

I: Gucci Podcast Host
SB: Sinéad Burke
AL: Andraéa LaVant
MGR: Maryangel García-Ramos

Intro Music

- I:** [00:09] Welcome back to the Gucci Podcast. On the occasion of International Women's Day, Gucci is proud to release a special capsule collection under the banner of CHIME FOR CHANGE, Gucci's long-standing global campaign to convene, unite, and strengthen the voices advocating for gender equality.
- I:** [00:27] To increase meaningful dialogue, centring and youth-led movements, in this episode, CHIME FOR CHANGE Advisory Board member Sinéad Burke, Founder of Tilting the Lens, and Member of Gucci's Global Equity Board, is joined in conversation with disability activists, Maryangel García-Ramos, and Andraéa LaVant.
- SB:** [00:52] Today is International Women's Day, and when we think about International Women's Day, questions such as who is in the room, conversations regarding gender parity at board level, or in an organisation or just a global perspective on women's equity, equality, rights, and justice, are often most amplified on days like today.
- SB:** [01:21] My name is Sinéad Burke, and I have the great privilege of being part of Gucci's Global Equity Board. My responsibility at Gucci is to co-lead the global strategic ambition of creating opportunities for disabled people at Gucci.
- SB:** [01:38] It is this consideration of disabled people at a company like Gucci that I'm so proud to be facilitating what I think is a really important conversation here today, on the Gucci Podcast. Because often, when we think about International Women's Day, we have a very specific idea in mind as to the kinds of women we think should be and could be discussed.
- SB:** [02:02] Often, they are not disabled women. Regularly, this conversation is not presented through a lens of intersectionality, even when it is about disability. But today on the Gucci Podcast, we're going to do that from right now.
- SB:** [02:17] I'm so grateful that you're going to be joining me, Andraéa LaVant, and Maryangel García-Ramos, to be talking about their lived experiences and expertise, but also, their perceptions and vision for a more equitable world. And when better to do that than on International Women's Day?
- SB:** [02:35] But also even more importantly, on the Gucci Podcast. Because for too long, the perspectives of disabled women have been invisible. But for

accessibility reasons, I want to begin our conversation with a visual description of ourselves. And as I'm the one currently talking, I'll go first.

SB: [02:54] I'm a white cisgendered woman, who uses the pronouns she and her. I am visibly and physically disabled. I have dwarfism. I have brown hair that is usually cut off at around my shoulder length, but actually, it's a bit longer at the moment.

SB: [03:10] Today, I am wearing a black sweater jumper that in bold writing says, "Stand in awe of the [menhor]". [Menhor] is the Irish word for woman. I thought that this was an appropriate shirt for today and for this conversation, though we don't always stand in awe. We don't always stand.

SB: [03:30] But I'm sitting at home in my home office with green flower wallpaper as the backdrop. Andrea, your name is alphabetically first, so I might pass to you for you to first give us a visual description of yourself, please?

AL: [03:44] Thank you so much, Sinéad. I am Andraéa LaVant. I use she, her pronouns. I identify as a black physically disabled woman. I'm a wheelchair user. Today, I have long kind of ambre individual braids, olive green cat-eye glasses, kind of square cat-eye glasses, and a caramel coloured shirt. And I'm in my bedroom, so there is a variety of shelving and décor behind me. Thrilled to be here, thank you.

SB: [04:24] Thank you, that was wonderful. Maryangel, you're up next. Your visual description please?

MGR: [04:29] I'm super-excited to be here. So I am a Mexican cisgender woman. My pronouns are she, her. I have long black, brown hair, curvy, and I'm wearing a white shirt with a black and white vest with three golden buttons. And right now I'm in a white room in the university that I work at, well yeah, and I also have a physical disability, and I'm sitting on a chair that gives me space to move a little bit. So yeah.

SB: [05:09] Thank you for those visual descriptions. I hope the audience who are either listening to this podcast or reading the transcript, are currently contemplating what their visual description would be, if we were to ask them.

SB: [05:22] But when we were beginning to frame this conversation, particularly thinking about Gucci's initiatives around CHIME FOR CHANGE, generation equality, and that relationship between women and equality, politics and culture, we had a conversation about the need to discuss social justice.

SB: [05:41] But when we think about social justice, my guess is that everybody has a different understanding of what that might mean. And actually Andrea,

you once said something that has given me a whole new perspective on what I think social justice can mean, particularly from a perspective of disability.

