



Making sense of hospitality experiences: Enhancing the social inclusion of blind and partially sighted customers in hospitality servicescapes

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Conference**
on Culinary Arts
and Sciences

Session Outline

- Background to the research
- Eating for pleasure and disability
- Understanding disability and sight loss
- Guest experiences
- Identifying the Barriers
- Finding solutions
- Identifying the skills of hospitality staff as enablers of positive experiences and social inclusion
- Questions



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Eating is a function of everyday life and a popular leisure activity, a time for enjoyment and relaxation as well as being an embodied tourist experience (Everett, 2009).

But many disabled people are still isolated by attitudinal and physical barriers





Symbols of Vision Impairment

- 2 million people in UK have a sight problem
- 8.7 million people with hearing difficulties
- 0.5 million are wheelchair users,



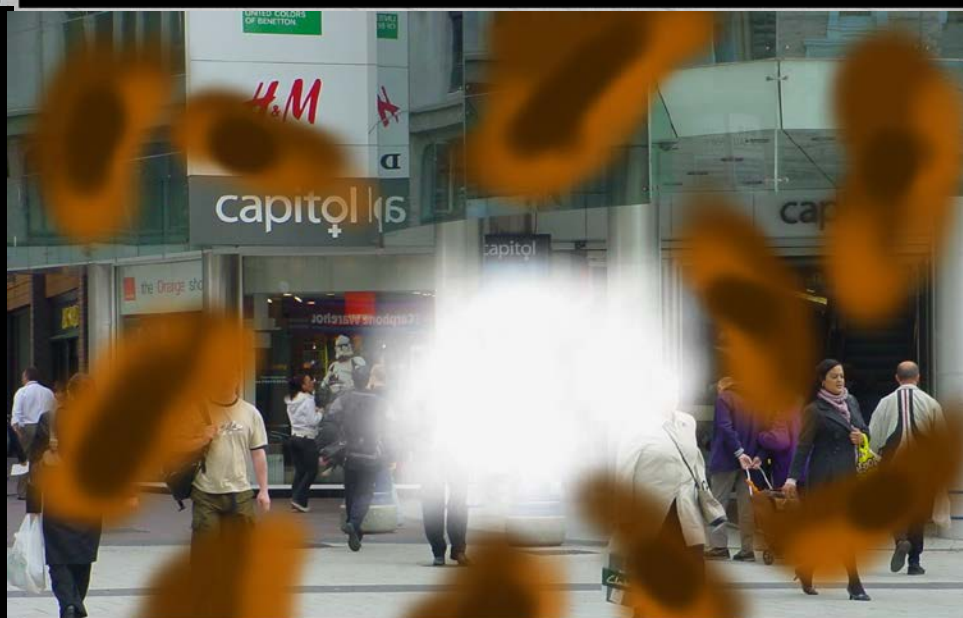
perfect vision



macular degeneration



glaucoma



diabetic retinopathy

DÉCOR & AMBIENCE

Perhaps a lot of people get the pleasure when they are eating in the dark [laughter]. We say to the person leading us in can you give us a table where there is some light?’

I use my peripheral vision for joining the queue, manoeuvring around tables

ISOLATION

You sit there and he’s up at the buffet - you’re thinking, what can I do? - just sit and wait. I don’t know how long he’ll be, where he is and you just feel I suppose you feel anxious until somebody comes back to you.

