**Co-production, is it an empty ritual?**

*(Sunny) and Neil talked about what coproduction means within their organisation. How Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions have worked toward meaningful active participation of their customers. They shared their story, and some of the challenges and the solutions for meaningful active coproduction.*

**Led by:**

Sunny Saini (Director at Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions since 2007) All Directors identify as having a learning disability or a disability (Expert by experience)

Neil Woodbridge (CEO Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions)

Thurrock Lifestyle Solution: [http://www.choiceandcontrol.co.uk/about.php](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/NEzTCnYEMuX5MYBsJKuv4?domain=linkprotect.cudasvc.com)

*"To promote an understanding of what disabled people by reducing and removing the barriers they face using the social model of disability approach and to help disabled people to become integral and active members of the communities in which they live". This is key to all the services we provide. Supporting 220+ people.*

Sunny and Neil gave a joint presentation and some of the main points included;

* Co-production is really hard
* Assumption – sometimes expectations are higher for Experts by Experience
* ***E.V.P. – Equal, valued, partners*** (we don’t want a ‘gift’)

We disagree about things, agree things. We work as a Team.

* We have ‘short-cut’ terms;

*SUMMIT* – ‘a person feels they might loose it’ (change the topic).

*MANGO* – ‘repeating yourself, off topic’ (not relevant to this conversation).

*RABBIT* – ‘talking too much’.

*PARROT* – ‘a point that someone has already made’. Rules within our meetings.

* Remove the barriers = Three ways 1) attitudes 2) Institutional disablism 3) Physical.
* “Community is an experience not a location”
* People’s outcomes – start with the outcomes/goal (what actions do we need to get to that)
* Working in a co-productive way. Formed a Community Interest Company, support individuals to come up with people’s goals.
* ***Adapt:*** Make things easy to understand – adaptation to explain things (apple pie for finance)
* Directors (set the direction) and CEO’s job to pull the ropes (Boat example)
* Customers rather then ‘service user’. Business model. Reverse the Triangle, (Community Interest Company, profits reinvested in the community or into service developments)
* 1969 (Arstein) – ***Empty ritual or do people have the power to affect the outcome***?
* Keeping people on a special bus, in a special building - keeping people away from others (Although we do have buildings that are places of safety).
* Born with ***two ears and one mouth*** for a reason –listening.
* Move from ***passive recipients of care to active citizens in control***.
* ***Assume*** –“ Ass out of you and me” (heads, hearts and hands, all have gifts)
* ***Participation rather than consultation*** (LeDeR review) – so what, what can we do now?
* ***Identify your KIN –*** links to other people, connections to other communities.
* ***Those who imprison themselves within the confines of one model, only have the perspective of the keyhole.*** The more we listen to others, more than one answer.
* Make a film (editing into a straight line sentence), people tell their stories. **Takes time**.
* Empty ritual – feedback – (we listen, we Act)
* “Principled Opportunity” (if there is an opportunity over there, we go that way).