SB: [06:00] You said, and my apologies, I'm going to quote you and embarrass you in front of you, but you said "we want to promote understanding of disability as a social justice issue, and build relationships across lines of difference".

SB: [06:15] When I think about that phrase, it makes me realise that this requires us to create environments that allow all of us to share our experiences of exclusion, which is more than disabled people, because we all feel excluded at some point in our lives. But it also gives us permission to strengthen communities, workplaces, and systems that drive transformative change.

SB: [06:36] But I would love to know, what is your understanding, both of you, of disability as a social justice issue? Because I think before we go any further, we really need a shared understanding of what it is we're hoping to discuss today. Andrea, seeing as it's your quote, I might ask you to go first.

AL: [06:55] That's a great question, thanks for asking and starting us off beautifully, Sinéad. You know interestingly, that quote, that particular phrase, building across lines of difference, is a phrase that I learnt from my dear friend and now ancestor, disability justice activist, Stacy Park Milbern, and she really served as an example for me, of how to bring disability into larger conversations around injustice, and ultimately, to effect change.

AL: [07:30] And as you said, the first step really in igniting change, is acknowledging where the issues lie, calling out truths, particularly in spheres and areas where we have, as disabled people, traditionally been excluded. And for many, I think when they think about across lines of difference, or social justice, they're thinking about communities that are vastly different from our own, where we've really blatantly been discriminated against.

AL: [08:02] But I've come to understand over the years in this work, that it also means building where lines are less apparent, perhaps they're a bit thinner, or more difficult to comprehend. So for example, a lot of social justice conversations to your point today, and when we think about forms of oppression like racism, or sexism, or homophobia, they often don't include disability within those conversations, and that's where the significant missteps are.

AL: [08:35] Disability is prevalent in every community, and thus ableism exists within those conversations, ableism meaning the discrimination against, oppression against disabled people, exists there, exists within other communities, and alongside these other issues.

AL: [08:56] So when we're talking about things like healthcare, or the economy, or the impact of the pandemic, so on and so forth, it's ensuring that disability,

because it is, we just often are skating around using that term, but when we say things like pre-existing conditions, that's disability, right? There are so many places we could go on and on, where it's not named and it should be.

AL: [09:27] And so that's what we are aiming to do, is to say the word, and acknowledging really that inner sectionality, and that's really where we need to build from.

SB: [09:38] Andrea, you brought up there that lexicon of underlying conditions, and I think over the pandemic, we've become all too familiar with describing people as vulnerable, as a way in which to create a departure from actually describing people at all. I'm in Ireland, but the UK is not too far from me, and if you look at the data around the pandemic, six out of every ten COVID deaths in the UK, were disabled people.

SB: [10:06] But even now as we enter into what we hope is this last phase of the pandemic, at least in developed countries, we are again erasing the existence, but also the inclusion of disabled people, as we think about what this next phase looks like in terms of inclusion.

SB: [10:23] But Maryangel, Andrea gave a really interesting description there around disability as a social justice issue, both from her lived experience, her locality, but also, her expertise. And I am wondering from your perspective and your work based in Mexico, do you have a different definition of disability as a social justice issue, or how do you perceive it?

MGR: [10:43] I think what Andrea said was on point particularly. When we talk about disability justice, we're talking about the justice within a system, and the system that we live in was designed, or everything is basically designed for the people that we assume have all the abilities. So everything that are designed, from the way a supermarket is designed, and the way a public policy is designed, everything is designed to work that majority, apparently.

MGR: [11:16] So how do you navigate towards justice when everything that is there, it's not made for us? There was one of my friends recently told me that it was really amazing that people with disabilities around the world were like the original hackers, like we were hacking the system all the time, and that was like amazing capabilities to develop, and it was kind of like our competitive advantage.

MGR: [11:43] Because there are companies that are looking for these things that we develop, and I think it's amazing that we are the original hackers, but why should we be? Why should we be hacking the system all the time? Like yeah, it's great that we learn how to survive, because that's what we're doing every day, surviving, and trying to fit in a society that's not made for us, that constantly tells us with everything, that this is not made for me, right?

