

## **A Very Kind Conversation Between a Cyborg and Some Biohackers**

Link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1X8pnC8ZNJqDYxrPgL-KxFfTCQkFhGji/view>

Duration: 01:18:48

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### Transcription Notes

This meeting was prompted by members of the grinder community, a subculture of biohacking, reading the writing of cyborg poet Jillian Weise. The grinders planned a group discussion of Weise's "Common Cyborg" essay, and grinder Berkelly Gonzalez reached out to Jillian Weise on email to invite her to be part of their conversation. The meeting happened to take place at the same time as Weise had drawn attention from the wider biohacking community when she asked, on twitter, during the virtual meeting of the Biohacking Village at DEF CON, "Are any speakers disabled? Are any speakers Deaf? Are any speakers neurodivergent?"

Attendees included grinders Berkelly Gonzalez, Cobalt Barnett, Hylyx Hyx, religious studies researcher Jacob Boss, transhumanist and host of the Future Grind podcast Ryan O'Shea, and the cyborg/poet Jillian Weise. Weise appears under the name Topsy Tullivan in captions.

The meeting begins 15 minutes into the conversation when Weise asked the group to record for archive and access. Everyone consented. Due to a glitch, the video recording lacks audio. Captions are Google AI and include things like misinterpreting "crip time" for "Crypt time." Weise offered to transcribe with agreement that biohacking community would rotate labor of future meetings. Weise is not licensed in transcription, so this is a good faith effort. Though she would usually transcribe verbatim, this is non-verbatim due to lack of audio. The transcript corrects the Google AI and relies on the collective memory of those in attendance for Google AI gaps and errors in captions.

### Image Descriptions:

Jillian Weise appears in a square on Google Hangouts. She is a white woman with reddish-brown long hair sitting on a beige chair. She is wearing a black short sleeve tee-shirt that reads "The Future Is Accessible." Behind her, there is a window with the blinds open and green leaves outside.

Berkelly is a woman in her mid 20s with dark brown hair wearing a blue button up short sleeved shirt and a headset with light pink headphone me cushions. She is sitting at a desk in a bedroom and is taking notes throughout the video.

Jacob Boss appears in a square on Google Meet. He is a white man with wavy medium-length brown hair seated in a black office chair. He is wearing an orange tank top. Behind him there is a green wall with a small white board attached to the wall.

Cobalt and Hylyx appear in the same video square. Cobalt is a white androgynous person in their 30s, with short blue hair and a lower lip piercing. They are wearing a

plain dark grey t-shirt and sometimes wear black-framed eyeglasses. Hylyx is a white nonbinary person with a pink floofy mohawk and a bridge piercing. Due to technical problems during the call, their square is sometimes absent, Hylyx is sometimes missing, and the background changes between a pink-and-black floral wall with a hanging green plant, the inside of a passenger car, and the blue-and-silver interior of an RV.

Ryan O'Shea appears in a square on Google Hangouts. He is a white man wearing an olive green t-shirt and sits in front of a wooden accent wall.

00:00 **Ryan O'Shea:** Okay we are now recording so hopefully as long as there's no tech issues, from here on out, it's recording.

00:05 **Jillian Weise:** Okay. I'm sorry I interrupted you. Could you continue? We were talking about sight and hearing. I like the point you made about the present, the presumption, which of course is an ableist presumption, that sight is preferable to Blindness, that hearing is preferable to Deafness. It's sticky as soon as you introduce something like—and then continue? What were you saying?

00:30 **Ryan O'Shea:** Yes, so for example, flashbang grenades are often used by police or in warfare situations and if someone did not have the ability to see or hear, they would theoretically not be affected by these desensitizing, disorienting tools that are used on others. So in some cases not having the ability to see or hear could be preferable and I also use the example of if you're trying to sleep. For example, you wouldn't need to use ear blockers or eye or sight blockers to try to make sure that you're able to do that and I think that's realizing that it's not always good to have what is perceived as more in many ways and that's why I think—

01:12 **Jillian Weise:** Well, it's not perceived as "more." It's an ableist framework. It's an ableist conceit.

01:15 **Ryan O'Shea:** When I was talking about more, I was referring to, we can see a certain amount of light of the visible spectrum. We can hear a certain amount of frequencies and one common thing in the biohacking slash transhumanist community is how we can perhaps see infrared or ultraviolet or how we can hear infrasound and these are—that's where I use "more"—to mean a wider range. But is that really beneficial? Do you really want to be—

01:38 **Jillian Weise:** Wait, this is really ... because you're conflating "more" with "beneficial." And so this is where we get into coded language, right, kind of like more better beneficial.

01:52 **Cobalt Barnett:** I'm sorry to interrupt but I don't think that correlation was actually happening [inaudible]

02:02 **Jillian Weise:** Not? Okay. Oh, I'm losing you. Can people hear?

- 02:04 **Ryan O'Shea:** And it's frozen on my end as well.
- 02:05 **Berkelly Gonzalez:** Maybe try turning off your—the connection might be a little more stable. [Pause.] That's unfortunate.
- 02:22 **Ryan O'Shea:** But I think I agree with what they were going to say, which was that I'm using the word "more" literally to mean a wider range. More frequencies. Not necessarily that that's better.
- 02:33 **Jillian Weise:** Okay.
- 02:45 **Ryan O'Shea:** We may have lost them completely.
- 02:46 **Jillian Weise:** I'm just pausing because I'm just—it's time—sometimes—
- 02:48 **Ryan O'Shea:** I was trying to give a chance for them to hop back on—
- 02:50 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah but I like going slow. One of the great parts about being a disability rights activist is we think of things like "crip time" and how the time that we're moving in right now is sort of a normative time. We're supposed to like respond, respond back, respond, respond back and that's not the time I'm in. I'm in crip time.
- 03:15 **Ryan O'Shea:** Yeah.
- 03:16 **Jillian Weise:** So I'm just sort of pausing here to think about what you're saying, which is, "more" as in a greater variety. But "greater." I don't like the adjective. I'm just—I'm a poet. I think about language. More. Okay, like infrared. There is a concrete example. It's hard, really, for me to imagine because I have this cyborg leg that doesn't even have my gender. It's made in the image of men. So like when the transhumanist or biohacking community is saying, "Well, we want infrared," or "We want whatever," could ya'll help me get a leg that's made in my gender? And I'm—That would be "more" for me to have a leg that isn't made in the image of men. Do you know? But it's not available to me at all and yet. One of the assumptions I bring to the transhumanist biohacking communities is that it would be of no interest to you all. It would actually be of no interest to you all to say, "Well, of course, before we have infrared vision, we should make sure that folks have prosthetics that align with their gender." Like it wouldn't be interesting to ya'll. And so that's where there's sort of this tension. Do you know what I mean?
- 04:45 **Ryan O'Shea:** I don't mean to be the one speaking all the time. So earlier—Jacob if you want to jump in please—but I would say is that I 100% agree that we should have a plethora of available prosthetics and augments and anything that people would want to change to help them get to that point and I think there's hopefully enough people interested in the space in general that they could be

working on multiple things at once. I'm not sure that a certain gender of prosthetic leg should necessarily be the focus of humanity right at this point.

05:21 **Jillian Weise:** Well, here we need to show though—here we get into the should. Because you told me earlier in convo that it was individual and now we're using like a focus of humanity. So talk to me about that.

