

Video transcript: Eliya's Story [Co-design Group Member]

Eliya: My name is Eliya. I run a badminton club but I was pretty athletic growing up. I come from a pretty athletic family. My dad was a pro surfer and my mum's side, they were all did all kinds of sports.

I like to use sport as a way of like taking care of my mind and body and then also connecting with other people. Sport is something that's very human and it's something that we've been doing since like the beginning of human history.

And when we understand that kind of aspect, we're able to really meet the core needs that I think a lot of people have when they go to sport clubs, which isn't always just sport. Like sometimes it is social, sometimes it's about feeling a sense of autonomy and competence and feeling that relatedness to other people that's just as important to them as a physical aspect.

Sometimes the best thing to do is to ask like in a democratic way, what people would like and what they think would work. I can make decisions like on my own with these kind of things, but the decisions that are usually the best made are ones where I've brought everyone in and asked all their opinions.

I think, I think it's probably putting people with different identities into positions of power and it's making sure they have power over the like social and economic aspect of the culture as well.

It's not being like, you know, this is the club, this is the people who run it and then these are the people we cater to.

It's all encompassing. Like we are all one club. And having a decentralised format I think has really helped me figure out like how to distribute the power equally.

I think shared values within the leaders and the other members and like a really well made like social and cultural atmosphere. I think that's what really makes people come back.

I noticed that the times when I've had social events right after games, people have been more interested in going back and returning and learning more about the club. Because I think when you only focus on the physical side, you're neglecting a big reason that people

won't even want to do sports at all. You know, friendship and yeah, feeling a part of something bigger, that's important.

I'd say it's being able to go there and know that my voice matters and it's making active efforts to make sure new people have just as much of a say as anyone else. So there isn't like a hierarchy unnecessarily and it isn't like an idea that new people are just like a burdened have to train or something.

It's like new people are like really welcomed and we're lucky to have them. It really doesn't matter what skill level they have. It's just about what they can get out of it according to their own goals and needs.

You know, it's not just about, yeah, solving the problem. It's about developing. It's about creating. It's community development, you know, and that's an entire area that I think is really important to think about.

Like, how do you create something that has its own unique culture and social customs that belongs to itself rather than tackle it like it's like it's a job, you know, like it's a green flag.

If a club already has these set up, regardless of whether they have members that have mobility devices or not, because they're thinking about future members. They're thinking about like, future approaches to how to accommodate. And that's a sign of, yeah, good leadership.

Well, the best thing to do is to just ask, honestly. Don't think you know better than them. Don't assume you go up to them. And then you say like, hey, how can I support you? What do you feel like you need?

And if they don't really know, then I think what helps is just providing options or just asking questions.

Like I've been to sports clubs where it hasn't had a lot of structure in a way that it like, you'd think it would be helpful to not have that structure, but instead it just wasn't considering how to support people.

It was just sort of almost like neglectful, you know, it's about having good design, but then also allowing for that to evolve and to change depending on the club and how it changes and evolves too.

Because every time you get new members and every time, you know, the culture shifts, you need to adapt to it.

I found that sometimes I felt like kind of wayward and confused about what to do. And then when I've learned like, oh, this is like a whole area of, like, study.

And there are real solutions, like learning about sustainability within the club and how you can make sure that you're not spending more than what you get. It's like paying attention to holistic aspects of how the club runs.

Yeah, learning about like how to even run, like how to do effective surveys as well, or how to do that in an informal way for people who don't want to take it in a more formal way.

It's a skill about really communicating and interacting with other people, making them feel heard, like active listening.