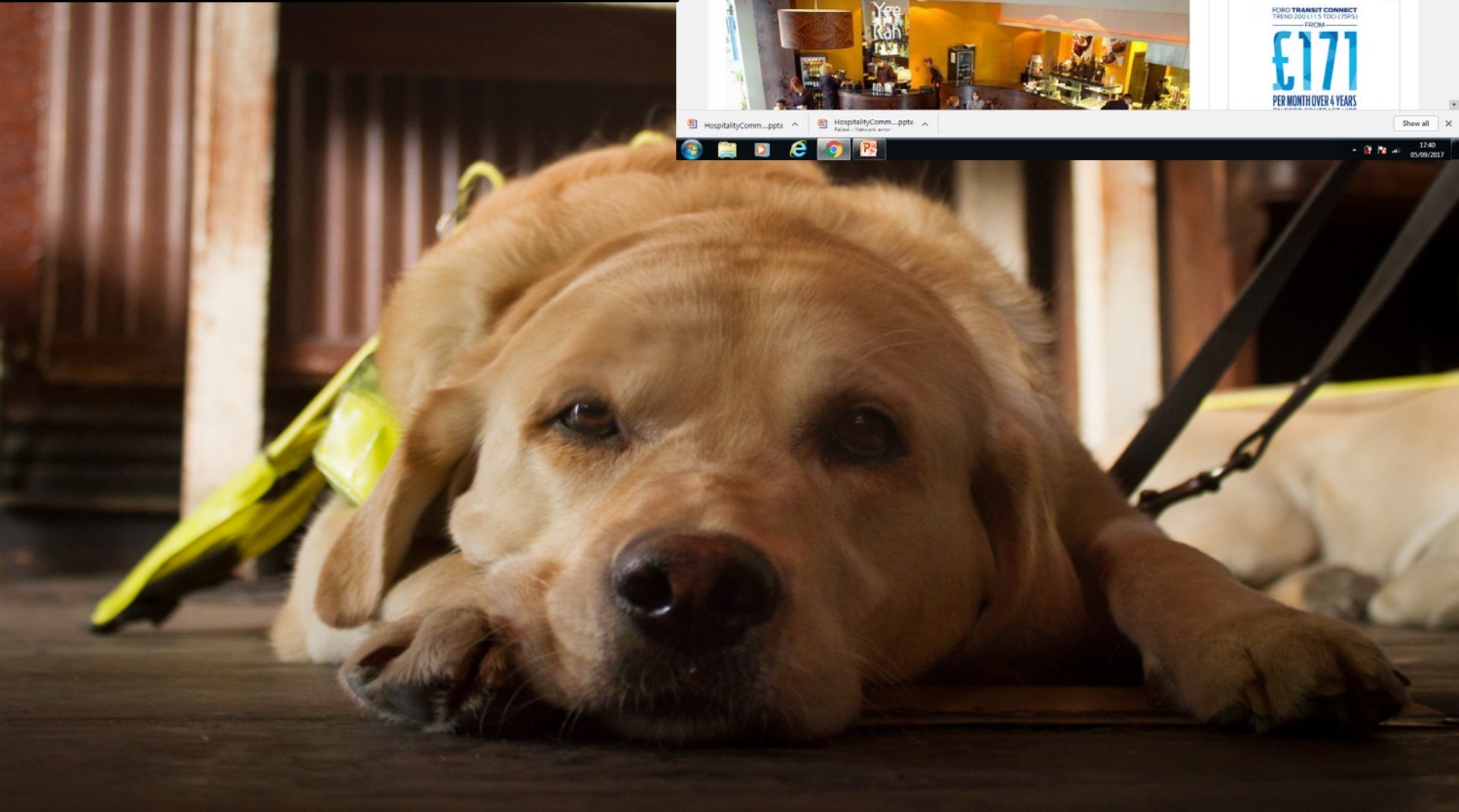
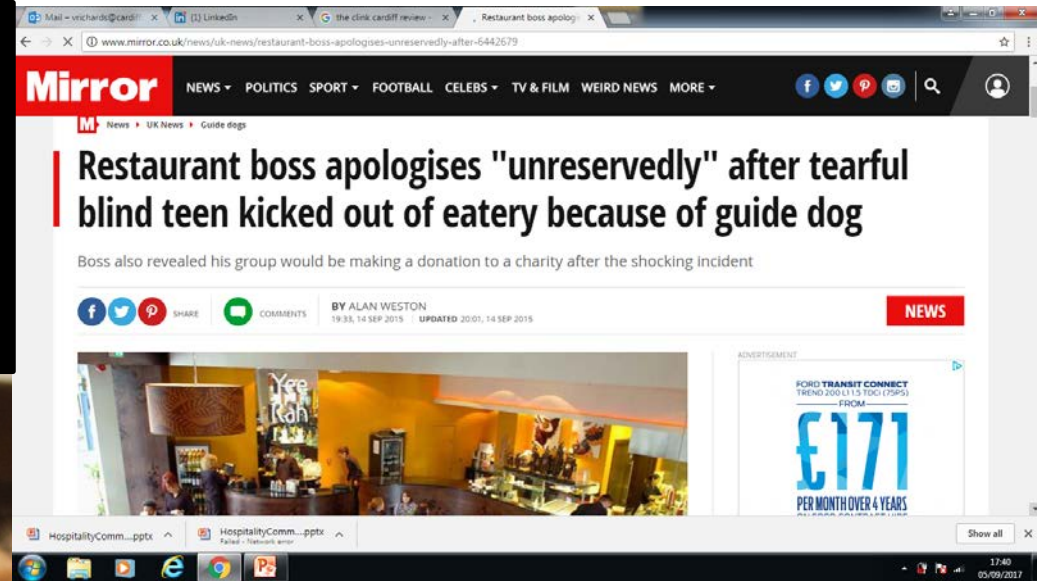
TYPES OF VISION LOSS

