STELLA: And in the past few years, we've been able to propagate this lie even further via

social media. You may have seen images like this one: "The only disability in

life is a bad attitude." Or this one: "Your excuse is invalid." Indeed. Or this one:

'Before you quit, try!" These are just a couple of examples, but there are a lot

of these images out there. You know, you might have seen the one, the little girl

with no hands drawing a picture with a pencil held in her mouth. You might have

seen a child running on carbon fiber prosthetic legs. And these images, there

are lots of them out there, they are what we call inspiration porn. [Laughter] And

I use the term porn deliberately, because they objectify one group of people

for the benefit of another group of people. So, in this case, we're objectifying

disabled people for the benefit of non-disabled people. The purpose of these

images is to inspire you, to motivate you, so that we can look at them and think.

'Well, however bad my life is, it could be worse. I could be that person."

But what if you are that person? I've lost count of the number of times that I've

been approached by strangers wanting to tell me that they think I'm brave or

inspirational, and this was long before my work had any kind of public profile

They were just kind of congratulating me for managing to get up in the morning

and remember my own name. [Laughter] And it is objectifying. These images,

those images objectify disabled people for the benefit of non-disabled people.

They are there so that you can look at them and think that things aren't so bad

for you, to put your worries into perspective..

And life as a disabled person is actually somewhat difficult. We do overcome

some things. But the things that we're overcoming are not the things that you

think they are. They are not things to do with our bodies. I use the term "disabled

people" quite deliberately, because I subscribe to what's called the social model

of disability, which tells us that we are more disabled by the society that we live

in than by our bodies and our diagnoses.

So, I have lived in this body a long time. I'm quite fond of it. It does the things

that I need it to do, and I've learned to use it to the best of its capacity just as

you have, and that's the thing about those kids in those pictures as well. They're

not doing anything out of the ordinary. They are just using their bodies to the

best of their capacity. So, is it really fair to objectify them in the way that we do,

mean it as a compliment. And I know why it happens. It's because of the lie, it's

because we've been sold this lie that disability makes you exceptional. And it

honestly doesn't.

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