

Disability Visibility Podcast

Episode 87: Climate Action

Guest: Kera Sherwood-O'Regan

Host: Alice Wong

Transcript by [Cheryl Green](#)

For more information: DisabilityVisibilityProject.com/podcast

Introduction

[hip-hop beat with radio static]

LATEEF MCLEOD: This is the *Disability Visibility Podcast* with your host, Alice Wong.

ALICE WONG: Hey, friends. Welcome to the *Disability Visibility Podcast*, conversations on disability politics, culture, and media. I'm your host, Alice Wong. Today's episode is on climate action with Kera Sherwood-O'Regan is an Indigenous multidisciplinary storyteller and activist based in Aotearoa, also known as New Zealand. Kera's work and activism centers structurally oppressed communities in social change and crosses the intersections of Indigenous and disability rights, health, and climate change. Kera will share about her involvement in climate activism and why climate movements must center Indigenous and disabled people. Are you ready? [electronic beeping] Away. We. Go!

ELECTRONIC VOICE: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.

ALICE: So, Kera, thank you so much for being on my podcast today!

KERA SHERWOOD-O'REGAN: Ah. Thank you so much for having me. I'm, yeah, really stoked.

ALICE: Well, I'm really stoked too, and I guess to get started, you're based in Aotearoa, and that's otherwise, for most listeners, that's also known as New Zealand. And I was wondering if we could start with you just sharing a little bit about your background and just kinda where you're located and just the different communities that you're a part of.

KERA: Yeah. Sure, thank you, Alice for having me. I might introduce myself in my traditional way then, because I find that really helps to situate me where I'm placed amongst my genealogy, my whakapapa and amongst the many communities that I'm a part of. So, I say, Ko Kohurau te mauka. Ko Araiteuru te moana. Ko Uenuku te whare kei Moeraki. Ko Motupohue te puke. Ko Awarua te moana. Ko Tahu Potiki te whare kei Awarua. Ko Kati Rakiamoa, ko Kati Waewae, ko Kati Ruahikihiki ka karakataka. E mihi ana ki a koutou. Tena koe Alice, aku mihi nui ki a koe mo tēnei punua pāoho. Ko Kera Sherwood-O'Regan toku ikoa, he uri ahāu no te iwi Kāi Tahu kei Te Waipounamu.

So, what I shared there is that Kohurau is my mountain, Araiteuru, my waters, and Uenuku is my meeting house in Moeraki. Motupohue is my hill and Awarua is my ocean and Tahu Pōtiki is my meeting house in Awarua or what's now known as Bluff. I also shared that Kati Rakiamoa, Kati Waewae, and Kati Ruahikihiki are my people. And so, I said that they're, yeah, my people. So, my hapu and also the callings that greet you all. So, thank you to you, Alice, and to all of the people listening to this podcast. My name is Kera Sherwood-O'Regan, and I'm of the Kāi Tahu

iwi or people of Te Waipounamu, which is now known as the South Island of so-called “New Zealand.” So, yeah. So, I guess this is the way that I introduce myself in relation to my ancestors and the lands and the waters of my people, which are probably, like for me, the really consistent things.

But I feel like the rest of my bio or how I introduce myself seems to change pretty frequently for me. I guess I say that these days, I tend to see myself as a multi-disciplinary storyteller and activist. And the work that I do is at the intersections of Indigenous and disability rights alongside climate change. So, I live with fibromyalgia and a few other funky health quirks. And I say these days I’m a recovering medical student with an ongoing interest in health or health equity for structurally oppressed communities. And so, yeah, I kinda sit in between Indigenous, disabled, and also the queer or takatāpui community as well! So, that’s pretty much me, kia ora!

[mellow music break]

Meeting during the time of COVID

ALICE: You know, clearly, right now, we are in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, and before we really dig in to climate activism, how are you doing? What’s up? How are you holding up?

KERA: Yeah. Thank you. Thank you for asking that. I think it’s...yeah, it’s hard to find words. Which I know sounds like a bit of a cop out answer. But I think it’s hard to find words to articulate the feelings at the moment because as you know of course, our disabled community is so massively impacted by this coronavirus pandemic. I think I’m feeling, at the moment, when I think about the international context, I feel very grateful to be in Aotearoa, to be in New Zealand. Yeah, I think I’m feeling very privileged that our government has made the decision to essentially go hard and go early. I think when I think around, yeah, friends overseas like yourselves or others in the States or in Europe, a lot of other disabled friends that we have overseas, I get quite anxious.