- **Training staff is a big part of it.....they had a Braille menu but he’d put it in his pocket and sat on it, it was no use to me then!**

The buffet I can’t tell what’s in the tub. I’ll say ‘could you tell me what’s in there?’ But ‘why do they think I’m asking this question, do they realise it’s because I can’t see what’s in the tub or do they think I’m dull or something?’ Buffets are quite difficult.

STAFF AWARENESS

Including guide dogs
is essential



Including people in the restaurant
experience
STAFF AS ENABLERS

Accessible Premises

Layout, décor, design, lighting,
signage

Accessible information

Braille, Large Print,
Smartphone Apps,
accessible
websites

High Quality Customer Care Communication Skills



YouTube: DaleMullany

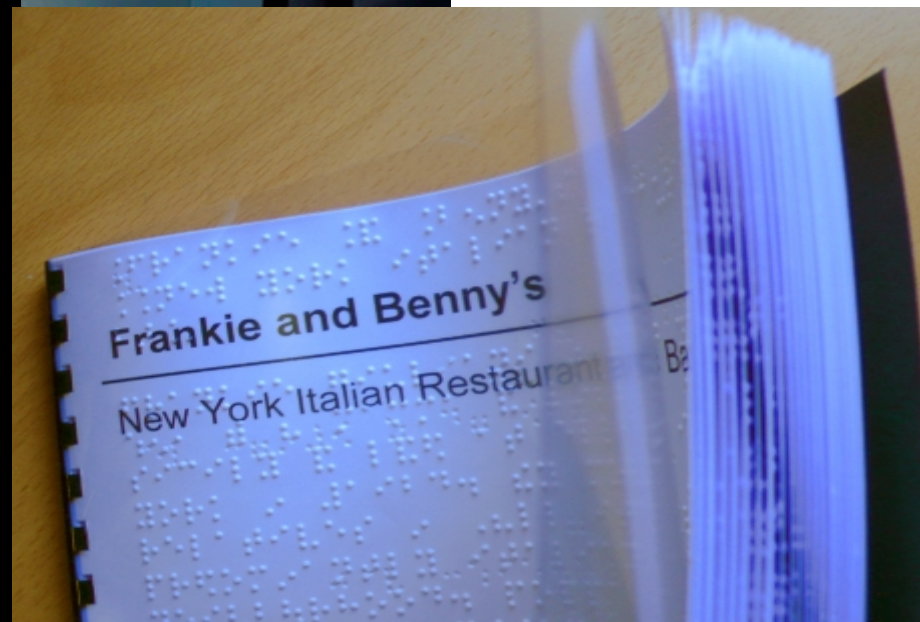
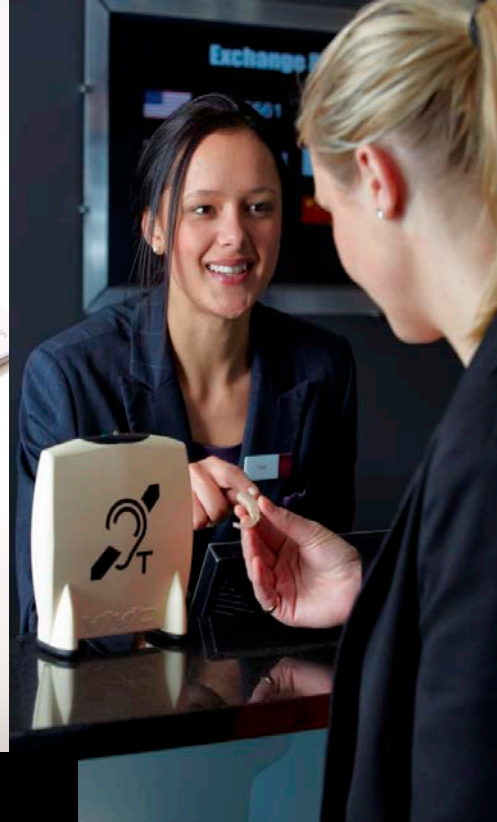







