

EYE OF THE NEEDLE



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Ahhh. The velvet hands of exclusivity.

*The satisfaction of belonging,
being seen and heard.*

You know, that feeling when you go to your neighborhood coffee shop and receive a welcoming "hello [insert your name here]!"

This is what I am aiming for. The feeling that you have arrived and are in the right place.

*And then, there is exclusion,
the other side of an unlucky
penny. Sting. Ache. Silence.*

A wound that, if untreated, festers. The festering takes on characteristics such as demotivation, depression, and finally, rage.

We have all been here before and recall how being left out turns our rational brain into irrational mud. If you are like me, you roll around in the dirt for a while but eventually get back up.

After dusting yourself off, you “pull a Will” from [Good Will Hunting](#) on the naysayer-set

*How do you like them
apples?*

The place that I have experienced the most exclusion is my 26-years in corporate America.

Known for being an effusive soul who considers the full scope of conversation rather than a narrow one, I have sat through countless meetings where I spoke up, only to have my viewpoint quickly dismissed.

I can tolerate challenges; what I refuse to accept is belittling—whispering right in front of me, eye-ball rolling, pen-clicking, and name-calling.

Nope. I will no longer suffer these circumstances. Like my [mic drop](#) in March of this year, I walk away from that which no longer serves me.

The truth is that when we listen to learn rather than to respond, no one feels the need to walk away from an otherwise threadbare conversation.

We are weaving a conversational tapestry.

When we dismiss divergent viewpoints, we are either using the wrong thread or not tying off the end to secure the fibers.

We all know the pain of being sidelined. The memory fades, but the ache remains. Exclusion feels like this, a not-so-good cliff-hanger.

Consider this the next time you are in conversation with anyone.

Recall how you felt when you, too, were not heard, dismissed, or flat-out ignored.

*Like pennies from heaven,
let's channel Will and take
the conversation shot with a
goal toward inclusion.*

Until we meet again, thread the needle with silk, and begin to weave. ❤️

Yours in Solidarity, -akm

December 9, 2020



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