

The Accessible Stall

Ep 45: Resolutions and 2018

E: Do you ever feel down and out about having a disability?

K: Yes

E: Do you ever feel like your life's not worth living because you're a cripple?

K: Yes

E: Do you ever feel like a subhuman being?

K: I think the TV's talking to me!

E: Well, if we're talking to you, do you know what you need?

K: What do I need?

E: You need to trade in your bad attitude!

K: How do I do that?

E: Just call the number on the screen! 1-800 THE ONLY DISABILITY IN LIFE IS A BAD ATTITUDE to trade in your bad attitude for a good one, and you won't be disabled anymore!

K: Hooray!

E: Only four easy payments of \$19.95, shipping and handling fees apply!

(Intro Music)

E: Hi, I'm Emily Ladau

K: And I'm Kyle Khachadurian

E: And you're listening to the first episode of The Accessible Stall in 2018!

K: What are we gonna talk about today, Emily?

E: We're gonna make some resolutions. But, we're gonna make them for ourselves and we're gonna make them for the Disability Community. I mean, we can't really tell you how to live your lives but..

K: We're gonna try

E: We can definitely tell you what we think you should be doing (*laughs*).

K: Which is almost completely similar.

E: But except it's not. Because, take our advice and take our thoughts with a grain of salt as always.

K: So, let's get right down to it. Emily what are your resolutions for 2018?

E: I've thought about this for awhile and I realized that making resolutions is hard and I never stick to them. So, now that you know that I have zero self-accountability, I'm taking a new approach this year.

K: How so?

E: I decided to give myself a word. And I have to do everything in accordance with that word.

K: Okay, and what's the word?

E: intention

K: Mhmm!

E: So, I'm not 100% sure what I mean by that. But I think make choices and decisions intentionally in ways that will be the most ideal to further whatever area I'm trying to grow in.

K: That kinda makes sense

E: And I'm sure that that definition's probably gonna morph a lot. But right now I think living an intentional life, being conscious about the decisions that I make, is a lot better than saying, "Oh I'm gonna lose 10 pounds, or do a marathon" so something like that. I just don't do stuff like that, I can't stick to goals like that, I need to be a little bit broader in my reasoning.

K: Yeah, I mean I don't know. It puts too much pressure on yourself to set a resolution. I've tried, and...some of them I've succeeded but most of them I haven't, so... I don't know, to me resolutions are like, "How am I gonna disappoint myself by the end of the year, starting on the first day of the year?"

(Emily laughs)

E: We're not pessimistic or anything

K: No, no, no, we're not being pessimistic at all but that's just what happens and it's like why do do this to myself?

E: Well, I think we make it easy to set ourselves up for failure when we use this arbitrary marker of a change in year to decide that we're gonna completely overhaul and revamp our lives.

K: And I get why you do it. But I don't have the self-discipline to do half the things that I want to do.

E: I'm sure if I really set my mind to something, I could. But I think that living with intention is better than intending on achieving goals if that makes any sense.

K: I mean, yeah for you it does. I need my goals to be concrete, I don't like nebulous goals. Because then it's very easy to say, "Oh look I did it!" Even if you didn't

E: Well, I think one goal for 2017 that I...

K: '18

E: No, 2017

K: Oh, really?

E: Yeah, I'm saying that I had a goal for 2017 and I hit that goal.

K: What was it?

E: It was to have something published in the *New York Times* Disability Op-Ed section.

K: There you go, that's right!

E: So, did that. Been there done that. So now, the problem with resolutions for me is that I sort of worry about never feeling good enough. And that I always have to do something better and top myself or top somebody else. And that competitiveness with yourself and others is just not healthy. Like, I'm already sitting here thinking, "Oh my gosh, what am I gonna do in 2018 that's s great?"

K: Whatever you want, man!

E: Well yeah, that's the thing, I can't...I can't prescribe that for myself, it's just gonna happen. Whatever happens, happens.

K: Well whatever happens is gonna happen whether or not you resolve to it.

E: Right

K: Like whether or not you declare it.

E: Right, and that's why I want to be intentional rather than resolute (*chuckles*)

K: There you go. Well, I don't know. I'm gonna lose some weight and become better in shape, which is a sentence that doesn't make any sense at all

E: You're losing weight?

K: (*Laughs*) Yeah no I, I have to. Because I can't fit in my pants and I'm too ashamed to go buy new ones.

E: That's an interesting factoid!

K: I'm not actually ashamed, I just was like, "I know how big I am" but it turns out I don't.

E: See, but yeah that's more concrete.

K: Yeah, I'll do it.

E: But is it just because of the pants? Or is like a self-image, self-esteem thing?

K: Nah it's literally because of the pants. Like I literally put on a pair of pants and I was like, "I know my waist size this absolutely 100% fits me" and then I struggled to put them on and then I laughed at myself and I'm like, "Well, that's it!"

(Both laugh)

E: See for me it's not as much like, "I'm gonna lose weight this year!" It's like, "I'm going to be intentional about doing exercise everyday"

K: Oh I do that too. But I'm still sticking to it back to the last episode, we've done it. So like I can't exactly say that I'm still doing it if it's a resolution from last year.