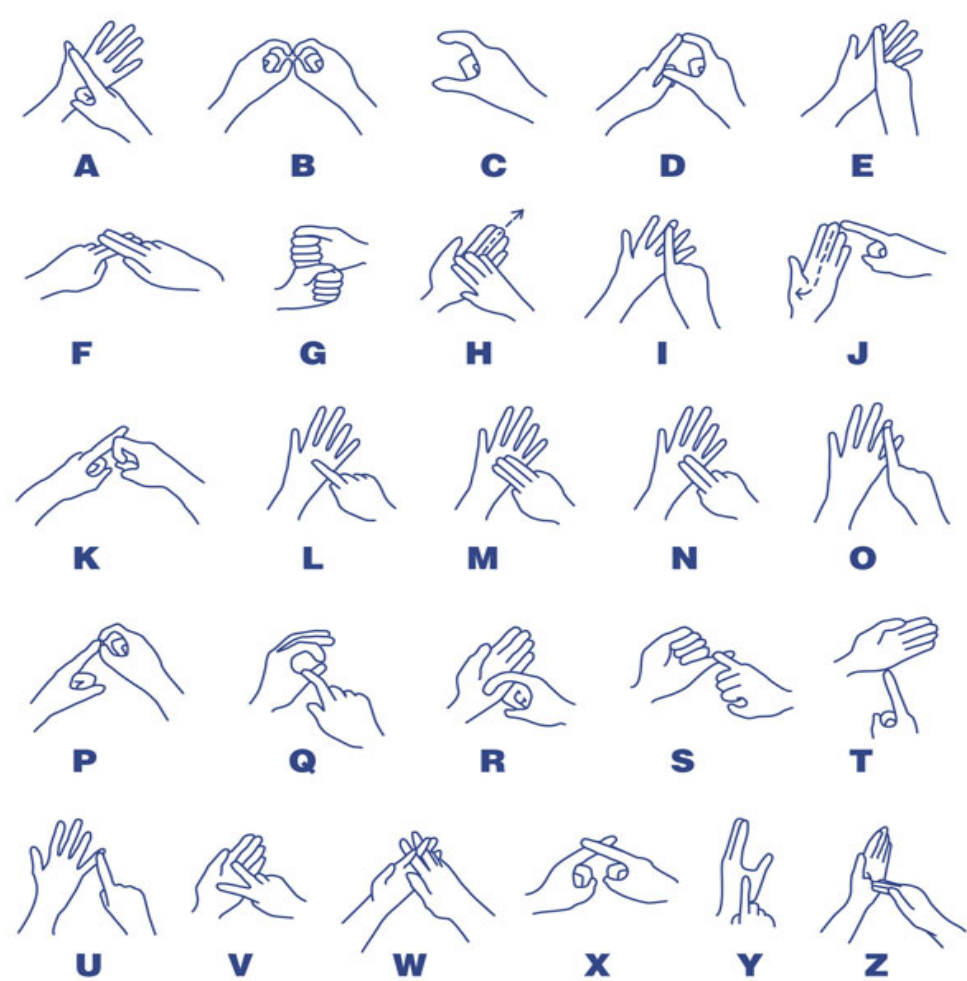
Colour contrast

Table settings
Crockery
Food
Furniture



Enhanced Communication Skills

- 
- ✓ Be yourself; act naturally
 - ✓ Ask if the person requires help
 - ✓ Identify yourself – don't assume recognise your voice
 - ✓ Speak naturally – loss of sight doesn't mean loss of hearing
 - ✓ Continue to use your natural body language but verbalise gestures
 - ✓ Use everyday language, don't avoid "see" and "look"
 - ✓ Use the person's name
 - ✓ Never channel conversation through a third person
 - ✓ Tell the person when you are leaving
 - ✓ Give clear and precise instructions. For example, "the door is on your left", rather than "the door is over there".



