

# Over A Brew Session

**24 July 2024**

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**



**CURATORS  
OF CHANGE**

directors of  
**adass**  
adult social services  
eastern region  

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**connecting innovating improving**



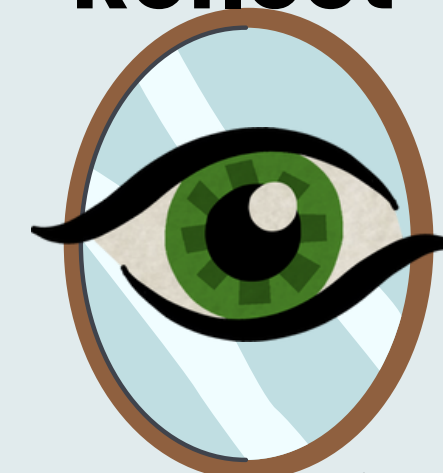
Guide

## Grab a brew



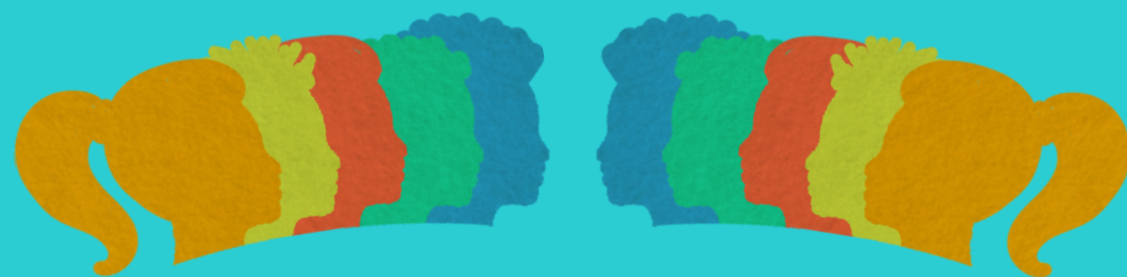
Once you have your brew, ask someone to be the timer

## Reflect



Each person has time to think about the questions for ONE minute

## Have your say



Each take it in turns to say your response  
(TWO mins each)



Use the rest of the time to reflect on what's been said  
(no fixing)

## Still got some time?



Talk about:  
What's not been said?  
What are your lasting thoughts?

# INFUSED WITH THE CAMERADOS PRINCIPLES

**MIX WITH PEOPLE WHO  
ARE NOT LIKE YOU**



**ASK SOMEONE WHO IS  
STRUGGLING TO HELP YOU**



**NO FIXING - JUST BE  
ALONGSIDE ONE ANOTHER**



**IT'S OK TO DISAGREE  
RESPECTFULLY**



**IT'S OKAY TO BE A BIT  
RUBBISH SOMETIMES**



**TO BE SILLY IS TO  
BE HUMAN**





# Introduction

**Around 30 people attended the session to share ideas, insights and views... Over a Brew**



**This OAB focussed on issues of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and included video story reflections from the regional co-production crew on issues surrounding EDI. Storytellers talked passionately about how it felt to be seen as a ticked box, or not have their access and support needs taken seriously in order for them to participate in meaningful co-production.**

**During the session there was some very open and honest discussion, reflected in this write up. However it is worth noting that even hosting an Over A Brew on the topic of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion was challenged on the grounds of it being a tick box exercise.**

**The biggest challenge we face in all efforts to improve people's experiences is making sure that all spaces are truly inclusive, and open to all, allowing people to express their thoughts and feelings about their own experiences without fear of judgment, regardless of race, gender, ability, age or perceived capacity.**

