:41.3] MW:** Yeah, right definitely. I mean it is, like you say, it's helping each other really trying to get all the people to understand why it is so important because unless you're client paid for that, people just don't understand this like, "Oh it is just an extra. That is not a priority in our budget, blah-blah-blah." That is all I hear, "Budget, budget, budget," and it's like you realize what this is going to do. Yeah, I'd be more than happy to look at.

**[0:28:08.4] BOK:** It's a really interesting thing you mentioned there of LinkedIn, which was something that I was completely unaware of because now, thinking and talking about recruitment and making those kinds of connections that Erica just mentioned there but then not realizing that the tools themselves are almost blocking, they are almost causing or contributing to the problem. That is really interesting to me and to tie back to what you and Erica were just saying about explaining the value of why that – you know if I am trying to recruit a more diverse team and I am using LinkedIn but the people who I am trying to recruit can't use LinkedIn and I am not aware, you know, there is such an obvious gap and knowledge there. That's just mind blowing.

**[0:28:46.1] MW:** It is, it is mind blowing. But people don't actually – I actually went to LinkedIn. I was invited here to their LinkedIn head office last year and in San Francisco. It's great, I love it there. I mean, any excuse to go there. But no, I was invited over there and one of the interesting things that I learned there was the head of accessibility who invited me who I later find out was fully blind. So he's totally blind, got no vision.

So he relies on voiceover, which is on all iPhones, iOS products. And I sat in a room with probably about eight or nine of them and the guy that was kind of above the guy that I was dealing with was on Skype on the wall and all of these people – it was very cool and I sat there and I showed them some of the features that I use. So I use large text and Speak Screen. Do you guys know Speak Screen?

**[0:29:44.6] BOK:** I've seen the name, but that is about it.

**[0:29:46.3] MW:** So the difference between voiceover and Speak Screen is voiceover is more navigational. So for someone who is totally blind to fill their screen and listen to what is underneath their screen fingers and then there's a couple of gestures like left-right. So that when they want to flip to the next word or sentence say flick to the right and then they want to tap, double tap. It is very confusing for sighted people to navigate it.

For blind people that's great because you don't need to use the screen, you don't need the screen much from having. You are just using a select amount of gestures to navigate your way through whatever. Now I know how to use it, but I show people in workshops and a lot of people aren't aware of how it's used and why they designed really poor accessible products. But Geneson who I saw sort of said, "You know, LinkedIn voiceover is really great for LinkedIn" and I was like, "Okay."

Now the only reason he felt it was accessible was bearing in mind he works at LinkedIn. I said to him so I use all the features I use and then I tried voiceover before I went in and I said, "The thing is with voiceover on LinkedIn is that you have to be aware that the bar on the bottom where it says Home, News Feed, Messages, whatever you have to be aware where that is in order to put your finger across it," and he was like, "Oh yeah but most people know where that is."

No actually not everyone knows that especially if you are using voiceover and you are totally blind you are trying to navigate an app that you have never navigated before. Geneson, he was fully blind and uses voiceover knows what that is. So he knows where to feel in order to access Home, Messages, etcetera. Now the one that use, Speak Screen, is actually a feature on iOS



designed for people with dyslexia. So you literally just wipe two fingers down from the top of the screen and it reads top to bottom the text.

So it doesn't tell you the orientation of the screen, the time or anything like that because that's what voice over would do. Voice over would do everything. So I sat in that room showing them and I said, "Right, Speak Screen, swipe down," and it will literally said, "No speakable content is available on the screen," and they were all just like, just silent and I was like, "So this is actually a tool that I use that visually impaired and dyslexic," and dyslexia is very common.

**[0:32:10.1] EQ:** It's very big.

**[0:32:11.2] MW:** Yeah and LinkedIn is not accessible, and so they were quite shut down by that. So again that was because people assumed that if you were blind to use voiceover. I said, "I am registered blind and have been for over 10 years now and I have never used and felt the need to rely on voiceover. I use large text, Speak Screen as and when I need to if my eyes are tired because I can see enough to navigate around the screen using zoom. But I don't need voiceover navigational stuff. Because that is really chatty and I'm also deaf, so I wouldn't get all of it because it's all very auditory. So they were like, "Wow, I haven't thought of that."

