

OCALI | Podcast – Episode 27
**Grace and Grit: A Conversation with
Judy Heumann, Temple Grandin, and Haben Girma**

TEMPLE GRANDIN: OK, I'm Temple Grandin. I am a professor of Animal Science at Colorado State University. When I was a little kid, I had no speech until age four, severe autistic symptoms, and now I'm a university professor, so the main thing I talk about is autism and how to help the kids that are different to be successful.

JUDY HEUMANN: Hello, everybody. My name is Judy Heumann I'm a white, almost 75-year-old disabled woman. I have brown hair with highlights. I'm wearing red glasses. I'm wearing metal earrings with a brown stone, and I have on a red sweater. I'm in the foyer of our apartment office high in Washington, DC. I'm a disability rights advocate.

I had polio in 1949, and I've had the privilege of working both in the nonprofit world helping to support the development of the Independent Living Movement, the World Institute on Disability. And I've worked in two presidential administrations and been involved in work resulting in a number of major pieces of legislation. I'm in a film called *Crip Camp*, which some of you may have seen either on Netflix or YouTube, and other documentaries.

HABEN GIRMA: Hello, I'm Haben Girma. I'm going to start by saying I'm deafblind. I always tell people this right away because it impacts how I communicate, how I voice, and how I receive what other people are saying, I am getting everything that's being said through braille. I'm using this braille device that I have on my lap, so as people are speaking, their words are being converted to braille. And there's a bit of a delay between when someone speaks and when I respond. So be aware if I don't respond right away, it's because the communication is still coming through. And it's helpful if people try to talk slower rather than faster.

I grew up in a sighted, hearing world. It's still very much a sighted, hearing world. So most of the things around me, including organizations, have been designed for sighted, hearing people, and that's put the burden on disabled people, particularly deafblind people, to design access and create more inclusive spaces. And through repeated experiences of discrimination, I gained the spark to go into advocacy, first, self-advocacy, then advocacy for the greater disability community.

I was the first deafblind person to go to Harvard Law School. I graduated in 2013, and now I work as an advocate for disabled people with an emphasis on making tech accessible for disabled people. Now, I want to do a visual description because it's one way to ensure visual access. I am a Black woman wearing a blue dress, and in this room behind me is a dog bed where the German shepherd seeing-eye dog named Milo. And I want to pause here and ask if, Temple, would you also provide a visual description?

TEMPLE GRANDIN: OK, well, I've got kind of brownish-gray hair. I've got on one of my Western shirts. It's tan with a brown embroidery on it. And I have a red tie on with a very nice slider that one of our retired faculty members became a silversmith and made for me, which I'm very grateful, Gordon Niswender. So that's basically what I look like. I'm in my kitchen studio with a Hubble space poster behind me. And then I've got a really cute little cattle dressed in a business suit that I thought was funny.

[AUDIO LOGO]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

SIMON BUEHRER: Welcome to *Rewind*, the *Inspiring Change* podcast series featuring conversations and connections from OCALICON, the premier autism and disabilities conference. Each year, OCALICON brings together a cross-section of internationally recognized leaders, educators, service providers, advocates, and many others for a multifaceted approach to improving the lives of people with disabilities across the lifespan. *Rewind* is the audio showcase of some of OCALICON's best moments, the speakers, sessions, and stories that make it all happen. I'm Simon Buehrer.

As you've already heard through their individual introductions, OCALI was fortunate to host a conversation between three leaders, legends, and luminaries in a number of important and intersecting areas—disability rights, advocacy, representation, education, employment, and the ongoing work of building stronger, more accessible, more inclusive communities—three women who have profoundly impacted our culture, our society, our world, Temple Grandin, Judy Heumann, Haben Girma.

OCALI's Director, Shawn Henry, frequently references this quote from author Jason Barger. "Conversations are the currency for change," which I think means if we really want to create, promote, or endeavor change, we really need to invest in conversations, deep, rich, meaningful, powerful conversations, the kinds of conversations that pull you in, that, yes, welcome your experience and expertise, while possibly challenging your long-held assumptions, positions, or beliefs, or at least, cause you to shift or expand your view and understanding, the kinds of conversations that can lead to real change.