And I think also, just at home, maybe I’m getting a little bit frustrated with, I think, a lot of the responses around COVID, because I think a lot of people in New Zealand, because we have kind of gone hard and gone early, I think a lot of people are forgetting how serious it can be. And so, I’m just seeing a lot of privilege on display, and particularly when, over these past four weeks and even before lockdown was announced, our community has just been organizing extensively, you know. I had to shift the support groups I run for fibromyalgia onto Zoom, which was OK, ‘cause I kind of had done that before as well. But we were all having to think about who in our community has got support, who hasn’t, how do we get PPE to people. And our disabled community has been organizing so, so much, and yet, then there’ll be other people who are just disrespecting the lockdown or people complaining about not being able to get haircuts! And I’m just like, really?! That’s what you care about right now? So, it’s a bit of a weird time, yeah, I would say. A lot of emotional energy.

ALICE: Yeah. It’s a lotta emotional labor for sure. I think there’s just the day-to-day stuff, and also, just being kinda overwhelmed by all the news and the latest kind of findings about this virus. And dealing also with the fact that I think both you and I know that way after these kinda orders are lifted, for many of us, we still will probably be at home, because we don’t feel safe, you know? There’s no vaccine anytime soon. There’s really no treatment. So, while most people will be going back to quote-unquote “normal” life, I think it’s gonna be a really long haul for a lot of us. And that’s what I think makes me nervous, is the fact that we’re gonna be forgotten.

KERA: Yeah. I think I definitely share some of those same concerns, especially seeing like in the workplace in particular, this rush to then being on Zoom for all of the meetings. Or seeing all of this kind of Internet accessibility, or like you know, just all of these different ways of working from home and how, as soon as able-bodied people are impacted, so as soon as there's a pandemic that affects able-bodied people, then all of a sudden, it's OK to do Zoom meetings. It's OK to work from home. It's OK to work flexible hours. And I think it can be pretty frustrating for those of us who have been trying to advocate for that sort of thing for a really long time and saying, "Why can't I study from home? Why do I physically have to come into this lab when I'm unwell?" Why do I have to do all of these things when institutions like academic institutions or when workplaces are making things very inaccessible? But then as soon as this has happened, it's been a very, very quick shift to see a lot of those accommodations that we've been saying we need, we've seen those essentially established overnight. And so, yeah, I share similar concern.

I hope that as we go back to the quote-unquote "new normal," that others recognize that a lot of those options need to stay there. That we actually need to be thinking around not how we return to how we were before the pandemic, but that we take the learning that has come through this and say, OK. You know what? We need to make our workplaces more accessible in general. We need to look after our communities so that when big things happen that are going to affect our livelihoods, people aren't going to be stuck without the essentials that they need. We need to reconsider our whole economic model so that people aren't forced to work in jobs that put themselves at risk while others who have financial privilege can stay at home, you know? I think all of those sorts of things are very front of mind, and I really just, I'm hoping that we can ensure that that stays on the agenda after the quote-unquote, yeah, like as we get to that sort of quote-unquote "new normal." But I think that also takes a lot of energy, mixed optimism.

[mellow music break]

Becoming an activist for Indigenous and disability rights

ALICE: So, we're gonna talk about climate activism. And before we do that, I guess I'd like to learn a little bit about your involvement in both Indigenous and disability rights. Could you just kind of describe a little bit about how you became an activist and maybe where you got started?

KERA: Yeah, for sure. I think, I don't know, I think the short answer is, "It's complicated." I've had a really interesting, I think, journey to my activism on all fronts. Because I think my activism has emerged as I've started to kind of grow into my identities a bit, if that makes sense. So, when I was very small, my Poua or my grandfather, he was one of the lead negotiators for our iwi or our tribe's Waitangi claim and settlement. Yeah, the settlement process was around, yeah, it was around recognizing breaches of our rights as Indigenous peoples. And so, my Poua had been involved in that when I was very little. And so, I was often sort of surrounded by that. And I guess he's been a very big figure in my life growing up. And then, so he did that. And his father was a surgeon, actually, and he had advocated for a lot of things. He was a sort of surgeon and City Councilor in Wellington, bit of an activist as well. And then his father's father, so my Poua's father, he was also involved in politics a lot as well. And so, I think on that O'Regan sort of family line, there has been a lot of activism.