- MGR:** [12:08] In the able system that we live in, we're not considered. Like there is a gender perspective, a disability perspective in every single situation, everything that we do, everything that we design. Because we are millions of people, and I think it's very important to do a double click over there, because if we don't talk, it's not... when we talk about the system, it's not us versus them, we are part of the system. So we need to address that in order to eventually transform it, change it, break it, blow it, whatever.
- SB:** [12:40] Build a new one. Maryangel, what you said there is really interesting in the sense that actually, as we even look to position disability as a social justice issue, it makes us ask the question, is that even possible? Because justice feels so far from what our potential reality is, because the system is designed against us.
- SB:** [12:59] And I also love that thought of yes, we are innovators by design, because we live in a world that was not designed for us. And whilst that is something to be celebrated, and something to maybe cater to the business model of disability, in reality, it is evidence of a trauma that we experience every day. Whereas that place is a toll, a burden, and whilst it does make us more innovative, or creative, I guess the question we need to ask ourselves is should we not just get to be?
- SB:** [13:30] And what I think is interesting from both of your perspectives that you've already brought to this conversation today, is the differences that exist across those boundaries of difference, be that geographical, be that about identity. And Andrea, you and I had the great pleasure of working on Crip Camp together, and you were the impact producer on what is an Oscar-nominated documentary. And you were also the first visibly disabled black woman on the Oscars red carpet.
- SB:** [14:00] But I want to look to Crip Camp, and specifically the Impact Campaign from a global focus, and the various different intersectional narratives that you were able to reach into, and to speak to. What were your key findings from your work as part of that campaign in terms of building maybe a new system, or building within an ableist system through a disability social justice lens?
- AL:** [14:27] Yeah, so I think that what's interesting in terms of a key finding based on those experiences, is actually something that Crip Camp the film, embodies and demonstrates. And it's really... it comes from our perspective and experiences, and what we received from disabled... what we heard from disabled people across the globe. And that's really the value and need for disabled people to build and have community.
- AL:** [14:55] And often, because of various reasons, our experiences, we are siloed from one another, but history proves that lasting change happens when we do come together, and that's what Crip Camp shows. It shows the power of

community, when these folks met there at this camp, and then ultimately years later, what we experience, are benefiting from even today, was them coming together. And so the Impact Campaign, really that was our goal.

AL: [15:27] A lot of people saw essentially what was the benefit of what us coming together really did. And so although it may have seemed there were so many other things, really it was that opportunity to come together, to then really acknowledge our power, and ultimately, effect change.

AL: [15:49] And another key takeaway I would say, is that cliché phrase, but it's the truth, that representation matters. And the more we, as disabled people, see ourselves reflected across all areas in the mainstream from entertainment to fashion to policy, technology, all of that, the more that we will understand and exercise that power.

AL: [16:13] So those are the things I think, you know, there are so many takeaways, but I try to always bring it back to us as a community, what we need, and the value for ourselves. And that really is to have each other, to have spaces like this, where we are leading the conversations, and then we're coming together and saying okay, break, let's go do the work.

SB: [16:40] And even that idea of for disabled people, and for disabled women in particular, gathering is almost a radical act, because we haven't been given opportunities to experience it before. And in many ways, the pandemic was so detrimental to our community. But simultaneously, it created digital opportunities for us to connect, gather, plot, plan, in the words of John Lewis, cause good trouble, and it's interesting to see what can be both a challenge, is an opportunity.

SB: [17:13] And Andrea, you were speaking to routes and ways of change there, and you and I both lead consultancies, which are For Profit firms. And Maryangel, I'm conscious that change happens in different ways. And you founded the Not For Profit organisation, Mexican Women with Disabilities, and have been doing phenomenal work around equal protection for disabled women in Mexico.

SB: [17:37] But I'm intrigued to know what did you want success to look like prior to setting up that organisation, and what made you look to create change in this way?

MGR: [17:49] As you both, I am also a consultant, and my actual work, I do consultancy and at the same time, I lead the Diversity and Inclusion office for one of the biggest private universities in Mexico and Latin America.

MGR: [18:03] And being a woman with a disability, I've always said that in Mexico, I'm not the average woman with a disability, because I've had the

opportunity to study, to have a Master's, to have a car, to have running water, gas, light. I am not the average person with a disability in Mexico.

MGR: [18:22] So to me, it was very important to understand my experience with other women. And when we created Mexicanas con Discapacidad, my biggest point of inflection there was we needed to create a community. I felt that when we talked about disability, we never made like a double click on the gender perspective of it.