And that's why we were so thrilled to bring together three people who have led and continue to lead real change. This was the first time that Haben, Temple, and Judy had ever come together. They recount stories and experiences that if you've read their books or seen their videos, you might already be familiar with. And they also offer insights and observations that might be new to you. So let's jump back in and continue with Temple Grandin who recounts a conversation that she had with a speech therapist earlier in her life.

TEMPLE GRANDIN: When I was young, in my 20s, I thought everybody thought in pictures. I didn't even know that verbal thinking existed until I talked to a speech therapist. I said access your memory on church steeples. How did they come into your mind? Well, she just saw this vague pointy thing, and I see specifics. That was my first inkling that people think differently. I

think for verbal people, maybe when they read *Thinking In Pictures*, people that were totally verbal, maybe for the first time understood that there's other people that don't think verbally.

I narrate the pictures in my mind with words. The first step is realizing different thinking exists, and then I'm interested in jobs for different kinds of thinking. Like, for example, my kind of mind is bad at higher math. We're very good at mechanical things, art, animals, photography, then you have more mathematical minds, engineering, computer science, and programming, physics, and chemistry.

And then, of course, you got word thinkers. They're going to be teachers, lawyers, and they think in words. And the different skills can be complementary. I'm discussing that in my new book, *Visual Thinking*. You can have complementary skills. I want to see young people that have got labels like autism, dyslexia get in and get good careers. I worked with a lot of brilliant skilled tradespeople that were either autistic, dyslexic, or ADHD. We actually need these skills.

JUDY HEUMANN: I guess I'm also wondering, Temple, how have you seen this actually being translated in the corporate world enabling people with autism, dyslexia, whatever, to be able to utilize the strengths that you've identified? Are they making substantive changes?

TEMPLE GRANDIN: Well, I think they're making some changes. Actually, my biggest problem with discrimination in the early 70's in the cattle industry was being a woman. That was a much bigger issue for me. The one I learned a long time ago was to sell my work, and when they looked at the work, my drawings, they'd go, oh wow, you did that. Another thing that people say, well, how did you manage to make changes in the cattle industry? You see a visual thinker doesn't think in general top-down like be inclusive or be nice to cattle.

I worked on a much more targeted way of looking at it where you're working on something specific, and I would explain to them how they'd saved money. That sells businesspeople. It wasn't like a generalization. OK, let's look at me. Now we have communication devices, so Haben can have a computer translate my speaking right now into words, and that obviously is a great advance.

But my approach would be let's pick some specific disability-access problem and work on it in a much more specific manner. OK, wheelchair ramps is one example from years ago. Well, they cost nothing to put in new construction. Retrofitting is expensive. OK, that's one example of something that worked. I like to pick out something targeted, and then figure out a way to solve a much more targeted-specific problem, rather than this kind of a big general let's-just-be-inclusive. I think that can actually be more effective.

HABEN GIRMA: So I love the focus on finding ways that our different ways of thinking, benefits, and can lead to innovation. Something I'm wondering, and I don't know if there have been studies, or, Temple, if you've read or done work on this, but so there's a lot of conversation about autistic people thinking visually. Has there been research on thoughts on blind people who are also autistic and what that thinking is like?

TEMPLE GRANDIN: Well, I have read a lot of the research, and the visual cortex takes up a very large piece of real estate in the brain. And if you're blind from birth, that's taken over by touch. And I've read interesting articles about how blind people can echolocate and can actually touch visualize because the visual cortex gets repurposed. And then I read something that I thought was really bad is that a blind person that can echolocate, some teachers discouraged that because they said that that was distracting. Now I'm thinking about here's the sensible thing to do. If you're sitting in a classroom, you don't do it. If you're out in the hall navigating, you do it. But I was not happy when I read that there were some teachers that discourage echolocation in blind people, or and don't even let them know it exists.