And then, as I was growing up, I was surrounded by that, and I had my dad, who is, he's an archeologist. He also, when I was very small, he used to work for our iwi, so our tribe, in preserving cultural heritage. And then my Auntie Hana has been very involved in preserving and growing our Indigenous language. And so, when I was very small, I would be taken to a lot of hui or meetings on our marae, so our meeting places, meeting houses, all around the place.

And when you're little, you're kind of just playing with the other kids, but you hear the adults talking about a lot of important issues for our iwi, so for our tribe and our tribal community. And so, I was really exposed to that. And I would say that when I was really little, probably my, yeah, the kinda three key people that I really wanted to impress were my dad, my Auntie Hana, and then my Poua, my grandfather. And so, they probably instilled a lot of that sort of activist thinking in me quite young.

And then, on the other side of my whānau, so on the other side of my family, my mom is Pākehā or white. And so, she's worked a lot in environmental program, mostly for Regional and City Councils and things like that. And so, she really influenced me when I was little growing up in terms of appreciating the environment or experiencing lots of the unique environment that we have in New Zealand. Because she'd take us all camping, so we'd go camping a lot as a family. And she really got me thinking about environmental issues mostly from that kind of level of individual action like recycling or producing less waste. But I think that kind of formed the sort of platform for bigger structural issues. And so, I think I never really used to think about it in this way, but I guess it was quite an Indigenous thing to think about how your family has influenced you and your activism and things like that. And the more I think on it now, the more I kind of think about how could I have not turned out to be an activist?! I'm not sure if that would be possible, you know.

[mellow music break]

Major environmental issues in Kera's community and region

ALICE: I was wondering, especially since I'm not from your part of the world, I'd love to learn about what are some of the major environmental issues that you're really concerned about in your local community and your region.

KERA: Yeah. I think that's also a really hard question to answer 'cause I think there are so many levels. But I'm willing to give it a go! But I guess I'll just say upfront that I think I'm not necessarily a huge expert on this. Because in my experience, when I was very small, I grew up in the South Island and around my family and around my tribe. But then, my family moved to Auckland, which is where I'm based at the moment. And so, I think maybe the way that I relate to those issues is yeah, I guess quite inherently privileged. I think a lot of the issues that I really am concerned about in New Zealand happen on maybe two levels. So, the first one being the kind of national political level, and then the second one being more focused on yeah, Indigenous environmental issues, and particularly being concerned for the future of Te Waipounamu, so my land back home, which I'm not on at the moment.

And so, I think on a national level, some of the things that concern me is just I think that New Zealand has this reputation for being clean and green. [chuckles] And surprise! It's all marketing! I think we do have a tourism sector that relies on having a lot of people come here because of that perception of it being very clean and green. But I think, you know, I think New Zealand has to wrestle with the fact that we try to play off this thing of being the small underdogs, but we're a very privileged country. We have a lot of wealth that definitely is concentrated in the hands of mostly white, older, able-bodied men. And so, I think, in a lot of ways, the approaches that we take to environmental issues are very much surface level, rather than actually dismantling the systems that are causing climate change and that are also causing the oppression of numerous communities.

But then, in terms of sort of direct examples: I was really fortunate to be invited to the Ngāi Tahu, so my iwi, my tribe's climate symposium, which happened last year. So, I was invited to

help MC that, which was really, really fun, really, really interesting, and a real privilege to be back, to be invited back home. And while we were there, we basically heard a lot of information from the team in my tribe who have been leading out on a climate change strategy: so, how we support our tribe to, yeah, to adapt to and respond to climate change. And so, some of the things that really struck me was particularly around our mauka, our mountain, Aoraki. So, Aoraki, whose colonized name is Mount Cook, basically, Aoraki is our Mauka Ariki, so our very, a very sacred mountain for our people, a very important mountain for our people. And maybe it helps to explain that as Māori, we see our relationships with land and with the natural environment through whakapapa, so through this, yeah, through genealogy or this, yeah, I guess just this idea of relationship and heritage and things. And so, when I shared my way of introducing myself, my pepeha at the beginning of this, I referenced the mountains and the rivers that are important to my people. And Aoraki is sort of the mauka that is really central for all of our tribe across the South Island.

And so, basically, through climate change, a lot of the glaciers around there are melting, and Aoraki is starting to have a lot more warmer days. And so, he's a very impressive mountain to view. He has the sort of like big, big snowy cape around him, and it's just, yeah, awe-inspiring to be there and really, yeah, I think a very profound experience going back and seeing Aoraki, seeing my mountain last year. And so, it does make me really sad to hear that through climate change, that he's melting and that that might be something that my mokopuna or my grandchildren won't be able to see. They won't be able to see the snowy cape on Aoraki or that a lot of the landscape around there might be quite different with a lot of glaciers melting and flooding and things happening.

