



Let's Talk about Disability: Learning, Impact and Next Steps Report HAKI COLLECTIVE CIC

(October to December 2025)

About this report

This report is intended to be clear, practical and easy to navigate, so that you can read it start to finish, or focus on the sections most relevant to you. Anonymous participant quotes have been included to keep the learnings grounded in lived expertise and experience. If you would like this report in another format, please contact Haki Collective.

Executive Summary

Let's Talk about Disability was a five session online discussion series delivered by Haki Collective between October and December 2025.

The series created a space for Black and global majority disabled people, activists, practitioners and allies to explore disability justice together. The sessions centred around lived experience, collective learning, access and care.



Across the sessions, participants:

- deepened their understanding of disability justice and its roots in liberation, not just inclusion
- reflected on language, representation and power, focusing in on the nuances of these themes in racialised contexts
- explored how racism, disableism and ableism intersect in everyday life, including within justice spaces that still exclude disabled people in practice
- named cultural and intergenerational narratives about disability, and the complexity of holding these realities without reinforcing racist stereotypes about communities
- identified where the work needs to go next, including the desire for deeper thematic conversations and practical resources that support action

A strong, consistent message emerged: participants want this work to continue in 2026, with more time, more depth, and clearer pathways from reflection into practice.

As one participant described, this space created relief, strength and a sense of shared movement:

“I’ve been able to exhale... and say, you’re not the only one... we can kind of stand shoulder to shoulder.”- *Participant, Session 5*



Key learning at a glance

- Participants valued a space where Black and global majority disabled people could speak without having to justify, translate or minimise their experiences
- Language and representation were identified as key sites of harm **and** potential change
- Access and care are not add ons, they shape whether disabled people can participate as themselves
- Financial recognition of lived expertise matters, and participants felt this series modelled a more respectful approach
- A key gap identified was the limited space to explore disabled people's full nuanced, complex, beautiful lives, including romance, sexuality, relationships, parenting, joy, independence and community
- Participants want the next phase to include practical resources, toolkits, shared directories and examples of what good practice looks like

Programme context and purpose

Disability justice spaces in the UK have often marginalised Black and global majority disabled people. Disability is still commonly treated as a single issue, without recognition of how racism, class,



gender, migration status, faith and disability shape people's lives together.

Let's Talk about Disability was designed to respond to this gap by:

- centring Black and global majority disabled voices
- treating lived experience as expertise
- linking disability justice and racial justice, rather than separating them
- creating a facilitated space grounded in access, care and shared learning

Programme design and delivery

The programme consisted of five facilitated online sessions. Each session combined light slide input with open discussion. The emphasis was on dialogue, reflection and collective learning, rather than teaching.

Session themes

- History of disability justice in the UK
- Language, representation and power
- Disability, culture and lived experience
- Race, disability and intersectionality



- Action, needs and next steps

Access was considered throughout, including intentional facilitation, flexible ways to participate, advance sharing of prompts, and honoraria recognising participants' time and expertise.

As one participant noted:

"Haki is a prime example of offering financial remuneration in a form that was accessible... taking into account people's time, lived experiences, and or expertise." - *Participant, Session 5*

What we heard across the sessions

The themes below repeatedly emerged across the five conversations. They overlap and connect, because participants consistently described disability justice as something that weaves through the whole of life, not only one part of it.

Disability justice as liberation, not just inclusion

Participants returned to the difference between being "included" in existing systems and being able to live with dignity, agency and self determination. Disability justice was explored as a framework



rooted in collective liberation, interdependence and leadership by those most impacted.

Language, representation and power

Discussions about language were especially significant.

Participants spoke about the ways words shape how disabled people are treated, and the additional harm when language is filtered through racism, stereotyping or pity.

“It is degrading and makes you feel less than human... especially when you live with a visible disability.” - *Participant, Session 2*

“There is a need to fight collectively in how we identify and represent ourselves.” - *Participant, Session 2*

Participants also highlighted the gap between organisational language and lived reality. The way disability is described, framed or marketed often shapes whether disabled people are treated as whole people, or reduced to a problem, an inspirational story, or a risk.