05:31 **Ryan O'Shea:** Well, whether that's about something, that's what I don't want. I don't think there should necessarily be at all a focus of humanity.

05:38 **Jillian Weise:** Okay, that clarifies.

05:42 **Ryan O'Shea:** So that's where I would come. Yeah.

05:47 **Berkelly Gonzalez:** Yeah, I think, in similar terms, I think that what you want is important and we should be fighting for it. But I also think that there's no reason to limit ourselves to what's currently capable or, you know, what's currently possible, like the infrared thing. That's far off but there's no reason not to, I don't think I even want it, but I don't think there's any reason for people not to dream about it, you know.

06:24 **Jillian Weise:** Berkelly, I love hearing that you don't even think you want it, like I'm interested in that because I'm so interested in desire and what we are permitted to desire. I don't actually want to have to ask you for a prosthetic that matches my gender. I wish that was like so 1909. So talk to me more about what it is that you want. First of all, you don't identify as transhumanist but more biohacker or—

06:58 **Berkelly Gonzalez:** Yeah, I think transhumanist is a very loaded political term and because of that I'm not really interested in getting involved in it [laughs] I guess.

07:06 **Jillian Weise:** Okay.

07:07 **Berkelly Gonzalez:** and I'm sorry. Can you—what was the—

07:14 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah. What do you want as a biohacker? You're like no, I don't really want infrared. So like, since you don't—

07:20 **Berkelly Gonzalez:** Yeah, um, you know, that's something that I've been thinking a lot lately about. I used to have, you know, the magnet implants in my fingers and those were really cool. I liked them when I had them. I'd probably get them again but—expansion of the senses is cool—but like for something like infrared I guess if you could turn it off, like that would be cool. But I don't see that being a possibility so—

07:54 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah.

07:56 **Berkelly Gonzalez:** I don't really know. I enjoy this community. I enjoy all the people that I've met in it, but I don't necessarily know, currently, what I want from it.

08:10 **Jillian Weise:** Now I love that [pause] I love that you brought up cool, like it's cool. Right? But I'm also hearing limitations and capabilities. Those are loaded terms. And disability rights, like, you know, or "special needs." What are your limitations? That's why when I started the meeting I did an access check. Not with, like, how will this limit you? But here's the space. We get to do with it whatever we want. What do we want? I mean, this is a terrible paraphrase, but you get what I'm saying? The cool part is what I want in on. That's what I want in on. The cool part. And since I haven't met you all before today I've just done it myself, by saying, "Well, I'll call them 'tryborgs' because that's cool and snarky and takes my point-of-view that there's a difference between someone who augments to be—for pleasure—right? And me saying, like, I'm a disabled person and it is pleasurable. Right? So how do we, like how do we, I don't know. That's just something I'm throwing out there.

09:33 **Ryan O'Shea:** Getting back real quick. So when you said what we individually want from being participants in the biohacking community—I think the best way I would phrase it is—I want myself and also everyone else to have the ability to—

09:48 **Jillian Weise:** Ability.

09:50 **Ryan O'Shea:** Yes. If not ability, I don't—

09:51 **Jillian Weise:** Can you use—

09:52 **Ryan O'Shea:** I don't know what—I don't know what synonym to use there. Ability, capability, kind of mean the same thing.

09:56 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah, find one. No, not ability and not capability. Capacity?

10:00 **Ryan O'Shea:** Capacity to self-direct what they want to become rather than to be defined by what biology or existing society, the box that that puts them into. So for me—

10:15 **Jillian Weise:** Wait, no. I need to go crimp time on this. I really do. Can you repeat what you just said?

10:20 **Ryan O'Shea:** Slightly rephrasing it's maybe making more clearer. From the biohacking community, I want to advocate for the creation of technology and the creation of a system that—I was almost going to use the word enable, but I feel like you would object.

- 10:39 **Jillian Weise:** Thank you. Thanks for not using it.
- 10:42 **Ryan O'Shea:** Create the capacity—
- 10:44 **Jillian Weise:** Provides?
- 10:45 **Ryan O'Shea:** Yeah, provide the capacity for individuals to self-direct their own evolution, using that term loosely, in a way that is not predefined by their biology or societal concepts.
- 11:03 **Jillian Weise:** Okay. That's a bit ... Can we stop for some crip time? I actually need 30 seconds and it's gonna be awkward for everyone and we're just gonna stare at each other, but it's fine. It's great. Okay? In fact, it's even cool. Okay ...
- 11:14 [Pause for crip time]
- 11:48 **Jillian Weise:** Okay, well, would anyone else like to chime in?
- 11:57 **Ryan O'Shea:** Just so I'm not speaking for the community. I feel like I'm talking a lot here. I would just like to hear Berkelly or Jacob want to share whether they, in general, agree or disagree with my statement.
- 12:05 **Berkelly Gonzalez:** I would say I do agree with it. I do think that a lot of the appeal of this community, for me, is, you know, sort of self-directed. I don't like the term evolution but creating yourself in your own image, I guess. You know. Being the person that you want to be, both inside and out, like that's something beautiful that I see in this community.
- 12:55 **Jillian Weise:** Oh Jacob, do you wanna agree or not disagree?
- 13:00 **Jacob Boss:** I don't even remember the statement at this point.
- 13:04 **Jillian Weise:** [laughing] Okay, what's great Jacob is that he can say it again. We're in crip time. No shame to repeating oneself as many times as you want. Do you—can you paraphrase, Ryan?
- 13:14 **Ryan O'Shea:** Yeah, I think part of the reason it was getting confusing before is because I was trying to use kind of, like, a lot of disclaimers to explain everything word by word. So think maybe, in a more simplified version, my idea of what I would like to see from my biohacking slash transhumanist future is a future in which everyone has the capacity to choose the life they want for themselves without any limitations, biological or societal.
- 13:40 **Jillian Weise:** Limitation. Scratch. Okay, so we're removing like—sorry, Jacob?

13:50 **Jacob Boss:** [laughs] I disagree. I'm here because I went looking to find out what people were actually trying to do, how they were talking, what they believed. At DEF CON a few years ago, when I found out there were some folks who were saying wild things about the power of their supplements and butter fortified coffee and things like that, what I found was the biohacking community and then I found there was a community focused on making money and a subcommunity focused on being "Bio Bros" and a subcommunity that was more queer and I gravitated towards the more queer, women-led parts of the movement and embedded myself with the group called The Grinders. And that's where Berkelly and I have met, on the grinding circuit.

15:06 **Jillian Weise:** How do you meet there? Just a logistics question. Is it on Slack? Is it online? Is it in-person?

15:15 **Jacob Boss:** All of the above. Yeah, all of the above.

15:20 **Jillian Weise:** Okay.

15:22 **Jacob Boss:** And then at *Please Try This At Home*, the conference in Pittsburgh last year, that was the first time that I saw biohacking was being led by out and proud disabled biohackers.

15:45 **Jillian Weise:** Oh wonderful! Jacob, you're ahead of me. I don't know this meeting. This conference.

15:50 **Jacob Boss:** *Please Try This At Home*.

15:52 **Jillian Weise:** That's the name of the conference?

15:58 **Jacob Boss:** [Nodding.]

16:00 **Jillian Weise:** So this is familiar to you! What I'm saying? What I'm throwing out?

