

[music playing] [Narelle] Good morning, and welcome to a new season of the Digital Access Show. Now for those that haven't listened to us before, we talk everything related to communication, digital communication, and how digital communication can be accessible for everyone. Now this year, we've come up with an idea, and I'll introduce our guest in a minute, but we're going to start the year looking at perceptions. People's perceptions. And the reason why perceptions are important, linking into the first principle of digital accessibility, which is perceivability, perceptions. Our guest is a director of the Digital Assistive Technologies, Digital Access Solutions and Assistive Technologies. I'll get the name right. And he's also the CEO and founder of Peak Performance Development. Allan Parker, thank you for being, coming on. Good Morning, Narelle. And Happy New Year, Narelle. Happy 1925. [Narelle] 2025! -[Allan] 2025. -[Narelle laughs] Let's go back in time. We're talking about perception. -[Allan laughs] -[Narelle] Yeah. [Narelle] Well, actually,

if it's 1925 my father would be 100

years old in a week's time, -[Narelle] A few weeks.

-[Allan] Wow. [Narelle] If it was 1925. [Allan] How about that. [Narelle] Yeah. Allan, the reason I asked

you on is you, and I learn from you every

time I listen to what you say. I want to talk to you

about perceptions. I want to talk to

you about beliefs and how perceptions, beliefs, impact everything we do. [Allan] They certainly do. -[Narelle] Yeah.

-[Allan] Yeah. [Narelle] Allan, what is a perception? What is a belief? And where do they interact? Where do they join together? [Allan] What great questions. What's a perception? And what's a belief? Great questions, In really simple

terms, a perception... is... a conclusion... that I draw from extrapolating, and observing and

singing and hearing, and feeling and exploring. And... And how that, here in this moment, my ability to take in

what's coming to me. Example, you started out and

you talked about perception, and then you connected

that to accessibility, and then you went into what

does a, what is a perception? Now that straight away, impacts

the different parts of my brain, and the listeners brains, because you taking it back into... what's a perception, wasn't the question

I was expecting. So all of a sudden, one of the things that becomes really clear about perception, even ahead of the importance of beliefs, are my assumptions. So I'm arriving here with a set of assumptions, and that then interplays with what you give me. And so you and I are both trying to make sense, and particularly, our brain in the background, is trying to make sense of this information that's available, and then the brain says, how do I connect this and interrelate it to all the things I've known and experienced in the past? So I've got this complex, I call it a web, some people call it a perceptual filter. I've got all of this input coming in and my past experiences and my background, and my education and my family history, my religion, my spiritual beliefs. You know. how the day was yesterday, how much alcohol I had, how much sugar I had, all of those things affect the filter that takes everything the world is offering me, and let some bits in and keep some bits out. And it's a filtering system. And out of every sentence you give me, my brain will seize

on one or two words as the primary
points of interest, because they're
meaningful to me. And that's one of our biggest
challenges with perception, and we confuse what I
experience from what's happening with what's actually happening. [Narelle] So the
beliefs,
then, is your inner knowledge, stuff you've obtained from
what you've learnt in the past, what your parents
have taught you, what you've learnt yourself
through different experiences. [Allan] Yes. [Narelle] And the beliefs
dictate what you perceive. [Allan] I think
it's a little strong. I think my beliefs, or not, and how holdly,
how tightly I hold them... has an impact on
what I perceive. Yeah. And how... my auditory part of my brain, whether it holds it
as definitive language, or it holds it as
non-definitive language. Yeah. And there's a distinction
between what I know because what I know to be true. Narelle Gatti is a woman,
pretty indisputable
piece of information, that's stored in one place. And then, Narelle Gatti is a kind
and generous woman, which is Allan

Parker's interpretation and view of Narelle. [Narelle] Yeah. [Allan] It's stored in a completely other place. Now, one of them, I'm going to make more important than the other, and it could be either. Or it could be Narelle's fascinating. I always discover something new about her, and I'd prefer to go and be really curious with her, and not form an opinion yet. So there's three ways that I can experience Narelle Gatti, which will change my brain function completely. And it relates back to what we were talking about before we started the recording, of you saying on your holiday... how much better you felt, and how much clearer your thought processes were when you went walking regularly outside and getting fresh air and activity. And I go, that's you doing something now that changes your perception of the world in that moment. And we, we have... I think we have a lot of... conclusions that we draw as being factual or actual, that we've prematurely... concluded what it is. And therefore most people are running around in the world, trying to validate who they are and how they are, instead of exploring and discovering the person they're becoming, and the potential inside them that hasn't yet got out. Yeah. And if I can relate that