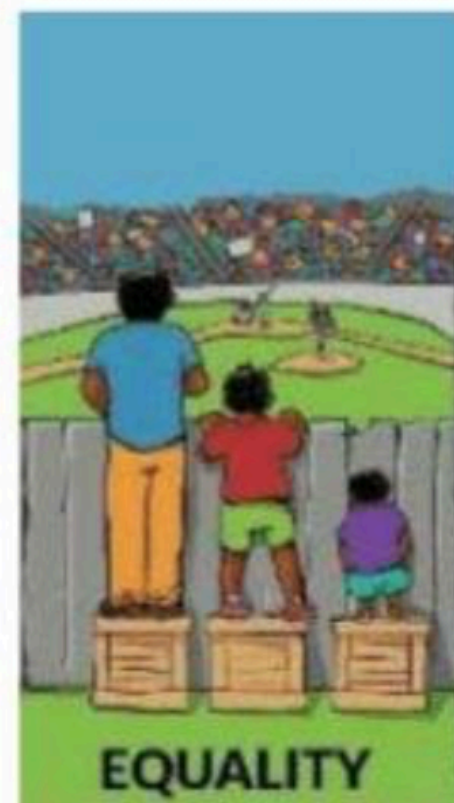
**We concluded the session accepting that there is a long way to go to create a world that is truly accepting people for who they are, and removing the systemic barriers that prevent full inclusion or acceptance.**



# Equity and Liberation

This is the image we used to explain what we meant by EDI and introduces the concept of equity and liberation.

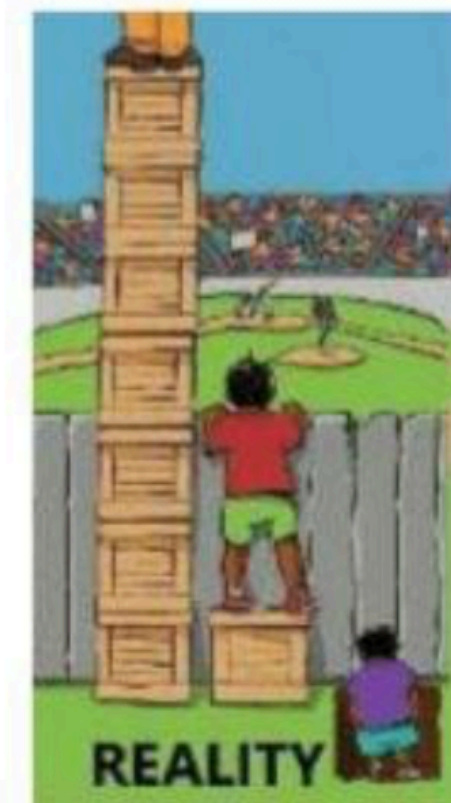
## EQUALITY, EQUITY, REALITY, LIBERATION



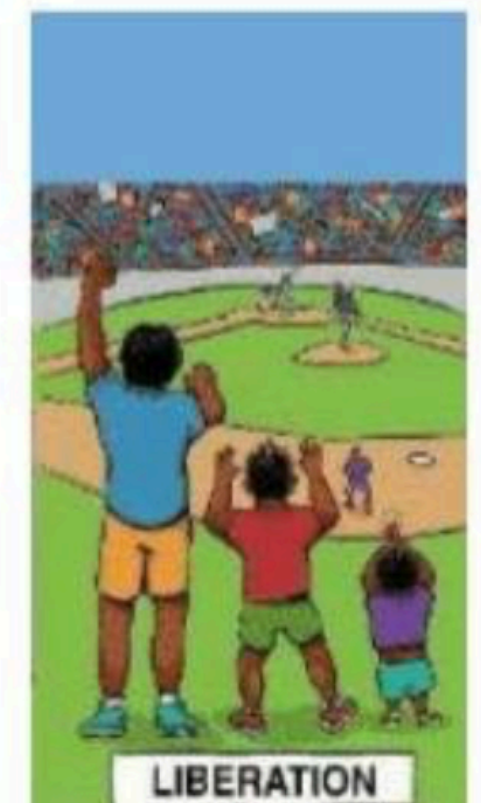
The assumption is that **everyone benefits from the same supports**. This is equal treatment.