HABEN GIRMA: You're right, and that's one of many different examples of how society and schools try to force disabled kids to look and act non-disabled. It happens a lot to autistic kids, to blind kids, to deaf kids. For a lot of history, deaf kids were told not to sign and were told only to speak, even though speaking was really hard for a lot of deaf kids, and signing, visually communicating came more naturally to a lot of deaf kids. So that still happens in a lot of places where disabled kids are pushed to look and act normal, which ends up keeping them from building skills, whether it's echolocation, or braille, or cane travel, that would be super beneficial to them.

TEMPLE GRANDIN: Yeah, let's not get too single-minded about how we do things because how I think is affected by construction. It's all about outcomes. You make projects work, and there's more than one way of doing things. And right now, I want to see everybody get in and get careers they're going to love. That's one of the things that's made life worthwhile for me.

JUDY HEUMANN: This is Judy. I think that one of the major issues relates to points that Haben and Temple have been making, their knowledge, their personal experience, and how it is not unique for people who are blind, deafblind, autistic, whatever their disability may be, to know how we navigate, to know what we need. But there are insufficient numbers of us who are in these professions as professors, as classroom teachers, even as researchers, to be able to legitimize in a way that multiplies what you're saying because there's so many important points that Temple and Haben have been making.

You know, Temple, you're talking about how some people think visually before they connect it to words. That's conceptually something that I think most people don't understand what that means. But being able to demonstrate as you have how this really unlocks people's potential and should result in these children not being in these segregated classes, that's not what yet is happening. And, Haben, you know the work that you're doing, there's a growing amount of work being done on accessibility in the technology area.

However, one has to continue to ask the question why is this not being automatically done by the designers of software as an example? And again, I think it's because the Habens and the Temples of the world who are technical—I'm a user, I'm not technical—but we're not yet at the tables of leadership. And the schools that are training people, the universities that are training people are still not integrating some of these very important points into the work that

undergraduate and graduate students are receiving. So they come into the field unprepared and continue with another generation of disabled people not getting what we need to be getting.

TEMPLE GRANDIN: I think another problem, and I remember discussing this with my blind roommate, Gloria, years and years ago, she said to me if I could just keep the health insurance, I could give up the SSI income. But there's a way these systems are set up, it traps it. You take a lot of employers on, like, OK, for you, Judith, on, I mean, I have a small business. A lot of the people I worked for were small contractors. And if the government would pick up your health insurance where I don't have to worry about expensive health problems—this would be where you're working in Washington, this is the biggest thing you do—Is there's so many people that have a disability where they could give up the payment, but keep the health insurance.

That's the thing that really needs to be changed because Gloria and I were roommates, I mean, that was, gosh, almost 50 years ago. And I'm 75 now, and she was complaining about that years and years and years ago. And this is something that really needs to be changed because I'm seeing with autistic people, they get good at something, maybe graphic design, and they can't earn over a certain amount because they'll lose their health insurance.

HABEN GIRMA: Haben speaking. I want to stress healthcare and access to health insurance is such a huge issue for a lot of disabled people and non-disabled people of underrepresented groups here in the United States. So that's something we should be working to fix for a million reasons. Health is important. And then Judy was making such a great point that many disabled designers, engineers are not being invited to help create accessible tech from websites to autonomous vehicles. And we would have such an amazing world if there were more disabled scientists, engineers.

And part of the problem is that universities are discouraging disabled people from going into the sciences. When I was in college, I really wanted to go into computer science and I was strongly discouraged. And I eventually had to switch majors and ended up going into sociology and anthropology because of the hostility in the STEM field. That's not unique. That's happened to a lot of women of color.