back to in my holidays, I've been doing
laps in the pool. Now, as you know, I've been
a long distance runner forever, and the heaviest part
of my body is my legs. I get into a pool, and my legs dragged
across the bottom of the pool. So I'm a runner, not a swimmer. [Narelle] Yeah. [Allan]
I had this belief that
I'm a runner, not a swimmer. I've worked over
the last two weeks to see if I could change it. And my swimming is improved because
I've been doing
it once or twice every day. [Narelle] Yeah. [Allan] And doing one
extra lap every time. Now that's me just
redesigning how my body and my brain
processes the world, and formulate it's perception. And yesterday afternoon I swam,
and I thought I felt like a
swimmer yesterday afternoon. Now that throws into doubt the
belief I've held for 50 years. You know, I've always gone
I'm a runner, not a swimmer, and that's been the
reason I haven't swum. [Narelle] Okay. [Allan] Now we could
call that an excuse. Or I can certainly call it
an invisible limiting belief. And I just wonder how
many invisible limiting beliefs... we hold on ourselves. You asked for a description

of what a perception is. A perception is mobile,

dynamic phenomena in how you and I

interpret the world in and across and through time. That would be how I'd define it.

[Narelle] What you've just

said is really interesting, because you triggered

a memory for me. [Narelle] And the

memory was his truth, her truth, and the truth. In other words, one person sees it one way, another person

sees it another way. [Allan] Yep. [Narelle] But there is

always the third way, the truth, which... when we look at society, that's what... dictates the whole

of society, isn't it? I love history as well. And when you go

and you listen to... history from different

points of view, and that's where

it really sticks out, because when you put

that side with that side, and you get the commonalities, the parts that are in common, well, they probably did happen, but everything

else is perception. And people saw it. [Allan] That's, I would, 20 years ago, I would have

concurred with what you said. -[Narelle] Yeah.

-[Allan] My... post 20 years ago, neuroscience and... forensic linguistics, and my nutrition and

biochemistry knowledge... would now challenge that. -[Narelle] Okay. Why?

-[Allan] Yeah. [Allan] If I, as a linguist, I think it's worthy of note that... true and truth are two

slightly different words, and interpreted

slightly differently. You used his

truth and her truth, and they could be

very different truths, but they're both true

for each individual. Now here's an

interesting bit for you, because they're stored

in their episodic memory, not their semantic memory not their visual spatial memory, and not their procedural memory. So it depends where

you and I store... the information. Now I throw into the

mix the word accuracy. [Narelle] Yes. How can we identify your truth and the other person's truth, and find out where

do they intersect, so that you have

collective truth? Because we have

a behaviour pattern where you've got

a view of the world, which is true for you, and if it's stored it in

your episodic memory, which is your experience

of what happened. We actually know it's the least

reliable of our memory systems. And it's because it's my

experience of what happened. I only remember what I saw, did, said and felt. And when I say to you,

what did Narelle say? If you notice, people can tell

you 10 times what they said, but when you go,

what did they reply? Half the time

they can't tell you. So, episodic memory, the person saying it truly,

deeply believes it's true, because that's how

they experienced it, but there's a lot of omission. Now, this is an area that

the insurance industry, for instance, needs to update their knowledge

in their investigation process. The legal system. And in fact, I'm, I'm having a... a meeting within

the next week with... senior people in the legal

profession to talk about... how do we manage

the legal systems... processes of... over attending to

the perpetrator and under attending

to the victim. Yeah. Now, then there's a whole

another range of things there. But in both the legal and

the insurance industry, the people doing the

investigating and the evaluating and the determining

need to understand... when is somebody speaking

from their episodic memory? Because I've got
to validate that. Got to acknowledge it, but got to explore it to
find out what's missing. And explore it to what
find out what's exaggerated, overstated, catastrophized, or understated, because
those things
happen in episodic memory. But if I,
if I can get you to go, what did you actually see and what did you hear? Not what did
you say? If I can get you to go,
what did you hear? I'm now in a receptive, a receiving part of the brain, and you'll
give me more
accurate information. [Narelle] Allan, how
does this all apply, then, to digital accessibility, people with
disability and society, because I know as a person
with a severe vision impairment, people get stunned when... they say, oh, you
know, I feel like, I went and bought of
sandshoes to get by. And they say you inspire me.
And I think why? Because I bought a
pair of sandshoes? [Allan laughs] [Allan] Because you're going
to buy them more on the size, the comfort, and what the characteristics
are of the quality, of the production, by feel, and verbal instruction, not what you see.
Your impediment simply means