Intersectionality in practice, including within justice spaces

Participants described how racism, disableism and ableism are



experienced together, not separately. A recurring thread was that even spaces committed to racial justice can reproduce disableism and ableism through unspoken norms about bodies, energy, communication, participation and pace.

One participant gave a concrete example of how exclusion shows up even in spaces that mean well:

“[In] those spaces... we do what we call grounding activities... where there’s a lot of movement... I often see how that can be awkward for a lot of Black disabled people.” - *Facilitator reflection, Session 4*

This reinforced a key learning - accessibility is not only about ramps, captions, or formats. It is also about assumptions, culture, facilitation and what people believe a “good participant” looks like.

Full lives, not one dimensional lives

A major theme, especially in Session 5, was the desire to explore disability justice in the context of the fullness of disabled life. Participants named the ways disabled people are routinely denied the right to be understood as whole human beings, with desires, relationships, joy, complexity and agency.



“Disabled people, we lead 3D, 4D lives just like able bodied people... we have wants, needs, desires, sexual desires... we want to have friends, we want to be working... we want all the things like everybody else... it shouldn't be for these things that we're not allowed to live fulfilled and fruitful lives.” - *Participant, Session 5*

Participants were clear that disability justice work cannot only focus on hardship, barriers, services, or survival. It must also include love, intimacy, sexuality, dating, friendship, pleasure, community belonging, independence, and the right to choose what a fulfilling life looks like.

Parents, parenting and family life

Participants also named parenting and family life as a key area for deeper exploration. This included parents of disabled people, disabled people who are parents, and the impact of family beliefs, systems and expectations.

“There's definitely a conversation to be had around relationships and disability, romantic relationships, parental relationships, being the parent of a disabled person, being a disabled parent.” - *Facilitator reflection, Session 5*



This theme sits alongside practical questions about support, access to services, cultural expectations of care, and how disabled people are positioned within family roles.

Culture, intergenerational beliefs, and the tightrope of naming harm

Participants explored the reality that disability is understood and responded to differently across communities, and that intergenerational narratives can shape experiences of shame, silence, pity, stigma, faith based interpretations, or pressure to hide.

At the same time, participants explored a crucial nuance: naming harm within global majority communities is often necessary for liberation, but can also risk being flattened into racist stereotypes if the context is stripped away, or if the conversation becomes a “cultural deficit” narrative.

This balance was named explicitly in the series, including the need to hold nuance and avoid reinforcing harmful stereotypes about communities while still making space for honest truth telling about the impact of beliefs and practices. - *Facilitator reflection, Session*



Community, belonging and brave space

Across sessions, participants described the value of being in a space where they did not need to explain, justify, or defend their reality. Participants linked this to safety, dignity and the ability to speak with honesty.

“Definitely agree... Haki is creating a space where we can exist without apology!” - Participant, Session 3

Participants also used the language of brave space, recognising that no space can remove risk entirely, but that the group can agree to practises that reduce harm and support growth, care and repair.

“Together we will create Brave Space... because there is no such thing as a safe space, we exist in the real world. We all carry scars. And we have all caused wounds.” - Participant, Session 5

Evidence of impact

While the series was designed as a learning and dialogue space rather than a formal training programme, participants consistently described changes in knowledge, confidence and connection.



Increased understanding and confidence

Participants described gaining clarity about disability justice history and frameworks, and the limits of the medical model and single issue approaches to social justice. Several participants reflected on learning language that helped them name their experiences, and on the importance of holding disability justice and racial justice together.

Reduced isolation and increased belonging

Participants described the emotional impact of being with people who share the reality of navigating racism, disableism and ableism together: “I’ve been able to exhale... and say... you’re not the only one.” - *Participant, Session 5*

Stronger sense of what needs to change

The series did not only raise problems. It generated practical ideas for action, and a stronger shared understanding of what “good” could look like when disability justice is embedded into culture, practice and systems.



What participants are asking for next

In the final session, participants reflected on what would help move from reflection to action. A clear picture emerged of what people want from Haki Collective next.

