# Transitions Theatre Script: Youth Monologue

1 So, sometimes I feel like there’s lots of pressure about the future. Like success in life. I actually think my transition to college was fairly smooth - successful, so to speak. But still, going to college made me see how the system isn’t set up for all of us.

2 Like, on the first day of school, when I went to the building, I went to the first elevator I saw and realized that I couldn't reach the buttons. The elevator buttons were above my head. It was the first wall that I hit, like, “how am I going to get upstairs? I need to get upstairs to attend the class.” So I had to wait for someone even to walk by, then I had to ask them to push the button for me.

3 Or another thing. At the college, they have this access centre. It's like a place where they deal with accessibility issues in general and you have your own facilitator that you go to. But even with the access centre, I still had to be proactive. Every time I start new classes, I have to make sure that they send over equipment that I need to that specific classroom. I also need to send an accommodation letter to all my professors to let them know that I need support. It was a lot of extra work for me.

4 You would just learn as you go, and you have to adapt. There are things that happen that you just have to be kind of prepared for, like just prepared to know that you're going to be hit with something that makes you uncomfortable. I don’t wanna sugarcoat this, ‘cause sometimes you stand out against your will, right? I’m literally the only person with a visible disability in my residence. So I stand out all the time. People stare at me, because they’re not used to people with disabilities.

5 Well, what independence looks like for people is different, and I think for me, it's... it's about knowing my limits. But also knowing there's always a safety net around me. Like my parents or friends. But I also really want to challenge myself and get to the point where I can trust myself enough to be, like, living independently using my support workers only. So there’s a bit of tension there.

6 And, I have a partner. But I couldn't see myself living with them right now... I, I just don't want my partner to end up being my attendant care person. And I also wonder how I give myself space. I want to be able to get to that point before we decide to live together.

7 So if I imagine the future…

8 ...Well, I don't usually like to look at the future too much. ‘Cause what I was told to picture is a textbook future – like have a job, live independently, get married, blah blah blah. I've always been taught from a young age, that’s the future. I feel like it's like following a textbook, 'cause I’ve been socially conditioned to think that's the best future.

9 Honestly, it can be detrimental, I think. ‘Cause the system tells us to be a cop, to be a teacher, to be a this, a that, right? But most people don’t fit in the box. Especially people with quote unquote disabilities. It’s just not fitting into the world, really, ‘cause the system isn’t built for us at all.

10 If I imagine the future, I hope for a kinder society, where people can be recognized for their humanity, rather than what they can contribute to society. And I don't have to constantly prove myself to people that I can function without being questioned, without being defined by my disability.

**Acknowledgement:**

This script was written by Yukari Seko & Julia Gray based on narrative interviews with eight youth with disabilities (17-22 years old).

# Group Discussion Questions: Youth Script

## Main discussion questions:

1. Which part of the script stood out to you? Which part do you feel is most relevant to your professional or personal life? Why?
2. If you were to support this person, what important perspective does your profession bring to the situation?

1. What do you think is your responsibility as a (role) in supporting this youth?
2. What similarities and differences do you notice?
3. Is there anything that surprised you?
4. Have you learned something new about other professions?

## Additional Questions (if time allows):

1. In the script, the Youth says: “*what independence looks like for people is different, and I think for me, it's... it's about knowing my limits*.”
   1. How can we help young clients explore their “limits” safely and authentically? How do you facilitate even one step towards learning limits?
   2. How do/would you collaborate with young clients and their families to figure out what independence looks like to them? How does knowing their “limits” tie into that?
2. The Youth says that the “*textbook future*” imposed by society could be “*detrimental*.”
   1. What is your response to this comment?
   2. In what ways can we, as current/future healthcare providers, help youth with disabilities envision and pursue alternative futures?