MGR: [18:45] There is no one single story about disability, and there is no one single story about women, right? So we weren't talking about women with disabilities, we were just talking about disabled people in general, like a monolith.

MGR: [18:55] And when we moved around the feminist movements, when we talked about gender equality, we were not talking about women with disabilities. And according to [Stefania Taleva], the founder of Women Enabled, we're like forgotten sisters. We were never there, and nothing was accessible. We were required to put our bodies in order for us to be visible, in the fights and the marches, and sometimes that was impossible.

MGR: [19:19] So to me, it was that. It was like how do we create a community of women with disability that we can just be a community and talk about this? That we could be talking about your period, what happens within your period, women and persons with disabilities that have a period, and who can we talk to about that? How can we talk about the probably, the inner wars we have within our bodies and the ableist thoughts that we have constantly in our work, in our own inner dialogues, and at the same time, how do we talk about public policy, how do we push this far, right?

MGR: [19:55] So to me it was a way that we can actually move this. Besides the work that I do consulting with companies and organisations, is how do we make communities more visible? And the pandemic, as you said, it was hard for us, because in Mexico, not everybody has access to internet and these platforms, but we created a bigger platform. We created groups and states that women were talking with other women that they didn't know about, and they were talking about their own issues.

MGR: [20:24] And we were thinking, and we started workshops about self love, we started workshops about identifying gender-based violence at home, because most... we know that mostly women with disabilities are the ones who are probably like ten times more sexual violence within their context. So we needed them to identify this. So we started creating all this content and everything within ourselves, and that was powerful.

- MGR:** [20:51] And I think us as an NGO, we don't provide a particular service, what we do is we create these networks, and we put this political pushing around that. And that's what we do.
- MGR:** [21:02] And to me, it has been the experience of a lifetime, because understanding the very unique perspectives of disability within that gender perspective has been life-changing. And that way, I think it's been able for us to truly understand it's a bigger community, not only the community with disabilities, but everyone around us, including feminist movements.
- MGR:** [21:27] What it means to talk about disability-inclusive culture, what is that culture around us with disability? And that makes us visible, and that makes us gain our power, that makes us be able to tell our own stories again, which is basically what Crip Camp did for all of us, right? And to me, it's like how do we keep doing this, how will we keep making it in the local, right, in the local spaces? This conversation that we didn't have, now we're allowed to have them because you feel part of this community and that changes absolutely everything.
- SB:** [22:03] And how do they prosper? You were talking earlier, Maryangel, about disability not being a monolith, because people have different perspectives and not all disabled people, or disabled women agree. But that importance of community and representation.
- SB:** [22:17] And I will never forget attending my first Little People of Ireland convention, and meeting other young women and girls who look like me, and talking to them about the challenges of gaining access to the contraceptive pill. Because we were women with dwarfism, BMI was used as the metric by which we would gain access to the contraceptive pill.
- SB:** [22:37] And if we were measured as being clinically obese, which many of us are, and that's a fat-phobic metric, but our doctors were non-disabled, educated in an ableist medical system. And if we didn't have feminism and community and representation, I'm not sure what position any of us would be in because there is no place, even sometimes on the internet, for conversations like that to occur.
- SB:** [23:03] But you were talking about changing systems, and I think each of us in our consulting work, but also in our community work, are very keen to build new systems. But the honest reflection is also that we can't exist without the systems that are already in place, at least we need to change them.
- SB:** [23:20] And Maryangel, you were speaking to there about some of your legislative work. What are the actual skills that people need to be able to either support legislators, or to convince them to act?