TEMPLE GRANDIN: My problem with the cattle industry in early 70's was being a woman. I got kicked out of places like Scottsdale feed yard. I had bull testicles put on my vehicle, and that was all—it was being a woman. That's a big issue in a lot of these fields. But again, I learned to sell my work. And one of the things that motivated me in the 70's, I wanted to prove to the world I was not stupid. A lot of people thought I was stupid and I wouldn't be able to accomplish anything. And I remember looking at this drawing that I did in 1978, one of the nicest drawings I ever did, and I'm going I couldn't believe that I had drawn that.

JUDY HEUMANN: This is Judy. I just want to underscore other thing that Temple said a couple of times, and that is children that are being placed in segregated classes not learning to the curricula of non-disabled children, particularly children with autism and other forms of learning disabilities. This is a critical problem because as Temple has been saying, the result of that is

people are coming out of school where their strengths have never been identified, and they're considered who they are is considered being weak and not able to contribute.

So I really believe that the new book is something that likely should be really touted in a way that gets—from an intersectional perspective—gets other people, including people who themselves have autism and other disabilities and may or may not have ever been identified to really look at valuable ways that people can make meaningful contributions.

HABEN GIRMA: So this is Haben speaking. And there are a lot of stories and pressures for disabled people to just work harder to overcome the healthcare difficulties, just work harder to get into a specific field, and overcome stereotypes. When you are someone with multiple disabilities, or you're also a person of color, or LGBTQ, or are a part of another underrepresented group, it's not just one form of oppression you're fighting. You are also facing multiple forms of oppression. And when we see intersectionality, we're also seeing it's exponentially more difficult to deal with multiple forms of oppression.

And instead of putting the pressure on disabled people to always overcome all these barriers, let's put the burden on the schools and our governments to remove these barriers. Let's fix the healthcare crisis. Let's make sure all kids have access to quality education, whether they are disabled or non-disabled, make sure kids can be in as inclusive and mainstreamed a classroom as possible so that they benefit from the entire program, and non-disabled peers also get to meet and learn from and befriend peers who are different from themselves.

JUDY HEUMANN: I agree very much with what you're saying, Haben. But I want to get back to a point that you made a few minutes ago, which is how you were discouraged from moving into the STEM field. And I think this is still an ongoing problem where disabled people are not being recruited in elementary school, middle school, and high school to even consider moving into these fields, which are so essential in our country and countries around the world.

I do feel, however, that one of the big issues is we need to be central in these discussions because I feel that most of the people—I don't like to generalize like this, but let someone refute me—most of the people who have responsibility for things like curricula development, instruction for teachers really don't understand many of the points that we are making, and I think that's really an issue for our elected representatives, for our policymakers at federal, state, and local level.

People have got to be forced to open their eyes to be able to understand points that we're making. They can't do what they don't understand. And I think that's a really big issue, that we need to figure out better ways of ensuring that those people in responsible positions, i.e., education, really understand much more clearly why what we are saying is not only critical for the individual person, but is also critical for the health of our country. And the diversity of the country needs to be much more prominent in the way we're moving forward.

HABEN GIRMA: Thank you for saying that, Judy. So in terms of STEM, there are still assumptions that the way to make STEM accessible for blind people is to just have a sighted person do all the

work for them. So instead of finding ways for a blind person to mix chemicals and do experiments in the lab, they just say have a sighted person do it for you.

TEMPLE GRANDIN: Well, that's—

HABEN GIRMA: And that's just one of many, many different examples.

TEMPLE GRANDIN: Well, OK, my kind of thought—

HABEN GIRMA: Temple, I wanted to say something.

TEMPLE GRANDIN: Oh, I'm sorry, sorry, sorry. Sorry I interrupted, but you see, that just triggered a visual thinking thing with me. And I'm really, really sorry I interrupted. I have problems with timing, my breaking into talking. OK, so that's a specific problem, OK, things like how to make lab work accessible, you know? Then, you see my kind of mind tends to work on something specific. OK, what can we do to make certain lab work more accessible?

And it's going to be a technology fix. The STEM people are going to be the ones that will fix that. You see, again, the verbal thinker is very top-down. I'm like, OK, let's make the lab more accessible, the chemistry lab. That's specific. That's the kind of project that I would tend to grab a hold of and figure out a way to try to figure out a way to do that.