And then on top of that, another issue that I'm really concerned about is the coastal erosion. So, most of our marae, or meeting houses, in the South island are coastal. And so, there's a lot of concern around how that erosion is going to affect our marae, because they're very culturally significant places. And so, the reality is that, with coastal erosion and as sea levels rise, in a lot of those situations, those marae are going to have to move. And alongside the marae moving, we also have to think about our other wāhi tapu, so our other sacred sites. So, those can be things like urupā, or cemeteries, where our ancestors have been buried for generations and generations and generations.

And at this climate symposium with my iwi last year, we're having to actually have that conversation around what does it mean to move an urupā? Like, is that something that can be done? Can you move this whole cemetery, and what does it mean to do that? I think that's quite a traumatic process, because we also often bury the placenta and things in wāhi tapu and spaces like that of our children or plant trees there. And so, there's this, you know, there's this cultural dynamic there, which is that we bury our dead there as a way of, I guess it's connecting us back to the land that we come from. And so, it's not as simple for us as just being like, OK, find another site for it. It's like that's going to be something that's going to be really traumatic for us.

I think one other example that I'm interested in—and which I don't know very much about, but I'm interested in—is thinking around the different species that are important to us. Because in New Zealand, we have very interesting and unique species. We have a lot of birds. And so, for a lot of our native and endangered species, they're birds. And they're big birds like the kiwi that people might be familiar with that can't fly and haven't developed in a way to be able to fly and to be able to manage with a lot of predators because they're, yeah, we just didn't have many predators before the arrival of humans and then other mammals that were brought with colonization. And so, I'm concerned about a lot of our species, a lot of our birds, a lot of our fish

species, particularly fish species that have been affected by hydroelectric as well. We have a lot of hydroelectric dams and things down south, which are obviously, if you're thinking about renewable energy, you're like, OK. That's really great that you have lots of renewable energy. But also, what does that mean for lots of the species that then can't get through their traditional migratory routes and things?

And then for me being from right down the bottom of the South Island, we have a lot of families there or some families who engage with tītī, or mutton birds, or the sooty shearwater, and they're on some of the sort of off-shore islands. And they're a really important cultural harvest is collecting tītī. And I understand that, through climate change, that they might become more endangered as well.

And then also concerned about what are the repercussions for us as Indigenous peoples as far as our rights are concerned? Because the government has a responsibility to protect our rights, and the government or the crown has agreed for certain species, for certain tāonga species, or precious species, like tītī to be protected. So, what happens if, through climate change—which is predominantly not caused by Indigenous Peoples—what happens if that means that we can no longer live up to the standards that've been set in The Treaty? I think that's probably a pretty comprehensive list of things that are on my mind as far as Indigenous climate change goes.

ALICE: Oh, I love it. Thank you so much. I just think this is the opportunity for so many of us to really learn about it and just take it seriously and to be in solidarity with Indigenous people all over the world who are fighting to defend their land and just trying to teach people, especially non-Indigenous people, how important the relationship that Indigenous people have to the land. And I think that's something that's really missing in these kind of larger, well-known climate movements.

Some problematic things in broader activism movements

ALICE: I was wondering if you would kind of expand on things that you've observed and experienced within the broader kind of activist movement. And what are some of the things that are problematic about them?

KERA: Yeah, for sure. How much time have you got, you know?! There are so, so many issues. [laughs] Yeah. I think maybe just like as a broad comment.... [sighs] How do I say this? I mean, I can be quite blunt here. So, I think a lot of climate NGOs frankly need to interrogate why they exist. And that probably sounds quite harsh, but the reason that I say this is because I think as Indigenous Peoples, as disabled people, as other communities that've been oppressed, we've been having to think about these issues for such a long time, right? It's like, it affects our communities first and worst. Like, when there are hurricanes, when there are fires, when there are power shutoffs, when there are all of these kinds of things, it's our communities that get affected. I think a lot of the climate movement kind of comes, it has an interesting whakapapa. And so, I guess for me, I think about a lot of things relationally or through this lens of whakapapa or genealogy, right?