E: Your treadmill thing?

K: Yeah. Although I did set an arbitrary goal for myself in 2018 which is to make sure to walk at least a mile every day. Which should be easy given my commute to and from my job. Which means I should inevitably increase it if it becomes too easy because otherwise, if it's happening anyway it's not...It's like saying, "I'm gonna wake up tomorrow morning God willing!" It's like, you're gonna do that anyway, it's not really a goal.

E: I too, have a goal to walk a mile! *(laughs)*

K: Well, all you need to do is improve your attitude!

E: Because the only disability in life is a bad attitude, so if I just knock it off! *(laughs)*

K: If you just stop being depressed, you might be able to walk tomorrow, you ever think of that?

E: 2018. A whole new me who walks.

K: Mhmm. You heard it here frost! "First" and "folks" at the same time, "frost" It's a new word that I just made

(Emily chuckles)

E: When I try to explain this whole intentional thing, I feel like it sounds like I'm being ridiculous, or that it's a total cop out But I just want it to be more that I'm not setting myself up to fail by creating these concrete goals but rather in the moment, I'm going to decide what my intention is: "Am I going to do something to take care of myself?" My intention is obviously to take care of myself. Or am I going to do something that's not good for myself? My intention is never no to...My intention is never to harm myself. So, that's kind of how I'm looking at it. Kind of taking it in baby steps rather than this big overarching thing that have to do.

K: Well whatever happens I have no doubt that 2018 will be good to the both of us.

E: I hope so. Personally, it was pretty solid, like can't complain. Professionally, pretty solid, can't complain. But on the global whole it was a dumpster fire!

K: Oh, 2017?

E: Mhmm

K: Oh, professionally it was baller for me! Personally, it was mmm...ups and downs. Mostly ups though, net positive. Uh and the global whole, there was 2016, and then 2017 came along and it was like, "Hold my beer!"

E: *(chuckles)* "Hold all my beers!"

K: Yeah. "Watch this!"

E: I prefer 2018 not be like that

K: I mean, there's reasons to be hopeful, and I'm gonna be hopeful for as long as the news lets me.

E: Well, I was just watching the news and it wasn't particularly happy. Not a great way to start off the year. There was tons of negativity as usual, and maybe one little happy thing at the end about a guy whose piano was damaged in a recent hurricane, and Vanessa Carlton saw it and I'm pretty sure she bought him a new piano.

K: That is very wholesome and beautiful.

E: So, may there be many more pianos be purchased by Vanessa Carlton in the future.

K: For you and yours

(Emily laughs)

E: Um, so in order for 2018 not to be a giant dumpster fire, which I don't know how much control anyone has over that beyond personal things. What resolutions do you think that the disability community as a whole, and I realize that we're completely, is it factious, like factions or fractious like fractions, you know what I'm saying?

K: No (chuckles)

E: I was just trying to think of the right word to use. The disability community is divided

K: Fractured?

E: Fractured. But I think that factious, or fractious is a word.

K: I have never heard either of those words. I'm sounding completely uneducated. If someone out there knows that that's a word they're probably calling me an idiot right now.

E: No, I'm probably lying. But the point is that "community" is a tough word in and of itself because we don't really act like a community. So what resolutions can we set for ourselves to do better this year?

K: You're putting the first resolution on me? Oh my God!

E: You bet I am!

K: This is so much pressure. Um, I think if I had to pick one it would have to be to take everything no matter what it is, no matter how it sounds, in the context of the world rather than you know, reading a headline that sounds awful and just stopping at the bottom of the article. Or better still, I mean this is gonna sound like I'm losing faith in the disability community but you know, don't share headlines like they're not exaggerated to get you to read them and instead you know, before you form an opinion read the articles before sharing. That's a good one.

E: I'm aware that this had nothing to do with what you said but I Googled and factious is a word, "relating or inclined to a state of faction" like a factious country". divided, split, schismatic, discordant...

K: Okay, cool

E: Conflicting, argumentative, disagreeing, disputatious

K: I learned something. You're describing this podcast

E: *(laughs)* Describing our relationship, Kyle. Now fractious, Oh my gosh! "Irritable and quarrelsome."

K: Now you're just describing yourself *(chuckles)*

E: *(laughing)* Shut up! So fractious and factious are both actual words, neither them I was using particularly because I knew what they meant but...because they just felt right. No I knew what they meant, but I just... you ever have a moment of self-doubt where you're like, "That's not a word that's coming out of my mouth!"

K: Yes. Most of the time while I'm talking

E: Synonyms of fractious include grumpy, bad-tempered, irascible, irritable, crotchety, grouchy, cantankerous, short-tempered, curmudgeonly,

K: Please tell me how you're not describing yourself right now?

E: I am describing myself! ...

K: There you go, you are very curmudgeonly

E: Peevish, cross, waspish, crabby, crusty, prickly and touchy.

K: You know, they always say "Old curmudgeon" but you know what's a young curmudgeon?

E: Me! *(laughs)*

K: That's true. So what would your resolution for the Disability Community be?