HABEN GIRMA: So there are a lot of disabled scientists, blind scientists who have found solutions for making labs accessible. But the people who are designing the curriculum don't know about this and don't bother to reach out to disabled and blind scientists, so this is called ableism—A-B-L-E-I-S-M—these hidden assumptions that people are making when they are planning curriculum, making textbooks, planning sciences assuming that the only way for a blind person to participate is to have a sighted person do all the work, when, in fact, disabled people have been solving this problem already. So ableism is a huge barrier in the science field.

TEMPLE GRANDIN: Well, the other thing is verbal thinkers, maybe I'm over-generalized. Now, some of these things that have already been figured out to help blind people work in labs, this is where I'd be making this big website advertising it with simple, easy-to-use directions on how to make labs accessible, and I would be getting education departments into that website, you see?

That's kind of my approach. It's a different kind of approach. It's actually more of an engineering approach, you see? Because the first thing the educators have to have is to know that these ways to make labs accessible actually exist. So that's my approach is that big website, easy to access showing all the ways to make chemistry labs accessible.

JUDY HEUMANN: This is Judy. We need to make it a requirement that universities when creating labs, when redesigning labs must do them in a universal way. I agree, Temple, that partly what you're discussing is when it hasn't been done correctly, what can they do to correct it? But from a financial and a practical perspective, taking the knowledge that Haben is discussing and applying it in the beginning is the best way to do it.

I also want to say that organizations like the American Association for the Advancement of Science, which was doing very good work in this area for many decades, the financial support for them to do what they were doing, which was working with undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and postdoc students in these areas, has really fallen. And so you can see that this important organization that was really advancing disabled people with all forms of disabilities has no longer been able to make the contribution that they were making previously.

So it's the networks also that people go to—non-disabled people—but there are professional associations. How is the information that we're discussing being normalized into the discussions that they're having, so that what Haben is saying as an example, it's there, the knowledge is there, people know what to do? One of the main objectives I think that, Haben, you're also making is accommodations like a support person are essential if they're needed. But if they're not needed, then there shouldn't be a presumption that you don't get accessibility, you get another person who is not you and is not your brain.

I mean, you want the individual person to be able to be the front-runner in the work that's being done and to rely on a support person if that's essential. But the way Haben is describing it, it's not essential. It's something that people are being forced to use because the system is not making the accommodations that are known about and need to be made. And they shouldn't be called accommodations. We should have of a universal design that needs to be built in.

TEMPLE GRANDIN: OK, I just want to say I am a designer. I design stuff, design stuff for cattle. But in order for me to design in a new technology, I have to know about it, OK? You can work on these things as a much more general thing. But if I'm laying out labs and designing them, this is where somebody needs to show me that website so that I know because I design stuff, and I can't design something in that I don't know about.

So there's kind of two ways to hit this. There's the more top-down you might say the policy. And then I'm thinking there's also the bottom-up approach of all these lab modifications, and modifications of procedures to get that out on a very accessible website, get that into the hands of architects that design labs. There's companies that design labs. And you might if I went into one of those companies, I would probably find that you've got lab designers there that don't even know about these ways to make a chemistry lab accessible. You see, I'm approaching it the other way. I'm approaching it the same way I do cattle handling, lots of how-to instructions. It's a more bottom-up approach. We got to hit it from both ends, my way of doing it, and then your way of doing it.

HABEN GIRMA: Haben speaking. So disabled people are hugely talented in the sciences. Temple's experiences and book have shown a lot of different alternative ways of thinking that benefits the communities around us. And there are other disabled scientists, blind scientists, and people in other fields who are making these alternative solutions. A lot of this knowledge is not known by the people creating our school programs, and it gets missed out.

And so a lot of the current disabled kids are not getting access to STEM or other fields when they could be. So it's my hope that people in curriculum-creating positions engage with disabled

leaders, whether scientists or artists, writers, dancers, theater professionals so that we have more disabled people represented in our textbooks, including disabled people of color and disabled people from other underrepresented groups.