Deeper conversations, with time for fewer themes

Participants asked for more depth, especially on topics that carry stigma, complexity, or strong emotion. Themes named as needing fuller exploration included:

- romantic relationships, sexuality and intimacy
- parenting, parents and family dynamics
- intergenerational and cultural narratives, held with nuance and care
- disability justice in justice spaces, including how racial justice movements can unintentionally reproduce disableism and ableism
- mental health, trauma and support, including access to culturally safe therapy and healing spaces

Ongoing spaces for connection and accountability

Participants expressed a desire for sustained spaces rather than one off sessions. This included appetite for regular forums where



disabled people can explore these topics together, build confidence, and reduce isolation.

Practical tools and resources

Participants were clear that future work should not only deepen conversation, but also produce practical outputs that support action in daily life and in organisations.

Shared directories and signposting

Participants discussed the value of collating trusted information in one place, including a directory of Black disabled organisations and practitioners, and clearer signposting to legal advice, advocacy and support: “Maybe collating a database of... Black disabled organisations... in one place...” - *Participant, Session 5*

Examples and case studies of what good practice looks like

Participants asked for positive models, not only critique. This included real examples of inclusive practice that people can copy, especially in low budget contexts: “...to create positive case studies of, actually, this is what good looks like... you might not have the budget... but one of your neighbouring businesses might, and form a partnership with them...” - *Participant, Session 5*



Accessibility toolkits and facilitation guidance

Participants wanted practical accessibility toolkits grounded in lived reality, including guidance for event organisers, community spaces, and facilitators. This included tackling less visible barriers such as participation norms, energy expectations, movement based activities, and assumptions about bodies.

Next phase: 2026 - A tangible route forward for Haki Collective

Based on what emerged across the series, there is a clear opportunity for Haki Collective to build a next phase of work that holds both depth and action. The strands below reflect participant suggestions and the learning across sessions.

Sustained brave space programme

- Deliver a follow on discussion series with fewer themes and more time per theme
- Include dedicated sessions on intimacy, romance, sexuality, parenting and family life
- Build a consistent brave space approach, including community agreements, care practice, and repair pathways where harm occurs



- Create optional smaller peer spaces or supported breakout forums for those who want deeper exploration in a more contained setting

Practical disability justice and accessibility toolkit

- Co create an accessibility toolkit for organisers, facilitators and community spaces that covers both practical adjustments and cultural norms
- Include guidance that supports racial justice organisations to embed disability justice in everyday practice, not only statements
- Produce versions that work for different contexts, including grassroots and low budget settings
- Include checklists, example scripts, facilitation prompts and “what to do when it goes wrong” repair guidance

Directory, network and signposting infrastructure

- Develop a shared directory of Black and global majority disabled organisations, practitioners and trusted resources
- Make fair pay principles explicit and visible, including guidance on remuneration and respectful commissioning



- Provide signposting routes for common needs such as legal advice, hate crime support, advocacy, mental health support and accessible community resources
- Build mechanisms for keeping the directory current without placing ongoing admin burden on disabled participants

Case studies and practice examples

- Collect and publish positive case studies that show what good practice looks like in real settings
- Include examples across sectors, such as community venues, arts spaces, workplaces, schools, faith settings and activist spaces
- Highlight creative low budget solutions that increase dignity and access without relying on perfection

Intergenerational and family focused strand

- Develop a strand focused on parents, parenting and family life, including practical support for navigating systems and shifting harmful narratives
- Hold intergenerational dialogue work that is honest about harm and stigma while explicitly resisting racist stereotyping and flattening



- Build facilitation approaches that help participants name impact without turning the work into “community blame”

Approach to impact and learning

- Continue to document learning in ways that centre lived expertise
- Capture both personal impact and practical change, without shifting the burden of proof onto disabled participants
- Use light touch feedback that reflects the nature of the work, including reflective questions, short pulse check ins and optional deeper interviews for those who want to contribute

Appendix

Series Slides: Let’s Talk about Disability was delivered as five facilitated online sessions between October and December 2025. Sessions combined slides, short framing input, discussion prompts and open dialogue.



Acknowledgements

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