- MGR:** [23:33] I think that's a very interesting question because we learn as we go. That's what I've learnt when it comes to that. First of all, like knowing where you're departing from, what's the actual situation, and really knowing your data, or the data that we lack of. Because in Mexico, we don't have any data.
- MGR:** [23:51] You said something about in the UK most COVID people who died had disabilities, we don't have that number here, we don't know anything. And without numbers, we're invisible, right?
- MGR:** [24:03] And to me, it's just I go back to the power of community. We need to make a force around okay, I'm not the only one who's pushing this. So what we needed to do is like okay, here are the issues, and we need to see who are the allies. There's always allies, and to see who can we push. And not only with the disabled community, but with other communities and other historically discriminated communities that are also pushing for their issues, and at the same time, they're intersectional, right?
- MGR:** [24:31] So to me, it's having that vision of doing it in community. That is what has worked over here, that's what makes like a bit pressure on community.
- MGR:** [24:41] And the second, I think that it's [great] to be sustainable because when we do this and when we're activists, and when we push, we get tired of fighting that system of power that will define what law goes, what change goes, what doesn't.
- MGR:** [24:56] But to make it sustainable, I think it is very, very important to keep on pushing disabled leaderships, super-important. Obviously in positions of decision-making, of course, but we can start in the small, and everywhere, right? And we need to be everywhere, because disability is everywhere, there's no one single disability issue. As Andrea said, we're like everywhere. So, yeah.
- SB:** [25:24] And on International Women's Day, I think it's really important to acknowledge some of those biases and those assumptions that we often even allow live in our own mind and bodies. As disabled women, we are constantly told that there are fewer opportunities afforded to us. As disabled women, we are often told that we must articulate our capacity because the world view is our capacity is so less.
- SB:** [25:48] But to your point, we cannot create or live in every opportunity, we will exhaust ourselves. And that idea that there cannot only be one in order to create long-term systemic, sustainable change, we have to create space for others. And this comes back to community and visibility, which unintentionally, are becoming our two themes for this conversation.
- SB:** [26:11] And when I think about visibility, I'm really often reflecting on the quote from the black British actress, Michaela Coel. When she won her Emmy

last year, she kind of gave the audience this big advice. She said, “write the tale that scares you, that makes you feel uncertain, that is uncomfortable. I dare you. In a world that entices us to browse through the lives of others, to better determine how we feel about ourselves, and to in turn feel the need to be constantly visible. For visibility these days seems to somehow equate to success. Do not be afraid to disappear from it, from us, for a while, and see what comes to you in the silence”.

- SB:** [26:57] I love that idea. I love the idea of removing to a remote cottage in Ireland, where the weather batters the roof and the building in and of itself, where there’s no internet. But I’m conscious that the three of us who are participating in this conversation, are visibly and physically disabled women. And visibility is a tool. Representation is so important for ensuring that there isn’t a single story around disability.
- SB:** [27:29] But visibility is also really challenging. So I guess my question is, how do we, as disabled women, as to not boost our own egos too much, as disabled change-makers, how do we ensure that visibility is not the sole metric of success by which we are measured on? But how do we also ensure that the visibility that we wish to give to our work, is not then a toll, or a weight for us to carry personally?
- SB:** [27:59] And just a heads up, I don’t have an answer to this question, I’m really hoping you two do, so you can solve all of my problems, and I don’t have to go to therapy this week. So Andrea, I’m going to pass that to you.
- AL:** [28:08] I love it. Well I will just say this is a perfect timing. I literally just last week was in, it wasn’t a cottage, but it was a lovely hotel room on the beach, where I turned off my phone for a few days, and did just that, you know, to be able to think [for a sec] and just work on some things that have been on my heart to do. So that’s my first advice personally for you, Sinéad, is to just create the space for it. We have to prioritise ourselves as important.
- AL:** [28:44] But I will say that one thing that I have come to embrace is the fact that visibility for visibility’s sake, is... it’s totally not what I’m after, it’s not what the work is for. The goal of visibility really is, should be, to begin a conversation.
- AL:** [29:01] When I think about my time at the Oscars on the red carpet, the goal wasn’t for people to say oh that’s nice, there’s a black woman in a wheelchair at the Oscars. What I hoped people were saying was oh, is this the first time we’ve seen a black visibly disabled woman on the red carpet, why is that? What have we missed in the past? What do we need to address and repair in our work moving forward? How do we ensure in the industry that she’s not the last?