JUDY HEUMANN: This is Judy. I want to continue on something you were saying, Haben, and that is I believe it's the government's responsibility to make sure where good practices are known like you've been discussing around accessibility, that those are the practices that are put forward, that there is a real need for good practices, best practices to be shared.

As Temple is saying, if they don't know about it, they can't apply it. But the Departments of Education, for example, at the federal and state levels, they're involved with every university, and every community college, and every primary, secondary educational systems to be able to share this information. And that doesn't happen frequently enough because we're talking about a relatively low incidence of people who are blind.

So I call this universal because I'm sure, Haben, the work that's being done benefits more than blind people, or blind-deaf people. It benefits everybody, and that's why I think it has to be put forth by entities that have a larger sphere of influence. I think that the value of the three of us speaking is that we're all overachievers, but I believe it's very important because we haven't yet really been discussing people who have developmental and intellectual disabilities, and comments that Temple was making earlier about people with autism who are considered to have developmental disabilities.

But I'm talking now about people with other forms of developmental disabilities, how there are these presumptions that what people cannot do, very much also to Haben's points. We must open our minds because we've been segregated in so many different ways. And like it or not, we've been involved with a system that really has enabled those people who look and sound more typical to non-disabled people to be the ones who are advancing, so people with communication disabilities, communication disabilities plus, plus, plus, or people who think differently and can contribute.

But we need to basically, unlock the key, or find the right key and unlock the door, which is what Temple started out talking about, getting families to learn more about our stories, and hundreds of others' stories. You know, what role did our parents play in making us believe that we could do whatever we wanted to do? I think that's so important, particularly for kids. And all three of us had our disabilities when we were younger.

Then there's a whole world of people who acquired their disabilities when they're over 20 or 30 who have no base of people to work with and are still very much with the mindset that disability is bad, and now they're one of us. And so there are a lot of complexities in disability that quite frankly, we haven't really effectively addressed yet, but I think we're more on the road to do that.

HABEN GIRMA: You said earlier, Judy, that the three of us have in a way, become overachievers. And I'm also aware of that. So when I give talks and am in the public eye, I also try to

acknowledge my privilege. I have a voice that a lot of people can hear and understand. There are a lot of deaf and deafblind people with less traditional voices, and there is so much audism and ableism in our society that those voices, whether they are signing, or voicing with an accent, or using alternative communication systems like computers, those voices are often not respected, and that is deeply problematic.

So I have a privilege of having a voice that people can hear and process, and I try to use that to remind people, hey, this isn't right, we should be hearing more voices. And I also have a body that allows me to easily stand up on a surfboard and have that balance. A lot of deafblind people struggle with balance. I do not. That's also another privilege. So as overachievers, we also have a responsibility to recognize that privilege.

I've had deafblind people come to me very upset saying, hey, this stranger said I've heard of Haben who surfs. You're deafblind. Why don't you surf? And that is the problem of a single disability story where it turns into pressure for other disabled people to conform to the few disabled stories that already exist. And one way we could help dismantle that is by acknowledging the privilege we have.

TEMPLE GRANDIN: I like what Stephen Hawking had to say about disability, the famous scientist and physicist. And he was quoted in *The New York Times* as saying, "Concentrate on those things your disability does not prevent you from doing well." And he could do math in his head really well. He found something he could be good at. I tell that to educators all the time.

HABEN GIRMA: Haben speaking. I want to strongly affirm Judy's emphasis on celebrating disabled stories and helping teachers and students gain access to books by disabled authors, and films, and podcasts, and YouTube channels by disabled authors. When I was in school, I did not know deafblind adults, and I had trouble imagining a future and career for myself. And a lot of the adults around me did not have the answers.

So if I had access to many of the books we have today written by disabled authors, that would have been incredibly powerful, both for me, and my instructors. One thing I did get access to that really helped was my mainstream teachers, and the special ed teachers encouraged me to join disability-related clubs and organizations. I attended mainstream public schools, so most of the time, I was the only visibly disabled student in my class.