**Everyone gets the supports they need** (this is the concept of "affirmative action), thus producing equity.



Some get **more than is needed**, while others get **less than is needed**. In reality, there is a huge disparity.



All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because **the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed**. The systemic barrier has been removed.

## EQUITY MAY FEEL LIKE OPPRESSION TO THOSE WITH PRIVILEGE

Source: Agents of Good, based on a graphic originally created by Craig Froehle

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# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion... What comes to mind?



As people joined the meeting, we asked – ‘What comes to mind when you think of EDI?’

*EDI to me means the uniqueness of every person*

*I sometimes think it can be overwhelming – how do I get it right? But when we do get it right it is amazing.*

*It means such a lot – hard to describe briefly! But I love the inclusion aspect :)*

*EDI means not forgetting that some people will need help from others to represent their views, in order to be included*

*EDI means to me everyone is equal, deserve fairness and justice*

*EDI for me is all about including everyone*

*Equality, Diversity and Inclusion..... as acronyms often hide the actual issue(s). And no part of this topic should ever be hidden else we accept hiding our unconscious prejudices.*

*Understanding of quality in the life as a disabled person ensuring that we can lead a fulfilling, equitable and dignified life*

*Not necessarily treating everyone the same but more recognising everyone is an individual and recognising and accommodating their differences*





# Poem about Equality Diversity and Inclusion by Isaac Samuels

**In a space where voices intertwine, A sanctuary where hearts align,  
We gather here, from far and near, To share our stories, free of fear.**

**Though different paths our lives have paved, In this haven, all is saved.  
Each tale a thread in the tapestry, We weave a quilt of unity.**

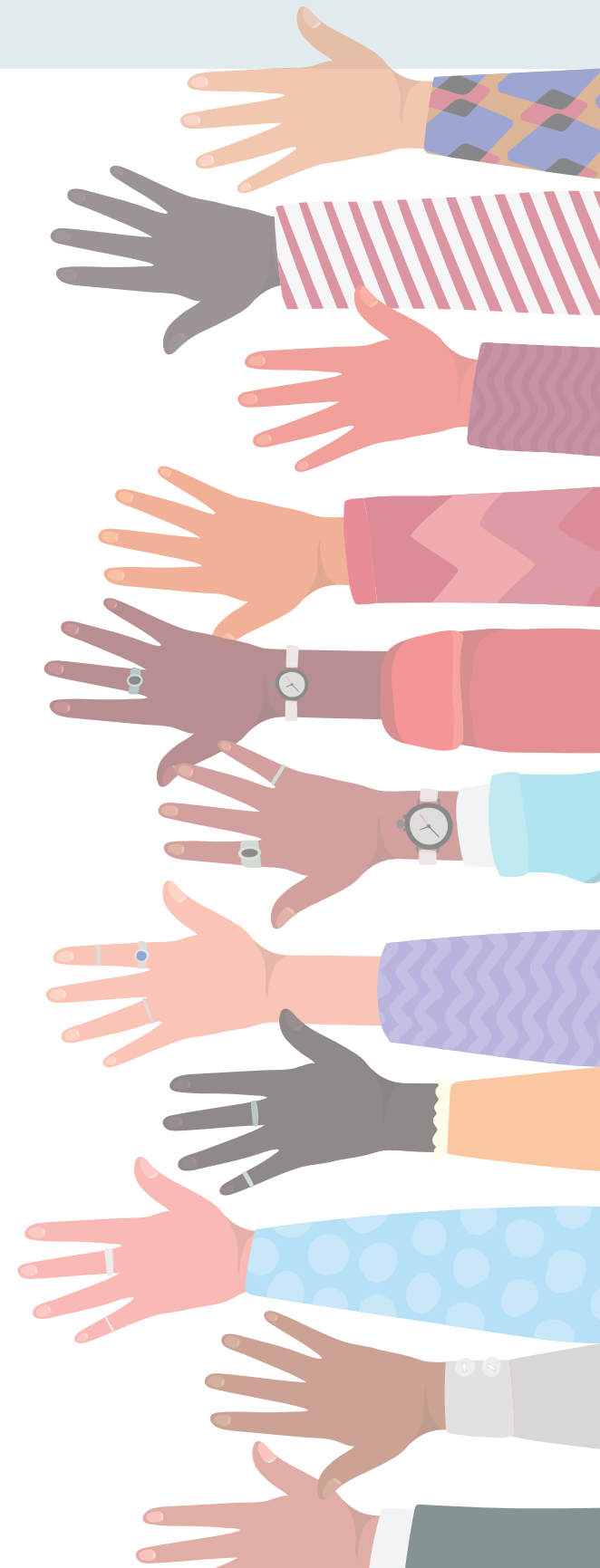
**Our ways of being, unique and bright, Illuminate this space with light.  
Though we may not always see, The same horizons, we agree.**