16:08 **Jacob Boss:** Yes, but I—I have a little bit of celebrity panic because I'm just so excited to meet you.

16:15 **Jillian Weise:** What?

16:18 **Jacob Boss:** And yeah, I love your work and—

16:22 **Jillian Weise:** [laughing] Okay, thank you very much. I appreciate it. Okay, um, yeah, so I'm still thinking about the thing Ryan said and, like, the thing is this idealistic, utopic, self-directed, outside-all-systems-of-oppression ... I don't know where this magical place is that you describe, but it's not, I don't believe you've found it in transhumanism, right?

16:53 **Ryan O'Shea:** No.

16:54 **Jillian Weise:** I don't think people have agency like the statement suggests. In other words, self-directed. If I really was self-directed well, you know, like I bring all of the—well, we're all white here in this room. Actually, that's presumptuous. Maybe we're not all white and I don't need to, you know, I don't want to presume, but I bring whiteness. I bring queerness. I bring being from a middle-class family. I bring my cisgender. I bring, well, being polyamorous, so that's way outside. Okay, so I'm just saying. I don't know who the "self" is in the phrase "self-directed." I can't get behind a universalism like that. Do you know what I mean?

17:45 **Ryan O'Shea:** I think it's on the individual level. So whatever you identify as would be the self in that scenario and it was an aspirational statement. I certainly agree with you that it does not exist in any community, transhumanist or other. It's not something that exists yet, but it's something that I would personally strive to build and I realize that in many cases there could be contention in what one person chooses to self-direct for themselves may be opposed by others and that's going to be a contention that exists.

18:31 **Berkelly Gonzalez:** I think, also, there's—you know—self-directed but you're going to be influenced by the rest of society, so I feel like there is that danger. People will overwhelmingly choose to make themselves, you know, whiter and blonder and that is ... I don't think that's a concern that we should ignore when we're talking about this.

19:20 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah, I'm with you. I think we see it already. If we. I don't know if we do or we don't want to call plastic surgery a version of augmentation but we don't have – I'm really interested in ugly studies and we don't have in our culture, like, people going to the plastic surgeon and saying, "I would like to be ugly. Um, could you please make that happen for me?" And so. Why not, right? So I'm just glad you raised that inherent danger.

20:00 **Ryan O'Shea:** I think you bring up a good point there, which is that I'm by no means an expert on this field. But from what I understand, many times for a cosmetic surgery or plastic surgery procedure to be approved and gone forward with, it would need to kind of meet societal standards of beauty or acceptance before a doctor will even consider doing that—

20:21 **Jacob Boss:** Ryan, do you mind if I jump in?

20:24 **Ryan O'Shea:** Yeah, go ahead.

20:27 **Jacob Boss:** I am obsessed with plastic surgery shows. And I pay really close attention to the language they use and what they say in shows like *Botched* when people come to them and say, "Make me elf ears. Give me a butt that's larger

than any butt that's ever been." They say, "Our business is to make you look normal." And it's like woah—

20:51 **Jillian Weise**: Yeah.

20:52: **Jacob Boss**: Okay. That's a really loaded term. And they use it as if "normal" is this kind of universally understood—

21:00 **Jillian Weise**: Yeah.

21:02 **Jacob Boss**: Yeah.

21:03 **Ryan O'Shea**: Well, the example I was going to throw in there is Dr. Evil, who was a body modification artist in the UK, was sent to jail for 30 months for performing augmentation procedures on his clients that they agreed to consent to and were happy with but he was charged with grievous bodily assault for doing things such as removing an ear and removing a nipple. And I don't know, it's unfalsifiable, but I doubt that he would have been charged and convicted if what he was doing was not against societal standards of beauty and normality.

21:40 **Jacob Boss**: It's worth adding that there are a lot of people who I've met on the biohacking circuit who have—hmm—piercings, tattoos, modifications, scarifications, different kinds of looks that don't meet ... I don't know ... generic white standards of beauty.

22:02 **Jillian Weise**: Yeah, that's well, that's a wonderful, like I'm not as familiar from within community. So it's wonderful that there is ... Is it predominantly white men or is that just what the media tells me it is?

22:18 **Ryan O'Shea**: I would say, in my experience, the place where the biohacking community is most lacking diversity is in racial diversity, but in everything else, when it comes to gender ideology, beliefs, their sexual orientation, it is all over the place.

22:42 **Jacob Boss**: *Please Try This At Home* are much more racially diverse than gatherings like The Biohacking Village in 2017. Just thinking about ...

22:56 **Jillian Weise**: Like, I don't know the famous Black biohackers. Do you?

23:00 **Jacob Boss**: This is a question that I ask people when I want to talk to them in the community, like who are the famous Black biohackers?

23:04 **Jillian Weise**: Yeah. Oh, do we know the answer?

23:12 **Jacob Boss**: No. They say: there's a couple labs outside the US that people—

23:20 **Jillian Weise:** Okay.

23:21 **Jacob Boss:** Oh, well, they're doing something in Venezuela or—but no.

23:25 **Jillian Weise:** I feel a lot of empathy with this, as a poet, because I asked the question ... I don't actually ... I want to back away from what I'm about to say ... I might not even say it ... I'm very hesitant about making analogies between disability and race because there are people who, of course, occupy both spaces and I don't want to erase them. All I'm trying to do is bring us closer together in this one way, which is that in poetry I will say, "Who are the famous disabled poets?" and I will get this similar, like, "This one guy," and then I don't know if this person claims or not, and like maybe you know, so it seems similar only as far as like, "Who is the famous Black biohacker?" is still a question that doesn't have us listing five people. It's having me list. Absolutely zero. Because the information I get is from the US and so it's frankly, I can't name a woman—no, I do know a couple women who I would consider pretty famous who are biohackers. But yeah, so that's just information. You know. Are ya'll familiar with Zaretsky's work?

24:37 **Ryan O'Shea:** Yeah, he's more of a bio artist I think.

24:40 **Jillian Weise:** Right. He's a you know ... I would add the caveat that he [long pause] I mean perhaps. No, not even perhaps. He definitely crossed a boundary with a fellow biohacker, which he talks about explicitly with her on a podcast called "Doing the No-No." And I don't know the name of that podcast. I think that's the episode. Anyway, I'm just gonna put that there. The fact that she came to the table and talked to him in that podcast and had that conversation is important. So I'm going to put that there but—

I'm interested in what he's doing to go back to Jacob's point about like "Give me elf ears," about saying like, "Well, why can't we put a dick on the forehead?" Or "why can't we do some biohacking that makes plaid people? I'd really like to have a plaid child, you know, and that's me." It further challenges the heteronorm of what I considered—not the heteronorm only but like all these systems of oppression that biohacking doesn't even recognize as systems of oppression because the goal is to improve. So it's as though there is, like, this savior and the savior's biohacking and we will all be saved from not only these systems of oppression that biohacking doesn't acknowledge but also from ever having to die. The real Jesus thing, right? Kind of, but like that evangelicalism, I mean.

26:15 **Jacob Boss:** I'm working on trying to finish an article about this. About the biohacking as salvation. I'm from religious studies. And so I got involved in the community because I thought there was some kind of spiritual community or network about, like, ultimate causes and goals and things going on and I wanted to learn more. So yeah, biohacking or transhumanism as having a project of salvation is something that I'm trying to put coherent words to.