that your perceptual filter and processes

are very different. The other the other bit is, that, if I haven't... been through or educated about... what it's like to be

somebody who's blind, I just don't have any reference

points to connect that to. You used the

word trigger earlier. I use the word cue. Something happens that cues you

to something you already know, and then you can

make sense of it. But if somebody hasn't had

a see, a visual impairment, and they've never

had that experience, they don't have the cue, It's why I remember back years

and years ago when I used to... do some work with

the blind society, pardon me, and the hearing impaired. And I'd train people who didn't

have either of those things by putting blindfolds on them, and we'd run the course

for an hour in blindfolds and then unpack. How is it different being blind? Now people had

massive realisations because the parts of their

brain that didn't need to work, automatically switched

on and accommodated. And part of why

your and my and Mark and all of us involved

in digital accessibility, have to make education, exposure, communication, such a big focus, because we have

to allow other people to walk in the shoes of

or see out of the eyes of... the other party. And we've become very

self-oriented as a society over the last couple of decades. And we don't stop and step into the other

person's shoes or glasses. When I did work

with, you'll notice, for those people who

get to see this on a video, you'll notice I'm always mapping

things out with my hands. And that was because I did

so much work, now I don't sign, but I know that if I talk to

somebody who's speech impaired, if I position the past

always in the same place, and the present

always in the same place, and the future in

the same place, they'll actually pick that up in the direction of my voice, in the tone of the voice, that I'll, the minute I

put the past over there, the voice will take

on a particular quality. When I bring it to the present,

it takes on a different quality, and when I take

it up to the future, it'll take on different quality. Now our language patterns

unconsciously change, and that simple

thing is something... that we just need to get
exposed out to the world at a far greater... speed than it's happening. If I point out
how delighted I
am every time I turn on a TV and see somebody signing. And in fact, I was at a...
ballet in the last week or two, and there's clearly
a story to the ballet. And there were blind,
there were visually impaired, there were auditorally
impaired people in the room. And the ballet was
taking place on stage, and the signer was
signing for them. And I thought to myself, wow. That's educating
everybody in that room, because at some point
in time, you've gotta go, how the hell are they... providing some
sense of story or music to what's going on
physically on the stage? But there were so many
of them there, I thought, it's got to be working. Now, the more we're exposing
the world to that consciously, and unconsciously, the better, because every person
who is at that ballet, I'd never seen a
signer at ballet before. [Narelle] No. I've never either. [Allan] When that
happened, I went, I went, we are making
progress, Narelle Batti. Narelle Gatti. Yeah. [Narelle] Audio description

happens at ballet now. [Allan] Yes. [Narelle] Which, it's wonderful. Not, I'm not into ballet,

but I've got friends that are. And it just excites them

that they go to the ballet. [Allan] It's, it's truly,

absolutely fascinating. [in unison] Yeah. [Narelle] Allan, what's the

takeaway that you can give to... everyone that's listening... about this? What's one small thing that

society, the community, could do to change their

perceptions and beliefs? [Allan] Yeah. We used to

think we were hardwired, and we now know that's

absolutely not correct, that the brain is improving

bits of its function, or decreasing its function, growing neurons or

reducing or pruning neurons, every minute, every action, every comment, every word,

every meal, every drink, it's actually

enhancing or reducing. The more we can focus

on how do we enhance... the human experience? How do we make every

moment better than the last? Because the brain's capable

of reprogramming, rewiring, and providing us new experiences

that we haven't had before. Yeah. [Narelle] So basically

saying be curious. [Allan] Absolutely. [Narelle] Yeah. [Allan] As always a joy and

a pleasure to be with you. And I would love to suggest that

somewhere soon, we do it again. [Narelle] Love to, Allan. So look, Allan. Thank you.

This is our opening episode

of the Digital Access Show. If you like what

we do, please like, subscribe, share, review. Tell your friends

and be curious. And we'll see you

next time. Thank you. [music playing]