**To listen deeply, to hold and care, In every word, we're truly there.  
Understanding may not always come, Yet respect's beat on every drum.**

**In professional, in personal stride, We walk together, side by side.  
A held space, where all belong, In harmony, we sing our song.**

**With open hearts and open minds, In each other's stories, we find,  
The beauty of diverse design, In this sacred, shared shrine.**

**So let us gather, let us be, A testament to unity.  
For in this space, we've come to see, The strength in our diversity.**







# Listening to stories on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion



Workshop  
participants listened  
to a lived experience  
story and answered  
the following prompts



- 
- How do these Stories make you FEEL?
  - What are the key themes in these Stories?
  - What do you relate to? (personally or professionally)
- 



Video on EDI can be found  
here:

[https://adasseast.org.uk/  
co-production/over-a-  
brew-virtual-coffee-  
sessions](https://adasseast.org.uk/co-production/over-a-brew-virtual-coffee-sessions)

# Themes that emerged during the session



## INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSE VOICES

- Efforts must be made to include a variety of perspectives
- Move Away from Tick Boxes – actions should be genuine and not just for appearance
- Representation from diverse backgrounds is essential
- Intersectionality – recognize & respect the multiple dimensions of individuals' identities



- *Need to make sure there are more varieties of voices*
- *And more voices should be heard*
- *Move away from tick boxes – we shouldn't be doing this*
- *Box ticking – token gesture*
- *Doing representation without tokenism is hard – eg the lady mentions that we have to make sure there is ethnicity representation around the table but we need to do this without making people feel like a box tick*
- *Talked about how we are all more than one dimension – (intersectionality) – Need to see everyone as a unique person*
- *Biggest barrier is the way we try to approach things – listening to the comments about ticking boxes – and then moving on – have been guilty of that in my time!*



# Themes that emerged during the session



## POWER DYNAMICS AND EQUALITY

- Striving for equality by sharing power with all participants
- Acknowledgement that power imbalances still exist in co-production spaces
- Equity vs. Equality – Equity ensures everyone has the right opportunities to make things fair, beyond just equal treatment



- *And everyone needs to be equal – the power should be handed to people*
- *Those in a position of power want to make change – and include more folk*
- *There is still a huge amount of imbalance in terms of power in copro spaces even today.*
- *EDI – we included equity – not just equality – equity, people having the right opportunity to make things fair. Diversity a range of people from different communities. Inclusion is about belonging – safe space, saying what we want*





# Themes that emerged during the session

## GENUINE ENGAGEMENT & SYSTEMATIC CHANGE

- Moving beyond discussion – since the Equality Act, minimal change has been observed
- Encouraging genuine self-expression and acceptance of diverse identities
- Systemic changes – Inclusion needs to be an integral part of how systems are designed and implemented



- *We are talking about it but since the equality act has been published there has been VERY LITTLE that has changed.*
- *Needs to be space for people to be heard and people really need to be a part of the spaces and changes that need to happen to our systems*
- *I really like the question of who I am – as it enables me to engage with people, where are you from, what language do you speak – it can be a good way of bonding. Don't be afraid of asking the question*