- 26:52 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah. I mean, how do we not ... can it ... can it be ... I mean, this is a binary so I don't like it. But if I knew that biohacking was a project of damnation, I would be more interested. [Pause.] We crip timed on that.
- 27:18 **Ryan O'Shea:** Well, I was going to respond but I think what I'm saying is kind of repetitive because I keep kind of repeating the same note over again, which is that you mentioned if biohacking is a project and—
- 27:22 **Jillian Weise:** I'm taking—I'm just reiterating Jacob—
- 27:27 **Ryan O'Shea:** Yeah, yeah. No, that's fine. But to just to respond to that. Like, phrasing it in that way. That, to me, puts forward the idea that there is a cohesive biohacking community in which there is a leadership and a common shared goal and I don't—
- 27:43 **Jacob Boss:** Which I'm very aware isn't—
- 27:45 **Ryan O'Shea:** Yeah. Yeah, I don't see that in the biohacking community. So I just want to flag that and then the one other thing that you mentioned earlier, Jillian, that I thought was noteworthy was you mentioned who identifies as a disabled poet. For example, and if it's a struggle to name one, and you mentioned the analogy, well possible analogy, you didn't want to make it, between someone who identifies as a Black biohacker and—
- 28:08 **Jillian Weise:** Quick clarification. It isn't hard for me to name one [disabled poet] at all but I'm talking about, like, capital P poetry, you know, whatever that is, by the way, it's amorphous and—
- 28:21 **Ryan O'Shea:** That's the exact point I'm making. Yeah, I think is that. It might be harder in our case to find someone who identifies as a biohacker. I think there are a lot of people that we look at—at an individual level—like I would identify what that person is doing as biohacking and that person does not classify themselves as such. And I think a good example of this is many people consider biohacking as inherently underground in DIY and if you are working in an academic lab, how could you possibly be a biohacker? if you are working in a corporate R&D lab, could you possibly be a biohacker? I don't really know the answers to these questions. I think I personally am much more welcoming to them to identify as such or be identified as such than others in the community would but that's just my personal view on it.
- 29:15 **Jillian Weise:** Oh, I share that assumption. I don't—I think of it as very do-it-yourself, very underground and I share that I bring that assumption to the table. That's why it doesn't make sense that disabled rights activists, cyborgs and crip borgs actually aren't having much of a conversation with biohackers because we're both groups that [pause] have our own codes, our own sort of community and we're both invested in machinery. And we're both invested in, yeah, similar

things. The difference is that disabled people bring with us a level of expertise that's ontological. And biohackers, from my point-of-view are like "This is brand-new," like 2000. I don't know what the date is but you know what I mean. Like it's so so new. And that's kind of ... but as far as like nuts and bolts, I think the communities have all the nuts and bolts. I mean, I think the communities have a lot ... Do I think they have a lot in common? I don't know. But something in common. It just seems like the disabled community is praxis and, you know, ontologically advanced.

30:55 **Ryan O'Shea:** Yeah, there is a conception I think of society for people who are tangentially aware of the biohacking community but not deeply familiar with it and that's in some ways like you said a new manifestation and not a natural continuation of fights that have been waged for decades and centuries by the transgender community and people fighting for their own reproductive health and people fighting to modify their bodies for religious reasons. And I don't know if this is where I'm confused on it. I don't know if that is ... perhaps the media who covers this industry is not making that clear or perhaps it's myself not even recognizing that that mood does exist in the biohacking community and I'm just not aware of it. But I can say personally for me that I do see what's happening today in biohacking as a continuation of those, you know, bodily autonomy fights that have been happening forever. And I definitely do not want to have, you know, white guys implanting RFIDs and magnets be the focus of the conversation. I think it is helpful in a way that we could rally around together. The idea of the importance of bodily autonomy and fight for that common goal rather than fight for who is the community who is fighting for bodily autonomy. I don't know if that makes sense or not.

32:16 **Jacob Boss:** I am, I just want to add that—

32:28 **Jillian Weise:** Am I glitchy?

32:29 **Jacob Boss:** Ryan?

32:30 **Ryan O'Shea:** We can't hear you right now.

32:34 **Jillian Weise:** Oh, now I can see better I think.

32:36 **Berkelly Gonzalez:** Could you repeat your last statement?

32:41 **Jacob Boss:** Would it be fair to characterize you, very briefly, as representing a kind of libertarian biohacking and transhumanism focused on autonomy.

32:49 **Ryan O'Shea:** That would probably be fair. I definitely, on the political spectrum, am left libertarian, slightly left, far libertarian. Yes.

32:55 **Jacob Boss:** I only bring it up in order to add a little more variety, add some more spice to the different perspectives that are available, that enormous

kaleidoscope of perspectives are available in biohacking. I was just watching Josiah's stream an hour or two ago, injecting experimental COVID vaccine and one of the things that he said was he wants biohacking to be thought of in the same way that comedy and art, well he wants science to be thought of in the same way that comedy and art are, where people are always asking questions. Like is this art? Is this comedy? Is this science?

33:35 **Jillian Weise:** Mmm-hmmm.

33:36 **Jacob Boss:** And so that's, that's another perspective. Also, I see a lot of people coming to – I've been traveling the grinder biohacking transhumanism circuit for a few years. I see a lot of people coming there for healing. And I know that there are disabled people in the community who haven't claimed that identity or don't claim the identity in those spaces or who do claim the identity in those spaces, but may not travel the circuit. They may only exist at certain nodes, so the—

34:07 **Jillian Weise:** Wait a minute because, because, since there are people in the community not claiming, they're not here with us for this conversation. And I completely agree that that's their choice, it's their autonomy to claim or to not claim, but it takes a certain amount of people claiming the identity for other people to feel okay claiming the identity. And I, especially in a group of biohackers, I mean, there for sure are disabled biohackers who are not claiming yet. How do we invite them in? You know, make it, I don't know, "cool," to go back to Berkely's adjective which I really like. It's cool to both claim and be disabled and be disabled biohacker. Like how do we make that cool? You know. What is cool though? Like acceptable, right, like but beyond acceptable, like a party you want to be at, you know? [Pause.] Do you have speculation, Jacob, about why? Why people in biohacking don't claim?

35:40 **Jacob Boss:** The folks in Pittsburgh were the ones who were coming forward and it was the most, it was a—it was an incredible experience being there. It was the most trans-led to disabled-biohacker-led conversation that I had ever been part of while traveling the circuit. It was amazing. So so incredible. The energy was extraordinary. [Pause.] Speculation. I don't know. Part of it, I'm sure, has to do with the fix-it approach. Like so, for example, I only get sort of brief reprieve from my chronic pain over the last 12 years or so, but I don't really tend to talk about it very much. And I mask it really well.

36:48 **Jillian Weise:** [Nodding.] Masking.

36:50 **Jacob Boss:** And in a lot of these spaces, pain is something to be cured.

36:59 **Jillian Weise:** Ahhh.

37:02 **Jacob Boss:** So it's kind of like, "What have you got for me?" If you watch biohacking YouTube streams, for example, and people are talking, you'll see

commenters streaming in saying, “Can you fix me? Can you heal me? Can you help me?” And that is, that is one of the ways in which the public thinks about, experiences people doing this work, as potentially people who can relieve their pain or their suffering.