And so, when I think about lots of the climate NGOs that exist, a lot of them have come through say like the '60s and the hippie movement and this big conservation movement, which I think is very much grounded and very much intertwined with white supremacy, with white supremacy and with ableism. It comes from an ideology of preserving nature because nature is so good, and it's so separate from people. I hate to be kinda judgmental, but I do just sort of envisage a lot of sort of white hippies, basically, who want to go and trek in the big national parks and just observe pristine nature because they are able to benefit from nature being absolutely destroyed

in so many other ways to fuel their capitalist system that they're then benefitting from. And so, I think when we think around the whakapapa, or the genealogy, of a lot of these organizations, they come from that sort of conservation movement, which really is quite, yeah, quite oppressive. And so then, when I think around how that has evolved with climate change, as we've started to see the climate movement emerge from maybe back decades ago when it was primarily very, very scientific, and it was a very heavily scientific exclusive community that was talking around climate change, to then how it's started to become more mainstream, I think a lot of those same ideologies exist within the climate NGOs that are big and take action today.

And so, it kind of got me thinking a while back around why does your movement exist? Why does your organization actually exist? And I've had to ask myself this question a few times as well, around some of the things that I do and the things that I choose to engage on. Or when I have an idea, and I'm like, oh my goodness! I should make this cool, big project, and I can do this, this, and this. And then I realize that actually, there are probably other organizations I could go and support, but it's me centering myself. Like, why do I want to do that project? Is it actually because this is really necessary for a community or an issue that's really important to me? Or is there some ego at play in here that I need to interrogate and start to strip back?

And I think in the case of a lot of climate NGOs, there's definitely that ego element. They could have, as soon as they realize, oh, climate change is a thing, and it's affecting lots of communities, they could've gone: Oh shit! Maybe we should be listening to Indigenous people whose land is being exploited by extractive industry. Oh crap! Maybe we should have talked to those disabled people who were saying that they're getting really sick from these industries or things like that. But they haven't. They have instead sort of created these movements which really center their own privileged experience. And then they wonder why climate change isn't getting actually addressed. And it's because their whole theory of change is quite superficial, I feel. If your climate movement doesn't exist to unpack capitalism, to dismantle ableism, to dismantle colonialism, then what are you doing?

[mellow music break]

ALICE: I think that's an excellent question because this really applies to all forms of activism, where again, it sounds very obvious, but it's all about putting the resources and the attention on those who are most impacted.

Changes Kera would like to see to center Indigenous and disabled people

ALICE: What are some of the ways, what are some of the changes that you would like to see just very broadly among climate activists on centering Indigenous and disabled people, especially their wisdom and their relationships and their knowledge about living in a world that's very hostile, and they've had generations of wisdom that's just really not valued?

KERA: Yeah. I mean, I think there are so many changes that are needed in the climate movement to make it a safe space for Indigenous and for disabled activists and for queer activists and activists from the global south and various other communities that are oppressed. I think some of the things that would help though is if, first and foremost, people and organizations did ask that question of themselves: what do I exist, like, why do we exist? Why does our organization exist, and what are we trying to achieve? And so, I think I'd like to see organizations asking that question and then putting their money where their mouth is. If you want to be more climate justice-focused, then pay people. Pay organizations from structurally oppressed communities to come and teach you how you should do it, and just listen and recognize that that's gonna involve a lot of unlearning. It's going to involve a lot of devolving

power. It's going to mean that you will have to recognize, oh crap. I've been taking up way too much space here, and I need to stay in my lane.

And I think for a lot of people, and particularly for a lot of sort of Type A climate activists, of which I think I kind of am one of them as well [chuckles], you know, it requires eating a bit of humble pie and saying, oh. Actually, you know what? Maybe my job in climate activism is not to be the person who's speaking on everything. Maybe my job is actually to go, how do I get other people into these spaces? How do I support other communities to be heard? And how do I do that in a way that's not centering me and my own activism? And so, I think those would be some really important places to start.

And I would say that the other one, which is probably another big piece, is around narratives, thinking around the narratives that you're using. Because in the work that I do with Activate with the social impact agency that my partner and I run. That's Jason, Jason Boberg on Twitter. Everybody, go follow him. He's awesome, and I'm not biased at all. But we do a lot of work around narrative change. And very often, the narratives that we see being promoted by climate activists and climate organizations are inherently ableist. So, whether that's stuff like seeing people talk about COVID and coronavirus and being like, "Oh, but nature is healing right now. Humans are the virus." No, absolutely not. That is a disgusting sort of narrative that really doesn't need to be promoted. And what we should be thinking about is actually that COVID is probably the time to be thinking the most around the at-risk communities and how they're affected and how we can support them to have their voices heard.