And I didn't know all the strategies and techniques for forming connections. I didn't really have other older disabled people to teach me how to make those connections and techniques. But when I went to camps for the blind over the summer, disabled camps, I was able to meet counselors with disabilities, other kids, older kids with disabilities who had the techniques, and strategies, and confidence that they could then share with me. Judy has shared in her book and in *Crip Camp*, the film, how powerful disabled spaces can be in building community and confidence.

When you do that over the summer and then go back in the school year to being the only disabled person in your class, you still have the strategies, and skills, and confidence you built

up at the disabled summer camp. And when you're struggling, you could call up, or email, or text those friends you met, and that can be your community and support as you go through a lot of the struggles in mainstream schools. So encourage and help disabled kids find those camps that can be safe spaces and give them skills and strength to deal with the rest of the year.

TEMPLE GRANDIN: Friends who shared interests. I was bullied in high school, totally bullied, and the only place I had friends was horseback riding, model rockets, and electronics. I talk to parents all the time—the robotics club, maybe the school band, an art club, getting these kids involved in activities where there's friends who shared interests. That saved me. Horses were my life when I was a teenager. If I hadn't had horses, I don't know what would have happened to me. But that's an example of friends through shared interests.

JUDY HEUMANN: From this conversation, I think what people have hopefully gleaned is you have three different people, three different backgrounds, all of us making contributions in our own ways. And I think one of the powerful points that all of us have made is our deep concern that we should be the norm. We should not be the exception.

And we are not the norm because so many people are viewed as not being able to make contributions, and subsequently, are not benefiting from a quality education, which prevents them from really being able typically to move forward. And I hope that what people get out of this is we represent a certain portion of the disability community, but there are so many other people with so many different types of disabilities. And at the end of the day, we need to be making sure we have a broad understanding of people with a broad array of disabilities.

One group that Haben raised were people who use augmentative communication, a very important group. But people who have invisible disabilities, diabetes, depression, intellectual disabilities, all of our group, over 1 billion people in the world are frequently limited in our ability to make contributions because of restrictions that others have placed on us. And that's really what I hope people take away from this. Everybody is a part of those restrictions, and we need to all commit to looking at what we need to be doing ourselves to truly make this a more inclusive world for everyone.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

SIMON BUEHRER: That was disability advocate, writer, and podcast host, Judy Heumann. You might recognize her from the film *Crip Camp*, which if you haven't seen it, you can find it on Netflix and YouTube. Learn more about Judy, including her book *Being Heumann*, and her podcast, the *Heumann Perspective*, at her website judithheumann.com. And we're sad to say that in the midst of producing this podcast episode, Judy passed away on March 4, 2023. She was 75. It was such a thrill and honor to welcome Judy to both OCALICON 2021 and 2022. Her leadership, wisdom, dedication, and passion for disability rights and inclusion, are second to none. We will so miss her. Thank you, Judy.

We also heard from Temple Grandin, Professor of Animal Sciences at Colorado State University, and author of numerous books, including her latest one, *Visual Thinking, The Hidden Gifts of*

People Who Think in Pictures, Patterns, and Abstractions. You might have also seen the 2010 HBO film, *Temple Grandin*, but if not, that's another one you can add to your list. You can visit Temple's official website at templegrandin.com.

And our third guess for the dynamic and energizing conversation was Haben Girma, a human rights lawyer advancing disability justice. Haben was the first deafblind person to graduate from Harvard Law School, and you can check out her self-titled memoir first published in 2019. It's a great read, full of memories and stories and adventures from throughout her young life. And you can continue to follow her journeys and doings on her website habengirma.com.

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You're listening to *Rewind*, our podcast series featuring conversations and connections from OCALICON, the premier autism and disabilities conference. You can learn more about OCALICON at ocalicon.org. Thanks for listening. I'm Simon Buehrer. We'll see you soon.

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