37:30 **Jillian Weise:** Of course. Of course. I mean, I think there’s two things going on and then I have another question for you. Okay, there’s a lot going on. But my mind is going to—like—a lot of times it’s difficult because people don’t either feel disabled enough or feel like chronic pain is outside the spectrum of disability, and it’s not like ... whatever ... you know, so they’re not gonna use the word because the word has politics with it, about which, my opinion is, I’m not a gatekeeper. I’m not a bouncer. So if anyone feels disabled, welcome and come on in. Okay so that’s one thing and then the second is, um, is about pain like a biohacker as a kind of medical industrial complex. Except the really cool one. Not yet licensed one. Do you know what I mean? So there’s something going on there ...

[Cobalt rejoins meeting.]

38:37 **Jillian Weise:** At the same time, I have to recognize that, as a person in pain, I too want pain relief. In fact, I would consider the pain relief that I get from pharmaceuticals to be a kind of biohacking. And I think that the campaign against pain relief is its own strange mess. Yeah, it almost feels risky for me to say. Yeah, I get pain relief, of course. Why should that feel risky? It gives me access to the world to be relieved of pain. So I kind of, yeah, I’m just really interested in these people that are coming into the stream, asking, “Can you help me?” They are either—they don’t have access to the augmentation of the pharmaceuticals that I am using. Or they don’t know how to get that access. Or that’s not working for them. Or something, you know, something else. What were the concerns from this group of disabled trans biohackers that came to the fore? that were exciting to you, Jacob?

39:51 **Jacob Boss:** It was just so wonderful to be in that space and to be able to learn from and hear about the concerns, perspectives, projects, right? So we’re not talking about just “here are the problems.” But *Please Try This At Home* has a lot of people who are involved in queer community building and creating parallel structures of support and there were a lot of anarchists there. This is something I’ve noticed in the biohacking circuit as I travel as the creation of parallel structures, parallel structures of knowledge, parallel structures of support, right?

40:29 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah.

40:30 **Jacob Boss:** Talked about the appeal of the community itself outside of any particular hack. The sense of the energy of the community was what drew me as a researcher in the first place, you know, but not just as a researcher also as a participant. [Pause.] There’s an energy there. So there were, there were powerful models of other ways of doing community, other ways of doing

education, other ways of doing mutual aid. Or just giving, right? Mutual can mean some kind of right that it has to be an equal exchange.

41:21 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah. Interdependence.

41:24 **Jacob Boss:** Yeah, those were, those were being lived in that space. A conference with no hierarchy, no staff.

41:32 **Jillian Weise:** Really? No hierarchy?

41:38 **Jacob Boss:** I mean there's the, Ryan can speak to this. Right? Did you go to both of them? Because there were two. I only went to the second one.

41:55 **Ryan O'Shea:** Yes, there were two *Please Try This At Home* conferences. So there was no planning in terms of speakers or anything before the event happened. Everyone just showed up and put their names on a graph that was there. There was an organizing team that led the event in planning and organizing it, but they were in no way in charge. Essentially, once the event began, it was all driven by the attendees that were there.

42:20 **Jacob Boss:** Because we—

42:23 **Ryan O'Shea:** And it was—Yeah, I mean everything from the food to the talks to the things that happened beyond the conference were all planned in-the-moment by the attendees.

42:35 **Jacob Boss:** We showed up and the friend who I had come with just sort of ended up doing badges. People could make their own badges and check into the conference. Just sort of ended up running the desk—

42:42 **Jillian Weise:** This is organically, though?

42:48 **Jacob Boss:** Anarchist. Organically, yeah it was a wonderful experience.

42:55 **Jillian Weise:** Great. Was there access?

42:59 **Jacob Boss:** Not only was there access but there was an access team that was on-call. And the team raised money to hire experts like Aida Manduley in making sure that the conference had active, ongoing accessibility. Supporters. People who could respond in the moment, immediately, who you could call and also de-escalators who you could call immediately. It was the best conference I've ever been to. When I'm thinking about it, I'm just sort—the warmth—

43:38 **Jillian Weise:** That's huge!

43:40 **Jacob Boss:** of the experience is just washing over me.

43:44 **Ryan O’Shea:** I believe there was a good accessibility document put together for the conference that I believe we can share with you. That might be good to pass along to others as well.

43:54 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah, I mean, it doesn’t surprise me that the trans disabled biohackers have access and at least de-emphasizing of hierarchy. No, not at all. Right? But like how can we amplify what this community in Pittsburgh is doing more broadly? Because we don’t know that access is already happening. These conversations are already happening. I don’t want to use the “we” because I mean, I’ll speak for myself. I think of like biohacking as sort of scary because if I go into those spaces people might actually want to eliminate me, like not me personally, right, but like the idea of a multiply-disabled-woman. Right? So anytime there’s something like this that you’re describing, Jacob, that helps me think, “Okay, there’s a possibility for a bridge here.” [Pause.] I mean, I don’t know what to do with that.

45:05 **Cobalt Barnett:** That’s one of the things—

45:08 **Jillian Weise:** The like, elimination thing, because that’s maybe just not accurate at all. But there is just a little bit of it, right, in the space of “cure” and this, you know, “overcome,” and “enhanced ability.” Right?

45:30 **Cobalt Barnett:** Yeah. I wanted to break here in just because it’s been such a relief to me to be in the Slack channel that everybody kind of, that this group has sort of gelled in and around. Because there’s none of that. And when somebody does come in from outside and kind of brings in a perspective, I’m thinking of— I’m thinking of Bubbles—for people who know what’s going on in this Slack lately. Somebody comes in—

45:55 **Jacob Boss:** like a young newcomer

45:57 **Cobalt Barnett:** perspectives that are really not aligned to that where it seems like yeah, a young person with a lot of sort of conservative orthodoxy in their background comes into this space and it’s been very—it’s been very—relieving to watch that person kind of get caught and, and uplifted in the ways they need to be and not shit on but also guided in the right way to just not be a jerk to other people. It’s been nice to see that and I’m happy that we have a community that’s able to do that. That said, going out into the wider, sort of, technical augmentation listservs, and seeing that not be there has been a disappointment. And has made me more appreciative of what there is in the Slack community. So I think that, as a point of connection, we might be onto a good route here.

Also, I missed a huge amount of the conversation. I’m so sorry my internet cut out and I actually had to kind of drive down the mountain and get back to where there’s a signal.

47:10 **Jillian Weise:** That's okay. Good to have you here. We're on crip time. So you come in whenever, you know, and no one's held hostage. Anyone can leave it.

47:23 **Cobalt Barnett:** One of the things I wanted to raise earlier was around people being out and you know, the sense that we have this big Slack community, but we need to go out to find disabled perspectives. There's a thousand people in the Slack, you know, and we all know that they're over the range of abilities. But at the same time, I can speak again, only for myself, where I do experience neurodivergence. I have some—I have a lot of invisible things that I deal with that make wonder how to relate to the idea or the concept of disability. And for me, it's not a fear of people knowing things about me. It's more of a sense of like I don't want to be thought to be speaking for people who carry visible or physical disabilities. And I don't want to have people sort of take my experience as the ground standard or the ground truth of a disabled experience because I really don't believe that that is—I don't know—that there is one ground truth of a disabled experience. So that has prevented me from saying, "Hey, I am a disabled hacker. AMA." I don't think that's fair of me to do and it doesn't seem just—

48:38 **Jillian Weise:** Wait, why do you think it's not fair?