# Themes that emerged during the session

## PERCEIVED BARRIERS & PRACTICAL CHALLENGES

- Budget issues can lead to a checkbox approach; need to find ways to overcome this
- Carers should have opportunities to input into service design and receive support
- Ensure co-production activities are accessible in terms of timing, format, and participation



- *Barriers mentioned in the video - helped people understand them more, and the poem helped to open up the thinking more*
- *Perceived barriers re budgets etc - we do try and tick boxes because there isn't enough budget to go around. We need to break out of this*
- *Issues around carers - sometimes no opportunity for a carer to input into a service or how to shape the service - it doesn't take into account their needs as well the person they are caring for*
- *The carer can often be left in a bubble - not being supported in their role, or in how services are designed and developed*
- *Co-production more inclusive - suitable times, having opportunity for face to face, anonymous, online - diverse people attend -*
- *More subtle things people are negotiating that are challenging too*
- *It can feel like a brick wall - some people find it easier to get what they need than others*



# Themes that emerged during the session



## IDENTITY AND BELONGING

- Cultural Acceptance – struggles of being accepted as British while being from a minority background
- Engaging with people's backgrounds in a respectful, positive and curious manner
- Inclusion should also consider those working in services, not just service users



- *It is hard as a woman of afro-caribbean culture being accepted. People ask me where are you from! England – No where were you born, Birmingham! No where were you really born! Not really listening to me, or accepting that I am British*
- *It's not just about the people who access services – it's also about people working in services who should be considered.*
- *I was taught as a child to blend in – so the idea of being more my authentic self in the context of a meeting is something I will take away.*
- *Some people are also curious about people's backgrounds in a positive way. Maybe they are worried about getting the language wrong but some come from a good place. I have a Polish background and enjoy talking about and my grandfather's journey to the UK*





**The importance of ensuring equal opportunities for all should be emphasized. While everyone should have access to everything they need, we need to recognize that barriers still exist. These barriers can prevent people from thriving, highlighting the necessity for continued efforts to dismantle them.**

**A recurring theme is the significance of respect and inclusivity. Creating spaces where everyone feels they belong, can walk side by side, and have their voices heard is crucial. This involves not just talking about EDI but actively practicing it, ensuring that policies and decisions are genuinely influenced by those they impact.**

**Despite a shared discomfort with hierarchical structures and existing barriers, there's recognition that these realities persist, particularly in local authorities. Therefore, there is a call for more proactive efforts in amplifying people's voices, making sure they are at the forefront of decision-making processes.**

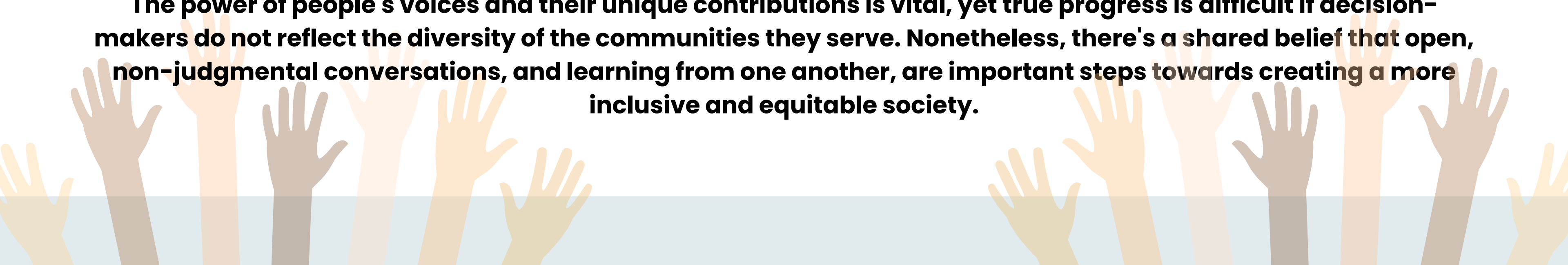
**However, EDI often feels like a tick-box exercise, a tokenistic afterthought rather than a genuine commitment. Greater education, especially around the impact of policies on diverse groups like those with autism, or policies that are truly anti-racist is necessary. When coproducing, it's important that people have the information and support needed to contribute effectively.**