- AL:** [29:34] Ultimately, it's ensuring that visibility isn't that sole metric, but it's emphasising the need to be asking those deeper questions and then ensuring that disabled people are at the decision-making tables, to help you answer those questions and implement those changes.
- AL:** [29:54] But to Maryangel's point, it's widening the table, it's bringing people with us, it's amplifying others, and it's moving out of the way to ensure that other disabled folks have opportunities to make that lasting impact.
- AL:** [30:11] I know for myself, that was why it was really important to actually build a company, not... you know, there's many, and entrepreneurship we know is not for the faint of heart, it's not for everybody, and there are some that choose the role of the solopreneur, and that's amazing.
- AL:** [30:31] For me, I wanted to be able to build something where other disabled people would have jobs, and be able to live quality lives, and be able to make influence and go out on their own and do even bigger things. So it is about expanding the table, and sometimes, in my case, rolling away from it so that someone else can take that seat.
- SB:** [30:58] Absolutely. And visibility comes in lots of different ways. Whether you are the first little person to attend the Met Gala, whether you are the first visibly black disabled woman at the Oscars red carpet, or whether you are in Mexico and the Generation Equality Forum is taking place, and Women Enabled are there to speak to the challenges, but also, the opportunities, and thinking about setting disability inclusion at this global agenda.
- SB:** [31:30] And Maryangel, I'm not sure whether you had great involvement, or got to participate in Generation Equality, but I'm conscious that it did take place in Mexico, and I wonder if it was an opportunity to raise these questions around employment, access to resources, of internet and education, and thinking about disability through this gender equality perspective?
- MGR:** [31:54] That's a very good question because I don't think it had the impact that it was supposed to have, because first of all, it wasn't accessible for all of us, so how could you do a Generation Equality forum that is not accessible, right?
- MGR:** [32:07] And what came from that, yes, there was visibility around the issues a little bit more, but it didn't have the impact that I wish it would have had on our policy-makers, our law-makers, and our systems over here, I would say.
- MGR:** [32:22] And I think it happened because there was nothing about us without us in the design. If we would have been part of that, and not only as women with disabilities, or persons with disabilities around that, but everybody who has been part of historical discriminative groups, like with this very

intersectional perspective of things, I think it would have changed in every way. The way we downloaded the information that was...

- MGR:** [32:48] Because there were very super-interesting conversations around Generation Equality Forums. So powerful, so amazing, but in the end, what you want is the results to be visible and what is it that governments are doing, what is it that NGOs are doing that government were not doing? And that's why they were created.
- MGR:** [33:08] So we can do a thousand forums and we can talk about amazing things, and we can have the most amazing voices there, but if we don't have the people listening to it, then I don't see the impact around that.
- MGR:** [33:22] And also, if we have a platform, any kind of platform, it could be your Instagram with 100 followers, it could be your Instagram with like a thousand, you could be at the Oscars, you could be Beyonce's best friend, I don't know, right? If you have a platform, any kind, this podcast, for example, right, it is a privilege.
- MGR:** [33:41] And what we need to keep on pushing is that there is no small platform. Every kind of platform counts, especially when there's no one single story of who we are. And I think that is where we'll make the bigger impact.
- SB:** [33:58] I think those points you've made are so important. And since the Generation Equality Forum, I have been fortunate to catch up with Women Enabled. And I think it proves the point that even in rooms where we are having the most detailed dialogues around equity and justice, that still disability is not part of the conversation.
- SB:** [34:19] I imagine we have all been in conversations where we have requested sign language interpreters, and someone will say well there's nobody deaf in the room. And my argument is always there never will be, because what level of othering do they have to put themselves within, in order to ask for what is a basic and by right, accommodation.
- SB:** [34:39] But I think the other point that you made that is so interesting, is there is also no small active advocacy. I think when we think about advocacy and change, again, so much of that is imbued with ableism. We talked at the very beginning about protest being a way in which to create change. For many disabled people, that is an inaccessible form to create change.
- SB:** [35:03] We often talk about couch politics, or sofa activism, but actually, that's something to be celebrated and encouraged, because hey, if you look at Imani Barbarin, you can absolutely change the world with a hashtag. You look at Alice Wong, there are so many people who have created a change in our consciousness, but also in our policy, from what began as a small act.