But have they invited me back for training and have they done anything since? No, they are not even compatible with I don't know if you know when you go into settings and you change your text to large text, underneath it says, "If that app is compatible with dynamic type the app will automatically adjust its font size so it goes bigger." Now Twitter does it and it's great. I go onto, hence why I'm always on Twitter. It automatically enlarges and I can read the text and I don't even have to make any adjustments to the app because the app would just recognize that my phone is set to large text so it automatically changes, which makes sense right?

Now all of them do it now. Facebook does it, Twitter does it. I say all of them — most of them, the networking sites. But LinkedIn doesn't do it and that is just so prehistoric now, and I keep telling them, "Why haven't you done that like large text that is something that lots of people would benefit from." Because I find it so tiny and my dad does and he uses it and he's a financial advisory. He loves LinkedIn, but he struggles because it is so tiny and yet but that's just LinkedIn. They think, ironically because they have a blind person in the team, they're doing their bit for accessibility.



**[0:33:59.8] EQ:** It is interesting that you say that, they do have someone with disability on their team and so they are very tunnel focus I guess on that one disability.

**[0:34:09.9] MW:** Insightful. Very insightful

**[0:34:12.9] EQ:** Yeah. So for people who maybe don't have that diversity on their team even for that one person how can you – I don't even know what I am asking? But how do you know that you are covering all of your bases, right? Because LinkedIn obviously thinks that they've done a great job because they have this person who's blind on their team. But clearly they've missed the boat on some big areas and then there's teams without diversity at all with no disabilities or no whatever the case may be, and it is an ignorance thing and I understand that. But it is just like, it's knowing where to start and how do you if you have covered all of your bases in?

**[0:34:52.2] MW:** I think that is why a lot of people stress about and this is where I become really nice and reassuring. You have to start somewhere and you'll never going to meet everyone's needs, that's the thing. I think you just have to be very open minded, I think you need to keep the communication going with lots of people. So for instance, if you do user testing kind of keep that ongoing. I think do that every now and then like bring people in and different people each time, and keep the conversation going and I think that is all you can do because no one's ever going to please everyone and that's the one thing I sort of say like although I can bang on about how crap LinkedIn is, but they're never going to possibly please everybody. But I think what's frustrating about LinkedIn for example is that people have said — I physically went to their office and told them what needed to be done and they didn't do it..

**[0:35:48.9] EQ:** They haven't done it, yeah.

**[0:35:50.2] MW:** And it's a mindset. So obviously what you're saying obviously is how can we cover our bases? But start somewhere and once you have started it's all you can do and I think it is just having the right mindset and perspective and goal, if you like, to meet more needs of everybody and that's all they can really be expected, really. Because that is how everything starts, isn't it? You just have to start somewhere and hope that you are going to achieve something.



**[0:36:20.9] BOK:** So what I am hearing there is that the cry and I think this happens to me as well sometimes that the feeling that the mountain is so big to climb that it is not even worth starting. But really what you are saying is that is obviously self-defeating and it's better to do something and realize that it's just never going to be perfect but that is an ongoing journey in that direction and that that journey is important in itself. Important enough to go on rather than saying I can't do it so I am not going to do anything.

**[0:36:47.6] MW:** Definitely.

**[0:36:48.3] BOK:** Sometimes when any of us go to a client or go to a project and say, "Okay look, it is really important to accept that we do something about accessibility here," and they don't listen or they don't prioritize it and it just slides under. But then another circumstances and maybe you have seen when they brought you in they are really actively, pro-actively do trying to move make things more accessible and I am wondering if you have any examples of what the difference there is.

Is there something you can point to and say, "You know, this type of situation or this type of client or this type of conversation leads to a more positive action, and then in other circumstances they don't do it?"