**The ongoing fight for equity, particularly in the face of funding reductions, underscores the importance of frameworks like the Workforce Race Equality Standards (WRES) and the Race Equality Impact and Equality Assessments. These should guide best practices, but they also require a genuine commitment to translate learning into action.**

**We need to recognise that each individual brings a unique perspective, and there's a need to see beyond surface identities. The notion of authenticity is increasingly valued, challenging the traditional idea of blending in. Asking questions is encouraged, as it can open up discussions about background and identity in a respectful way.**

**For co-production to be effective, professionals must engage with diverse communities, considering the timing and location of meetings, including going to where we know people are, and being flexible in how people are compensated for their time. It's about valuing people for their thoughts and experiences, not just their identity.**

**The power of people's voices and their unique contributions is vital, yet true progress is difficult if decision-makers do not reflect the diversity of the communities they serve. Nonetheless, there's a shared belief that open, non-judgmental conversations, and learning from one another, are important steps towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society.**



# Feedback on the session



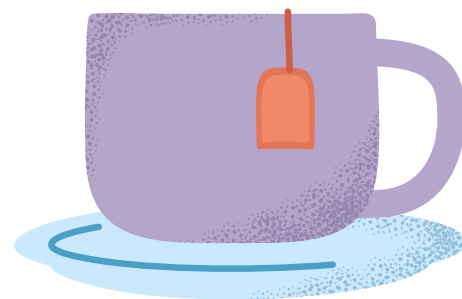
**Great facilitation team Curators of Change. Thank you**

**I need to do more in my workspace and in my outside life to break down the barriers**



**One thing we haven't touched on today is values – the fundamentals of how we expect to be worked with – with dignity and respect and kindness – value approach is so important for this**

**Video was powerful – appreciated, made people think and had an impact**



**Thank you for this space and the generosity shown by people willing to share their experiences. I will take time to think through today's session, both personally and professionally. A rich discussion.**

**Powerful poem and wonderfully read Jacqui**

**Things to reflect on – the issue of being invited to 'represent' a particular group – how do we avoid this – is about having the conversation like this – Over A Brew – being brave – and learning from one another and calling things out**



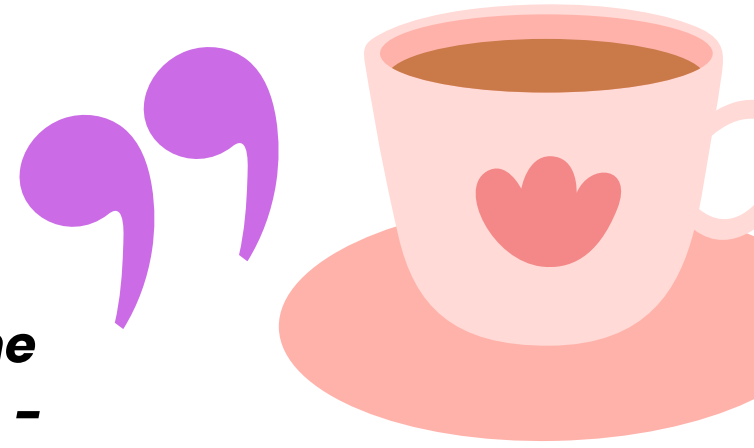
**Fabulous words! well done Isaac**

**Great session fantastic conversations and discussions**

**Thanks for the conversation – loved it!**

**Thanks for a great session**

**I'm taking away a reminder that there is more that unites us than separates us, and we can all learn from each other**



**Great to be able to have this opportunity to chat stuff through**







# Thank You!



**Please join us for the next session on 25  
September 2024... to talk about Unpaid  
Carers... Over a Brew!**