- SB:** [35:27] So to your point, whilst yes, we can all dream about existing on big stages, well A, none of us started there, and B, let me tell you a secret, that's not actually the work. That is a joyous, terrifying moment, but not actually the work.
- SB:** [35:42] But I am conscious that we are coming close to the end of our conversation, and I think we have given some great frameworks to both large organisations that are creating geopolitical gatherings, but also, to an activist who is just starting out in their advocacy.
- SB:** [35:59] But I want to know, what does success look like within work and community, but also, for you personally? How are you going to measure it, going forward?
- AL:** [36:10] That's a hard question. You know, when I think back to what we've talked about from a policy level all the way down to grass roots, for me, it's the one. It's seeing the difference for the one person, a disabled person of colour, who there was an opportunity that they didn't have before, or that wasn't... that the system was set up completely for them not to experience.
- AL:** [36:38] That not just what's fixed for them, because that's not what it's about, right, but it's that they have basically the life that they have dreamed, and they have been able to be an active participant in it, not as one that is a recipient of service, but that has actually been able to actualise what their dreams and desires are.
- AL:** [37:01] So for me, it's that grass roots moment, that's the successes, when I'm talking to a young disabled person, or I'm talking to a person of colour that's the only person in their workplace with a disability. And they've gotten the accommodations, they've advocated, or not even so, that they haven't had to put up a fight for it, that it's been there for them.
- AL:** [37:26] It's those individual stories that come together as a collective that prove success to me, and it's the reason why we do what we do.
- MGR:** [37:36] Yeah, it is a hard question. I would also say that yes, it is when I've seen myself in other women with disabilities, and that they tell you that they see themselves with you, right, and that they share those experiences. To me, that power of community, it's success.
- MGR:** [37:54] And at the same time, when we can... we want everything because again, in the system that is not made for us, it's hard for us to navigate. Every little bit counts. Every little win is a big win.
- MGR:** [38:09] And if for example, a company like Gucci pushes forward to do stuff like this, to make us in Mexico here, like we were in a magazine, like first time women with disabilities in a magazine, like visible, right? Or if we make

universities push forward for more people to study with disabilities, be part of the education system because they're pushing through their privileged boundaries, and they're pushing forward, all of those big ones and small ones, I think to me, that is success.

MGR: [38:45] It happens to me sometimes that I keep on doing things because I chose to do this. It doesn't mean that if you have a disability, have to be an activist around this, you can be an activist just by living your life and being, right? Sometimes we don't think that our voice, our platform, the tiny things that we do every single day, has an impact on other people. And to me, that is success.

MGR: [39:08] The moment obviously, that no more women with disabilities have to return to people who hurt them physically or sexually, or abuse them, in Mexico, not because of accessibility, then to me will be the biggest of the wins, but to this day, maybe one woman.

MGR: [39:26] Maybe one woman that we could definitely take... took out from that context, right, maybe one person who can actually feel part of a community, all those tiny things, I think that is a success. And when we work globally, we work as a collective, but sometimes it helps for me to do the double click, and we're talking about individuals, right, and that is completely powerful and beautiful.

SB: [39:51] Gosh, thank you so much. Those definitions of success are going to stay with me, and undoubtedly shape my own. I think in my work recently, I've been trying to construct a new definition of success, which is challenging people's approach to disability inclusion, but specifically, accessibility, away from compliance.

SB: [40:11] Because whilst it's important to have legislation and policy, and many regions have not, the reliance on legislation and policy to be the sum of life that disabled people get to experience, is just so limiting, and without justice.

SB: [40:28] So my definition of success is if we can get to a new status quo, where we don't think about compliance, but think about creativity and how we consider and construct accessibility. But first, we have to fix education, health care, employment, and we can do it all at once.

SB: [40:46] But I want to thank you both so much for joining me in this conversation on the Gucci Podcast. As we began our discussion, it feels very fitting that this conversation is taking place on International Women's Day.

SB: [40:58] And what I want to encourage our audience to do, is to commit to doing one action. Now that action could be a tweet. It could be finding out if your company has an employee resource group for disability and accessibility, and joining it as an ally, or as a disabled person.

- SB:** [41:16] It could be going and talking to a friend about disability or accessibility inclusion, because my guess is, if you're participating in this podcast in some sort of way, you're probably already interested, or you're just a big fan of Gucci. I get it. But in order for us to create systemic change, this requires all of us. Disability is not about me, Andrea, and Maryangel, it is about all of us.
- SB:** [41:42] So I'm going to wish you a happy International Women's Day, and I'm going to wish you the best of luck, whatever act, big or small, you're committing to. But let us know. Make sure you're following Andrea and Maryangel as they go off and conquer the world in very equitable, justice-focused, non-colonial ways, of course. But happy International Women's Day, and enjoy the rest of the Gucci Podcast. Thank you so much.
- I:** [42:13] Thank you for listening to the Gucci Podcast. To discover more about CHIME FOR CHANGE, please see the episode's notes.

Outro Music