**[0:37:27.5] MW:** I guess other than what I've already told you, I think I've had a mixture of experiences. Yeah, I think actually it's been mainly what one's been in and spoken to people or spoken from other people's experiences. It is more often than not kind like a positive outcome. I have people that's like, "Hey you know we can see why it's important, blah-blah-blah." But I think again sometimes what I find when I am invited for to do a presentation opposed to consulting of therein and I am asked to talk about myself and why it is important in design for accessibility and inclusion and I find that I go in and they enjoyed the presentation. I get lots of great feedback but I talk a lot about training, and going forward and doing workshops and consulting and how can we make this a better experience for everybody?

Sometimes what I find as I kind of go in and do the presentation and I was saying, "You know, please do be in touch if you want me to come back," and sometimes you just don't hear and I sort of think, "Did you not get a memo?" Like I can't just come in and report to you for half an hour and you'd be fully in the know now. It just doesn't work like that." I think again going back



to priorities I think it is actually being committed to it and I was saying I would class a lot of — some companies are more committed than others because some will have me and stay and listen to me talk and say, “Yeah that’s great, you know, we understand the importance.” But they don’t show anything for it and that is happened a few times I think.

So yeah, again kind of going back to what I’ve already said, really trying to sell that point and actually also say that is not an instant fix. You’ve got to work on it. Yeah it takes time and you’ve got to pay for it. I am not about to volunteer myself to go in with my time and yeah, it’s tricky.

**[0:39:32.2] BOK:** Yeah and then tying that back to, as you said what we were talking about earlier, tying back the reason you know it is not just accessibility for its own sake but the fact that it will bring these other benefits down the line. Cool, awesome. Thank you so much Molly. We are sort of heading towards running out of time. But I really appreciate that.

But just to finish up, what would be good if you’d share us some of the links and where people can find and connect with you and find out about what you do?

**[0:39:54.7] MW:** Yeah, sure that’s great. I can send all of that over. So just like my Twitter handle and things like that right?

**[0:40:01.2] BOK:** Yeah, absolutely and we’ll put them in the show notes there yeah and it’s Molly – and you also by the way we should mention the charitable trust that you do. Maybe just quickly mention that.

**[0:40:09.9] MW:** Yes, The Molly Watt Trust is a family built charity that was set up back in 2011 and that was really for all the troubles I had in education, we didn’t have a lot of help and I think we wanted to try and set up support systems for those with Usher Syndrome. Because it’s a lot more common than people realize and we also identify that there were a few solutions again with my experiences like what I mentioned before with using a Kindle or an iPad that was how I could access my education.

So at the Molly Watt Trust we fund bits of technology to help the everyday lives of those people living with Usher Syndrome because we don’t sit and hope for a cure. You know, other charities do that. But we kind of live in the here and now. How can we make life easier? We know people



with Usher Syndrome are fully capable of going out there and succeeding, how can we help that? So we funded Apple Watches, Kindles, eyewear, all sorts of things and we kind of bring people together as well.

Because some people with Usher haven't meant other people with Usher Syndrome, we meet their families and we are just there. We mentor and we just like to be there for people with Usher Syndrome for the struggles and yeah. So that is Molly Watt Trust and we can be found online also at [mollywatttrust.com](http://mollywatttrust.com) and my personal website is [mollywatt.com](http://mollywatt.com). So there's lots of blogs that go online, we like blogs. We write a lot, I write a lot and we get lots of people with Usher Syndrome to write a lot as well. Kind of talking about technology or experiences in general and yeah, just endorse the experiences where we can. So the good and the bad experiences so people can be more aware in going forward but yeah that's the Molly Watt Trust.

**[0:41:50.2] BOK:** Awesome, thank you. That's really inspirational I really like it. As I mentioned, we'll put all of those links in the show notes, people can check it out and find out more about you there. Thanks again, thanks Molly, thanks Erica.

**[0:41:58.8] MW:** Thank you.

**[0:41:59.3] EQ:** Thank you.

**[0:42:00.4] MW:** Bye-bye.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

**[0:42:06.9] BOK:** You can get all the links and notes from this episode on [happyporchradio.com](http://happyporchradio.com) where you can also find out how to send us questions, feedback and get involved in the conversation about this series.

If you enjoyed the show, please share with anyone else who might enjoy it too. Thanks for listening.

[END]