Or things like how so much of the climate movement, a lot of their demands talk around laziness or this concept of laziness or convenience. So, whether that's things like the straw ban or like prepackaged vegetables, chopped up vegetables, and things like this, there's this predominant narrative that oh, straws are just a convenience. Plastic packaging is just a convenience. And when those narratives exist, they inherently are obviously ableist, because hey, disabled people need those things to survive! But also, they promote this idea that is inherently linked to capitalism, which is the root cause of climate change, right? It's like, how much more can you reinforce the structure that you're supposedly trying to rail against when your discourse is all around productivity and this idea that you just have to do all of these things. Otherwise you're lazy and therefore can't be an actual climate activist.

I see this particularly with the activism that has been happening around COVID. The whole time, for years and years and years, disabled activists have been organizing online. We tweet stuff, we have Zoom meetings, we do podcasts like this. We do all sorts of awesome things that happen online, and that is really valid activism. Just because it doesn't happen in person doesn't mean that it's not activism. But yet, we hear all of these narratives around quote-unquote "slacktivism" or like "keyboard warriors" or things like this, which inherently try to devalue that work that is being done online. Yet, as soon as able-bodied people have to stay at home, suddenly we're seeing all of these conferences magically happening online! Suddenly, all of these different activist things are happening online, and online petitions are the only way that people can get these changes happening. And so, I think I would really like to see the climate movement be much more aware and a lot more thoughtful about the narratives that they use. Because I think very often, we're enforcing, unintentionally, the narratives that we're using are actually enforcing the systems that have got us to this point in the first place.

[upbeat music break]

The future of climate activism

ALICE: Is there anything else you'd like to share in terms of just, as we wrap up, thinking about the future of climate activism, especially as we, as the entire world is going through this horrific pandemic, and it's not gonna be the last one, right? We both know this is gonna happen again. So, any other final thoughts you have about the future of climate activism?

KERA: Yeah. I think what's really on my mind at the moment, particularly as we are during this pandemic—which as you say, we know it's not the first, and it's not gonna be the last one—and as we are also holding at the same time that there is another massive crisis going on in terms of climate change, I think the thing that sticks out to me in terms of the future is how we get there through accountability and being radically accountable to ourselves, to our communities, and to the wider climate movement as well. And I say that because I think that a lot of these issues that I kind of just shared before come up because people are not holding themselves accountable, or we find it very difficult to hold others to account. I think that this should be a moment for reflection for a lot of people, myself included. I've been doing a lot of reflecting on my own accountability in things. Because I think we need to be able to hold space for learning, and we need to be able to hold space for people to work through these difficult and traumatic things that are happening. Climate change is really traumatic, even for the very privileged Pākehā, or white people, who have a lot of privilege and are going to be the least affected, I do get that it's a scary thing for them as well. But I think we need to be able to both hold space for people to learn and unpack and process that trauma while also recognizing that it's OK to challenge people and to challenge people to do better, and that that doesn't necessarily have to be something that's unkind.

I think that we need to also be able to hold that while saying, "You need to do better." "There are some people who are having it worse than you, and it's OK for you to have those emotions. But actually, this is a space that we need to center other voices." And so, I think that I would like to see people taking this time to reflect. Because I think COVID in particular has brought a lot of these power dynamics to the surface. It's brought a lot of voices to the surface. And so, I think, yeah, I would really just hope that this moment can be a time for people to reflect, listen, to go out and try and find some of the answers themselves, and then to hold themselves accountable. Because I think if we're going to have a future that does center and uplift and is a beautiful space for our structurally oppressed communities, then I think that is going to come from people having to be accountable to themselves, to each other, and to all of the communities that they might be affecting through their change.

ALICE: Wow. Kera, thank you so, so very much for spending this time with me and just sharing your story and your expertise. I am just incredibly appreciative and humbled by this experience.

KERA: Well, likewise, my friend, likewise e hoa. I feel very, very privileged to have, yeah, to be able to share this digital space with you and to have this platform to share some of my whakaaro, some of my ideas, which are not my own but come from all the communities that I'm a part of. I'm very grateful.

Wrap-up

[hip hop music]

♪ How far will they go?

Oh, yeah yeah.... ♪

ALICE: This podcast is a production of the *Disability Visibility Project*, an online community dedicated to creating, sharing, and amplifying disability media and culture. All episodes, including text transcripts, are available at DisabilityVisibilityProject.com/Podcast.

You can also find out more about Kera on my website.

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Thanks for listening, and see you on the Internets! Bye!!!

♪ Rocket to the blast off
Stop drop dance off ♪