48:40 **Cobalt Barnett:** But that gets missed through silence.

48:42 **Jillian Weise:** Oh wait, what?

48:46 **Cobalt Barnett:** Because I worry that it's going to make other perspectives less visible instead of more. [Pause.] Am I having connection problems again?

48:52 **Jillian Weise:** No, I'm just in crip time. I'm just going slow. Because sometimes it takes me a little while to respond. I think what you're saying is important. I'm just going slow. [Pause.] Okay, like you don't want to be the spokesperson for disability. Am I hearing that part? Or not the groundskeeper? Did you say that? I don't remember but like there's some concern about not feeling like you can claim.

49:30 **Cobalt Barnett:** Yeah, exactly, because I don't want to be taken for speaking over the people we undoubtedly have in the community who both are more visibly or more traditionally disabled and I'm using that word kind of out of the blue. I hope it is understood what I meant by traditionally disabled. I don't want people who do identify more closely with disability to feel that I am taking that from them and providing them less of a route into the conversation instead of more.

49:59 **Jillian Weise:** Would you feel comfortable saying, "I'm a neurodivergent biohacker"?

50:00 [Pause]

50:02 **Cobalt Barnett:** Yeah and I do say that. I do. I think it's helpful to disclose what exactly we're talking about here. So I have Autistic spectrum and ADHD stuff going on. And I also have Ehlers-Danlos and not yet diagnosed autoimmune disorder. So my physical capabilities vary but I usually don't need external adaptations.

50:35 **Jillian Weise:** And I love—I love—the Ehlers Danlos crew. I'm sure you know them, but like my goodness! And I don't know them like you know them.

50:45 **Cobalt Barnett:** I hate it.

50:47 **Jillian Weise:** Let me re-phrase. I don't know them in the same way you know them. But I mean like—yeah, I won't say any names—but that's not a new group of people to me, right? Thinking of [Ehler's Danlos] artists ...

51:08 **Cobalt Barnett:** I do love the community. I'm sorry. Now I'm having connection issues. Problems again. I was being a little flippant there. I don't like having Ehler's Danlos.

51:19 **Jillian Weise:** Ohhhhhh, okay. Yes, of course. Sure. Yeah. This is complex. This is complex. That I understand. Yeah, for anyone listening, I'm thinking of Karolyn Gehrig who has Ehlers Danlos and is doing #HospitalGlam which is connected ... I think ... to this conversation so far as she's gone into the medical space and she's taking glamor shots of herself in the medical space. A space where she is told, "You cannot use your camera. You cannot do this. This is wrong," whatever, and she has then reclaimed that space. Right? So I'm just thinking of transgression right now. Like of being in spaces where we're – I don't know why I'm using the word "we" – I almost feel like I'm being somewhere I'm not supposed to be. I'm a cyborg. I'm disabled. And I'm with the biohackers and at least one transhumanist. You know what I mean? Like, so this is just me but back to your point.

52:25 [Connection Issue]

52:30 **Jillian Weise:** I was, you know, every disabled person's on their own journey. You don't have to claim ever if you don't want to. But I don't think—I disagree—with by claiming for myself I make it more difficult for other people to claim. I think by claiming for myself, I hope that I make it easier for other people to claim. Because I am not claiming and saying, "I know everything about disability." I'm claiming and saying, "I'm disabled."

53:15 **Cobalt Barnett:** That does, that does make sense to me. Um, and I'm jumping around a little bit because there were just so many interesting threads at the time

that I fell out of the conversation. And so please, please do direct me back to the recording if you think that it's ground that's already been thoroughly tread. But where did we—where did we get to as a common understanding on the word “more”?

53:38 **Jillian Weise**: I think we got to a wonderful [pause] disagreement but recognition that we disagreed but other people may—I don't know how to paraphrase it.

53:53 **Ryan O'Shea**: Yeah, I think it was made clear that when I use the word “more” I'm talking about an increased quantity rather than a subjective valuation and when we are talking about—but in the instance that we are talking about it's objective evaluation. I would be interested in perhaps a word. If there could be, if anything is taken from this conversation from me today, I think one of the main things is you've consistently, Jillian, flagged language such as “enable,” “ability,” and “limitation,” and also the word “more.” And I would like to be more conscious of what language I could use in place of those words that might not be so alienating or sound subjectively value-based to others. And I think one of the words we settled upon when we're talking about—instead of “ability” or “enable”—would be perhaps “capacity.” But I would be interested if others have ideas of words we could slot into there. That's a side note. We don't need to get into that now because I know you asked the direct question but that's where my mind is currently going for the future.

55:06 **Jillian Weise**: But we didn't get to hear your point-of-view, Cobalt.

55:08 **Cobalt Barnett**: I do, I do want to have a word for treat—for dealing with sort of the physical reality, for example, the thing that Ryan raised of, you know, a slice of the visual spectrum that you do, or do not, perceive. I want to have a word where we can talk about, you know, having a wider range or more narrow range of the spectrum that's available to a sense, a sensorium, you know, not necessarily a human but any sensing thing whether it's a physical sensor outside a human body. Whether it is a human body. Of perceiving, you know, I want to be able to talk about that in a way that's very unambiguous. Doesn't use words that could be implied to give subject valuation.

55:55 **Jillian Weise**: I got it, I think.

55:58 **Cobalt Barnett**: I want to have that vocabulary because I want to be able to talk about physics without making people fear that I am talking about value.

56:04 **Jillian Weise**: Okay, I got it. I figured it out. I'm so glad you brought us back around to this question because I didn't know the answer earlier. And it's because of its opposite—less. And it's because disabled people have been considered “less than” for so long.

56:23 **Cobalt Barnett**: Mmmm.

56:25 **Jillian Weise:** That's why I bristle at the word "more." So to your question of what can we do with this word, like, your desire is also mine insofar as I would like to use precise language that doesn't have any value systems—tentacles—on it and I don't know what the word is. But I'm really glad I know why I'm objecting to the word "more."

56:54 **Cobalt Barnett:** And it makes, it makes, perfect sense to me that that word is way too charged to be used to communicate unambiguously.

57:05 **Jillian Weise:** Maybe that word has to come from—

57:09 **Cobalt Barnett:** I just want to be able to say that a different way. Like you know?

57:15 **Jillian Weise:** Maybe "additional options"? I don't know. I'm not inside community so I almost hesitate to suggest language for a community that I don't belong to, you know? So it probably is your word to discover, or your phrase to discover, Cobalt, or anyone inside community, like especially with regards to—

57:37 **Cobalt Barnett:** But okay, so I also want that community. I want to keep that community from becoming exclusive due to something so, so—you know—I don't want to say minor but so so narrow, so narrowly focused as a choice of language that is, that is, that's not communicating what we intend.

58:00 **Ryan O'Shea:** Yeah, so I have, I could see something happening here. Right? I use the word "more" here in this conversation and it was instantly able to be flagged as something objected to and we could have a conversation about that. Whereas I could imagine me using that same sentence, same word, to a journalist perhaps. And that word being in a headline of a news article—"Biohackers Want People to Have More"—and I'm very concerned if I had used that word in that context. What would other communities, outside the biohackers, view of us, right? That could have been an entire misrepresentation and misunderstanding there, that I didn't intend but through this third party lens and telephone game it turned into something else. That's what I want to be cognizant of and avoid, if possible, in the future.

