Speaker 1: The Disability and Philanthropy Forum presents Cara Reedy, Media Narrative Director at the Disabled Journalists Association.

Cara Reedy: It's also a power play to be like, "Oh, look at you. You overcame this," because then there's no culpability in society for why they had to, why they were in such a predicament. Why were they in such a predicament in the first place? They were in such a predicament because our systems are broken. And so a lot of what our language does puts it on the individual. "That person is wheelchair bound," and, "They also were able to get to school, look at that." And the question is, why isn't that kid in the wheelchair in school? Why is our society broken that, that kid can't go to school? That's the switch.

You'll see these videos where some school engineered a walker because the kid's family couldn't afford a walker. Why in America, the richest country in the world, are there children that have trouble getting walkers?" That's not inspirational. That's an, "Ew. We're not doing it so great." Also, when you do that and when you praise someone for overcoming a system and you ignore the system that is holding this person back, you also don't give that person the space to complain about the system, because then you've put this other person, "Well, that person did it. Why can't you?" And this is all just baked into language, and we don't think about what these sentences actually mean.

Speaker 1: To continue your learning journey, visit disabilityphilanthropy.org.