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**People with disabilities,  
what are the key changes  
that will help?**

Kay Brereton Beneficiary Advocate

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# Why is this important?

An adolescent indian boy and his sick Grandmother, were seen as not able to contribute to their tribe

They lived on the edge of camp scavenging the remnants when the tribe moved on

One day the tribe left behind a horse that was injured, and was therefore seen as a liability

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# Why is this important?

The hunt for the spotted buffalo

The Magic hide cured the Grandmother

The horse helped the young man vanquish the enemy

The pair became important and contributing members of the tribe

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**The people that we cast  
aside today as of no value,  
may turn out to be the  
people we find to be of  
great value tomorrow**

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# Over 50% of people in receipt of main benefit have a health condition and or disability

## Jobseeker (with partial or full deferral of work obligations)

- Treated just like other unemployed
- Seen as short term barrier to work

## Supported Living Payment

- No work obligations
  - Paid at a higher rate than JS
  - Work bonus payment and other “products” to reward work
  - Hard to prove eligibility
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# What's wrong with the classification approach?

- Treats everyone with a health condition or disability as a group who needs “fixing”, although there is much talk about a strengths based approach, in reality this is a deficit model
  - Bureaucracy assumes they have the solutions, and can solve the problems using economic levers (subsidies) and “activation levers (sanctions)
  - Unable to take into account in any meaningful way the diverse experiences of the people it is meant to be supporting
  - Unable to recognise a continuum of impact of health condition, either temporary (JS), or permanent and severe (SLP)
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# What would be a better way?

- An approach with the person and their whanau wellbeing at the centre
  - A system designed to ensure the needs of the most vulnerable are met, is able to meet the needs of all the people it serves
  - Earning, learning, caring and volunteering must all be seen as valuable paths to social inclusion
  - Engagement rather than enforcement
  - A truly strengths based approach any supports offered are for real needs, not to pay an employer to take on a perceived risk
  - In conjunction with employee protections
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# Trust and Empower

1. Everyone has value to contribute to their community
2. Everyone wants to be a contributing part of a community
3. We need a system which can enable and empower all people to achieve
4. We need to value people, to enable them to realise their \_\_\_\_\_ ability to contribute