59:01 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah, I mean. I have this impression that like the nation, okay "the nation" this sounds high-falutin, that's why I'm laughing. Um, whatever culture is is on the side of biohacking and transhumanism—okay—in greater quantity—since I'm trying to avoid the word "more" as well—than disabled people because of the pandemic moment we're in right now, where yeah, the same people are dying and there's triage in some hospitals to determine who deserves the ventilator. And we already know of a quadriplegic man for whom it was determined his life was not worth living and he didn't get the necessities that he needed to recover from COVID. Okay, so like that is happening. And it gives me the impression that even if the news journalist took your use of the word "more"

and spun it, already—before you even uttered the word “more”—the news journalist is on your side. I don’t like the word “side,” but is with you more than with the disabled population in part because why did that quadriplegic man’s life not get national news coverage? Why wasn’t that a big reckoning? I don’t know where I’m going with that but ...

01:00:46 [Long pause]

01:01:01 **Jillian Weise:** Oh, I love this. We’re in crip time right now. We got to crip time organically. We’re just thinking together.

01:01:07 **Ryan O’Shea:** Just to clarify, I wasn’t necessarily blaming any particular, you know, I wasn’t using the term media to refer to a journalist who would take me out of context or anything. I just meant that with that third party party in the middle there, without the face-to-face opportunity to ... I’m referring to this as face-to-face when face-to-face could possibly be ... without the opportunity to correct things in real time. Perceived differences can be blown out and magnified. And I think I’ve seen that happen before. And I’d like to avoid that in the future because I feel – like you mentioned at the very beginning – you see this as an opportunity for like a romantic, I think was the word you used, relationship where there’s this ... There are differences in the communities and there’s the shared common goals that some have and then they’re very noticeable differences. But I think there is an opportunity there for collaboration and opportunities to work together and share things and I wouldn’t want me speaking not understanding the consequences of the words that I’m using in how they will be perceived to hinder that at all. I want to be cognizant of being a community builder rather than perhaps unintentionally making walls and divisions there that might make others feel less comfortable or less likely to identify with our community and participate in it.

01:02:31 **Cobalt Barnett:** Yeah, I mean I want to go one step further than that and say that one of the points I feel you are making early on is that, contrary to concerns about coming into a community that is not yours and trying to bring language there, I think that the context we’re all trying to get to is the community that already includes all of us, where it is entirely appropriate to determine what language that that larger community will use. And I would like to see the parts of the community that you have not felt part of adopting that common language, you know, as a goal. As a stated intention so that we can actually have this communication that’s missing. Does that hang together?

01:03:33 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah, absolutely. I am just thinking of like – it’s hard. It’s just hard. And why does it feel hard? I think ... I think ... honestly because I come from, to get personal, such a [pause] churchy background. And I say this as a person who has been to a healing ceremony to be healed, right? There’s a little bit of church in biohacking and transhumanist circles in the healing ceremony part and that is what makes it hard. Does that make sense?

- 01:04:20     **Jacob Boss:** [laughing] It does to me!
- 01:04:25     **Jillian Weise:** Okay, like how do I enter your community and know that nobody wants to heal me? Nobody wants me to overcome something? I don't want to grow, for instance, I don't want to grow a second leg. I mean, I have one. I don't want to grow a second one. I just want to have, like, a spot in my cyborg leg for lipstick and a revolver. Can we make that happen? And I know the revolver is a bit ... but as a cyborg woman, I do not feel safe in the world. So yeah, like can I be guaranteed that it's not at all related to ... like evangelical, evangelical healing? And I don't know.
- 01:05:34     **Cobalt Barnett:** You are ... you're concerned about ... It sounds like you're saying that you're stating a concern about the sort of ... developing an orthodoxy of ability. You know that something is going to be defined as an optimal set of abilities as it already is, and that that idealized state is going to move even farther away rather than recognizing a range of capacity and saying that like what we're seeking is self-determination of capacity. Rather than some kind of orthodoxy and correctness of how that capacity should look like.
- 01:06:10     **Jillian Weise:** Yeah, oh yeah. If there was—
- 01:06:14     **Cobalt Barnett:** That I mean ... that is also the thing that I want effectively.
- 01:06:18     **Ryan O'Shea:** I think I just want to jump in to say that was very well phrased and I stand behind that. That was basically speaking for me. That was very well phrased.
- 01:06:25     **Jillian Weise:** I have to interrupt and I'm so sorry, Ryan, because I have been giving you grief, but since you've already recognized — “I stand behind it” — right? I'm just, you know, we don't have to ... we do not have to fix it or overcome it. I'm just drawing our attention to language, right?
- 01:06:47     **Ryan O'Shea:** Now I appreciate you doing that.
- 01:06:50     **Jillian Weise:** [Nodding]
- 01:06:51     **Ryan O'Shea:** Where my mind would go there is ... is it possible to use the word metaphor, metaphorically? Not literally. Without the connotations. And I don't know, I don't know. It's a side topic. It's a complete side topic and
- 01:07:03     **Jillian Weise:** Yeah, no.
- 01:07:08     **Cobalt Barnett:** Why not—why not—just say what you meant. Why not say that you're aligned to it? I mean that seems to say the thing.

01:07:15     **Ryan O'Shea:** That's fine.

01:07:16     **Jillian Weise:** Yeah, by the way, how is everyone doing? This is an hour. I'm looking at the clock. It's an hour and a half. How are you feeling? I don't remember what the meeting time was for, I just wanted to do an access check-in. How's everyone feeling? My pup is obviously antsy.

01:07:45     **Ryan O'Shea:** Yeah. Let me see. Am I on mute? I don't know. I'm okay. I'd be happy to wrap up at some point soon here Berkelly. I don't know how long you intended for it to go. My concern on my end is that the longer we go the more likely that a technical glitch will happen and the recording will be lost, so ... that is my fear.

01:07:54     **Jillian Weise:** Yeah, okay.

01:07:56     **Cobalt Barnett:** Yeah, Hylyx ...

01:08:03     **Berkelly Gonzalez:** I left it open-ended. So okay.

01:08:04     **Jacob Boss:** I'm happy to chat as long as people, as long as people, would like.

01:08:07     **Cobalt Barnett:** And Hylyx was, what, behind me in a slower vehicle so I'm gonna go see if they can join us.

01:08:16     **Berkelly Gonzalez:** Okay.

01:08:17     **Jillian Weise:** Okay.

01:08:20     **Cobalt Barnett:** Just for the last ... we'll wrap up ...

01:08:25     **Berkelly Gonzalez:** And how are you doing, Jillian? Because if you need to leave?

01:08:28     **Jillian Weise:** Yeah, I'm here for like maybe another 10. I share Ryan's concern about technical.

01:08:32     **Berkelly Gonzalez:** Okay.

01:08:36     **Jillian Weise:** I'm just so grateful that we thought to not only record but everyone consented because it's just been such a really [pause] provocative conversation.

01:08:53     **Ryan O'Shea:** The one thing I will share is that I have some slight concern that I feel like we live in a society today where the ability to say things wrong is held against a lot of people and I feel like many times today I definitely, and

perhaps others have, maybe misspoken in such a way that could be misinterpreted. And I am slightly fearful that a segment of what I said could be clipped and angry Twitter mob could be coming my way.