Learn how to guide
a visually impaired
person

Learn some basic
finger spelling for a
Deaf person



Opening menus for everybody

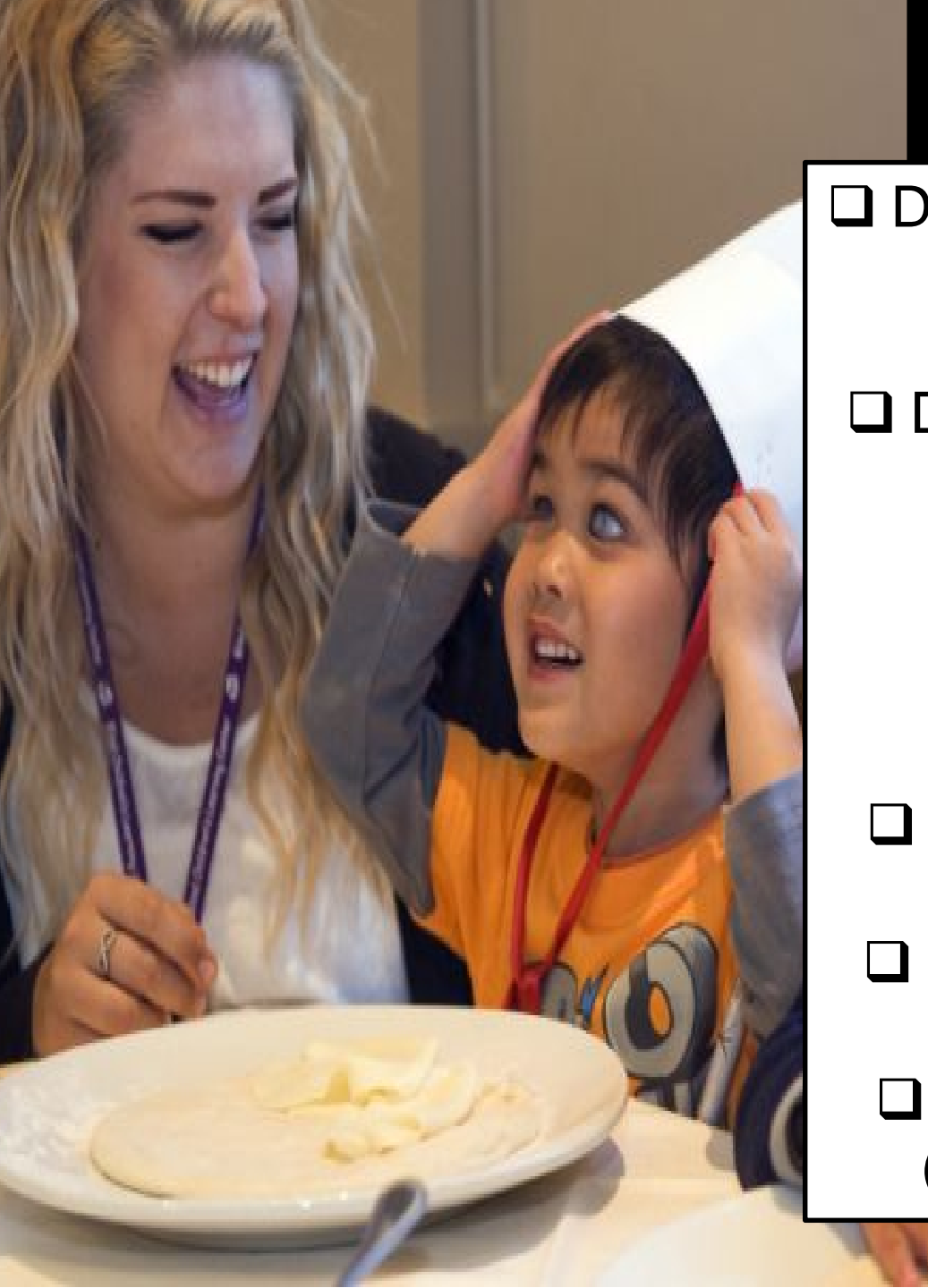
GoodFoodTalks makes it easy for visually impaired diners to eat out at restaurants by providing accessible menus right here on our website

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Restaurant
DANS LE NOIR

A Braille representation of the text 'Restaurant DANS LE NOIR' is shown below the main text. The Braille is composed of white dots on a black background, arranged in a grid that corresponds to the letters of the text.

Final Thoughts



- ❑ Disabled people continue to be marginalised in every day experiences
- ❑ Disabled people can and want to enjoy hospitality experiences
 - ❑ Hospitality staff can be enablers of social inclusion
 - ❑ Awareness Training
- ❑ Interpersonal Communication skills
- ❑ Understanding of the Equality Act 2010
- ❑ Practical skills and resources (décor, furniture, tableware...)

Diolch yn fawr

Thank you

Vicky Richards PhD



Diversity is being invited to the party;

inclusion is being asked to dance.

Vernã Myers