

Maybe just one or two minutes to move our hands a bit, for the interpreters.

It will give me time to arrange my papers.

At first, my apologies for the interpreters. This morning I had a meeting with them to talk about my presentation today and I'd like to tell them I'd radically changed everything I said and I even remembered to button my trousers, which were open this morning; now they are closed.

Ges, what time does the Princess come?

Good morning friends,

We have met many times over the years. Congratulations for those who are involved in this meeting and all the other ones. I think you have done a fantastic job. I am looking around the audience here and I counted about a 150 people. Now, if I give those people an average age of 40, I am being very nice to some of you, probably were sitting in this room is 4500 years of experience. Isn't that incredible? In this room 4500 years of experience. Sorry mic, but is it better if I put it up a little bit? I am called the technical disaster! If I get anywhere near technology, it falls down, breaks down or explodes!

Of those 4500 of experience, if we say that each one of you has an average of 10 years of experience with deafblindness, we have 1500 years of experience sitting in this room; isn't that incredible? That's why this type of event is so important.

But, we are here under false pretences, aren't we? Deafblind people do not exist, at least in law, in legislation. They are not recognized, they do not exist. So therefore, you do not exist either. Our job is to make deafblindness recognized and visible because then we make the people, the significant others, in their lives, also visible. That for me is a really important aspect. The title of this conference is "The art of communication". There

are thousands of articles about the art of dialogue and communication, but there is one question that I think is important: is it possible to teach art. Can we teach art? Well, Socrates would have said: no. Kyle Rogers would have said no. But, we can learn it; and how do we learn it. It is exactly by communicating and dialoguing with others. It's not such a long time ago that people with disabilities considered as not contributing to society. It was only a 150 years ago that these people were considered inequitable, they could not learn. I would like to fight that phrase. Disabled people, or people with disabilities, contribute just by being there in society. There is no society which exists in the world where they are not there. But how do they contribute. Because they effect our quality of life. What does that mean? Quality of life of course is having, being and loving and it's access to knowledge. If everybody was perfect, what would we know about visual impairment? What would we know about language development? What would we know about challenging behaviour if everybody was the same? People with disabilities have given us access to knowledge, which effects our quality of life. I would like to do something also known as the disaster for interpreters. Now William Green is doing a role-play.