01:09:18 **Jillian Weise:** No.

01:09:20 **Ryan O’Shea:** So that is a concern that I have and I would like to make it that in general in society I would like the ability for people to say things that are blatantly wrong and be corrected. I feel like that’s missing in a lot of places and I would like that to exist more.

01:09:37 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah. I just wanted ... I’m not ... when I am jumping in – jumping in? we could even say “hopping in” would be my bodymind experience – umm, I don’t like the police. I’m not trying to be the police. I’m just trying to get my mind around ableism and all the really, really subtle ways it’s already in our language and then I’m just trying to bring it up to the surface and present it. So yeah, that’s all I would say. I’ll stop.

01:10:26 **Ryan O’Shea:** So I will ask you, Jillian, then, what are – most of us, the rest of us are in this Slack channel. We’re in the biohacking community. I would like to hear if perhaps maybe there’s no answer whatsoever which is totally fine. Did you have any perceptions of the biohacking community coming into this call that perhaps change? Or what are your takeaways from this conversation? I certainly know what mine are. I learned a lot. I don’t know if you had anything as well?

01:10:52 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah, of course I did. I think it’s hard for me to summarize. I’ll probably know the answer tomorrow, but the really big takeaway is [pause] that like I thought I just needed to get on the phone with Ray Kurzweil to say like, “Hey, you used to work with disabled people. One of your first inventions was for the Blind like what has happened? What’s happened? What’s going on?” And I think that’s hierarchy in my own, whatever, cognition, like I don’t actually need Kurzweil. I don’t need him. But he is a symbol or a totem, I’m not sure. For me, the Singularity. Biohacking, transhumanism, which is a much more diverse community that doesn’t get the same, doesn’t get nearly the same—obviously—level of fame, right? So I think it’s really helpful for me to kind of question my assumptions about why on Earth I thought there was a figurehead. And what now?

I also really just ... Berkelly’s conversation about the magnets ... like I would have an entire conversation just about that, Berkelly, like the choice to put magnets in your fingertips, the choice to take them out, and then the choice that you might engage them again. I mean, to me, that’s very in line with Crip orgs because there are so many of us who use a wheelchair and then sometimes don’t and then sometimes do and then sometimes don’t. Prefer a cane. You know? I mean like this identity that one’s identity isn’t static but is in flex and flux – and

obviously, gender fluid, they write – but also in like a whatever. This is where you're choosing it, Berkelly, for this time period but not for this other one?

01:13:00 **Berkelly Gonzalez:** I do think I have to clarify. The choice to remove my magnets was more practical. They ... the coding on them failed and they stopped working. So I removed them rather than [pause] something having to do with sort of identity or anything beyond the fact that they stopped working and were potentially harmful to keep in me.

01:13:37 **Jillian Weise:** Okay.

01:13:40 **Berkelly Gonzalez:** Yeah.

01:13:42 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah. [Pause.] There's a corollary there for sure, but I'm just not making it because I am fixating on the words "they stopped working," which totally makes sense to me when you're talking about choice and magnets but I'm not, I would need to think it out ...

01:14:11 **Berkelly Gonzalez:** Of course.

01:14:15 **Jillian Weise:** But I appreciate that because I would not have known.

01:14:24 **Berkelly Gonzalez:** Hylyx, you are rejoining a little bit late. Is there anything you were hoping to contribute or talk about?

01:14:39 **Cobalt Barnett** [shares a screen with **Hylyx**, who is speaking]: Probably but it's okay. I was planning on like writing something up. Sorry guys I missed a bunch of stuff and it's gonna be impossible to like chime in reasonably. Um, I guess one question—

01:14:50 **Jillian Weise:** Guess what though? We have a copy. We have a copy of this for you to watch.

01:14:53 **Cobalt Barnett** [shares a screen with **Hylyx**, who is speaking]: --I had for you. Is there anything that like, you know, we're I guess, at least this group is a really small I guess, like, somewhat radical subset of the general biohacking community, I would say. Is there anything that you could see that we could do better to like help this romance of like rad cyborgs and do you know rad disabled people and rad like biohacker people who like get along? Because I think we totally should and everyone would be better off for it. But you know, if there's anything you can see that we can do? Just concrete or whatever to help that happen.

01:15:46 **Jillian Weise:** Yeah, I mean I already applaud you for doing this. I'm thinking. Oh and some of you are going to Crip Camp? I mean Crip Camp is gonna teach you more than I could teach you. Just modeling it. Modeling access.

And I mean disability justice. But I'm trying to think of what we could do concrete. I feel like, to go back to Cobalt's point—

- 01:16:26 **Cobalt Barnett** [shares a screen with **Hylyx**, who is speaking]: Yeah, this could be a follow-up. I just put that out there.
- 01:16:29 **Jillian Weise**: --about not wanting to be like a groundskeeper, I share that concern especially in this particular setting where I'm like, the cyborg right? But there are other—there are other cyborgs. We're doing a panel and it's called Cyborg Ethics at a conference in October. And so I'm trying ... like maybe we do another one of these when it's convenient to us all but it wouldn't just be me. I could bring in like other cyborg, cripborgs, and then it wouldn't just be like I'm the cyborg.
- 01:17:15 **Cobalt Barnett** [shares a screen with **Hylyx**, who is speaking]: Yeah, that would be great.
- 01:17:25 **Berkelly Gonzalez**: Yeah, that was my intention.
- 01:17:32 **Ryan O'Shea**: I totally agree with that and I know you said -- well, I'm looking at the time – it's 6:26. You said 10 more minutes.
- 01:17:35 **Cobalt Barnett**: Thank you again for making time.
- 01:17:40 **Ryan O'Shea**: We're at that point now so I think it's probably a great point to wrap up. Yes, thank you for joining us, Jillian, and thank you, Berkelly, for organizing it and making it possible. I definitely had a great time.
- 01:17:50 **Jillian Weise**: And you recorded?
- 01:17:52 **Ryan O'Shea**: Yep. I have it. I'll figure out a way to—
- 01:17:54 **Jillian Weise**: I just know Ryan doesn't have my email address. That's all I'm saying. I want to have a copy of it. I will not put it out anywhere unless we are all okay with that. I'm very consent culture.
- 01:18:09 **Jacob Boss**: Thank you.
- 01:18:11 **Jillian Weise**: But and also I would not put it out without captions. It would need to be captioned. But I—
- 01:18:15 **Ryan O'Shea**: I do have auto captions turned on this whole time. So it was, at least, Google's AI was making all captions.
- 01:18:21 **Jillian Weise**: Okay, okay.

01:18:27 **Ryan O'Shea:** Berkelly. Well, I guess, Jillian do you mind if Berkelly shares your email address with me and I can send it to you?

01:18:34 **Jillian Weise:** That's fine. Thank you everyone.

01:18:35 **Jacob Boss:** Thank you so much. I just want to say there are so many –

01:18:37 **Cobalt Barnett:** Thank you. Thank you so much. This is awesome.

01:18:44 **Jacob Boss:** personalities in this community. I'm excited for you to have a chance to meet more of them in the future.

01:18:48 **Jillian Weise:** I would love to.

[END]