E: I think that we need to try harder to hold up our end of the bargain in social justice conversations. So by that I mean we're very quick to become argumentative about little things and sort of what you were saying, we get very wrapped up in the details and we get caught up in the language. Goodness knows I love language more than anything, and I will fight you to the death probably about words and the importance of their usage. But, I think we need to start learning when to differentiate between having an argument over something that's really not going to change somebody's mind or further or cause in any way. Versus devoting our energy to people who are willing to engage and learn and have conversations. And I realize I'm probably going to get some hate for that because people are either gonna say well on the one hand "It's not our job to educate everybody, or on the other hand, that if someone does something wrong they deserve to be called out on it.

K: If you're not willing to educate someone after you call them out, then you're not calling them out you're just bullying them. It's not your onus, it's not your job to educate anybody but if you really believe that then shut up. Unless you're willing to explain to somebody why what they're saying is wrong, because otherwise you're just a bully.

E: And I think that that probably leads to my second resolution because in using the word "bully" the other thing is that there are members of the Disability Community that are bullies! To everyone! To other people within the Disability Community, to people outside the Disability Community, to their dog, to their iguana, like stop it!

K: I have one too. I have another one that's sort of similar and related to all the ones we just said but, you gotta learn to see the forest from the trees.

E: Oh, yes!

K: Like not just with words, like at all. Like you said, the Disability Community loves to get wrapped up in details. And that's great! I mean truly when it comes to things like Legislative Policy and things like that Healthcare Bill that affects all of us. You know, things like that of course Oh my God, make detailed lists about every letter on the Bill, I mean that is where that is necessary. But you know, if it's not something that requires a microscope don't use one because you'll end up getting lost in the details. You're just not seeing the bigger picture is all I'm saying. Sometimes.

E: I think that everything that we've said can pretty much be combined into one resolution although I don't quite know how to do so artfully and succinctly but I do think that an overarching resolution needs to be that we are smarter about how we focus our energies. Because when we do get lost in the little things and we get so stuck in the weeds, that's when I think we're hindering our progress.

K: Especially because, you know the people that need to hear what we're saying the most, I don't know because I'm in this as much as you are. I mean, I'm not really *in* the community like you are, but I am somebody that is disabled so I get it insofar as what you're supposed to know. But I feel like if you're someone who's able-bodied and completely ignorant to all these facts, right? And you Google something or you hear an argument and your just punched in the face with this information all at once and I feel like from the outside looking in it could be very daunting and very, very unwelcoming. And I really don't know how to fix that but I do know that you can't increase a community if you're hell-bent on almost alienating, I don't know. I really don't know, I agree with everything you just said though.

E: Well I think that social justice in and of itself, and recognizing the humanity and the civil rights of other people does require some grappling. I mean...

K: Oh yeah, of course, you gotta learn things but like at what cost? I'm saying like if I have to read a five hundred page manifesto about your cause to understand your cause then maybe your cause is too esoteric to care about.

E: Well Disability Rights is not esoteric, we could just do a better job of making it more accessible to people

K: Isn't that ironic?

E: But...Well that's always been my saying. If we want the world to be accessible to the Disability Community then we need to make the ideas and concepts surrounding Disability Rights accessible to the world, but if we ain't doing that then we're not driving down a two way street. You know, I don't think that we need to turn ourselves into people who are like, "Come over to our side we have cookies!" But I think that we need to work on finding balance and a middle ground.

K: I agree.

E: So that would be...How many resolutions is that, like 26?

K: Uh, I counted like four? 26, 4, give or take 20...

E: What else does the community need to resolve to do better, or differently? Or maybe stay exactly the same? I don't know...

K: Don't discount members of the community because they disagree with you. I see that *all* the time. I see that too much, I see that way too much! That bothers me to my core and it's not just because I often disagree with the Disability Community. Although I'd be lying if I said my reason for saying that wasn't rooted in that fact. But I do see that *all* the time! Like, somebody has an opposing view on something and it's like a flash mob it's like all of a sudden the entire force of

the community entire focus on Earth is to explain to that guy why what they said was terrible. It's like, don't be that way, just stop it!

(Emily laughs)

K: Just, stuff it! Haven't you got anything better to do?

E: I suppose that I would add on to that don't discount someone from the Disability Community just because they have a different disability than you do. Or...

K: Oh, does that happen?

E: "Too disabled, not disabled enough"

K: Aw, yeah

E: Were you being sarcastic?

K: No, I mean I've never had that, I mean not to me, I've seen a lot of stuff. I've never seen that but I believe you

E: You've never been told that your not disabled enough

K: Oh no, no that I've been told. But I haven't... you said, what what did you say don't discount other people because they have a different disability than you?

E: Yeah, so then I guess I was just not articulating it very well. But basically what I was trying to say, was that every disability experience is different. So let's not alienate some people.

K: (sighs) Yeah, yeah.

E: Even though Kyle is always wrong and not disabled enough

K: And Emily is always right and too disabled

E: It's a strange balance

K: And that's why we're here

E: In the bathroom stall. Ca you think of any other? Because I think that actually kind of covers it.

K: I mean, as much as we like to harken back to our first episode, I would say “pick your battles” but how often have we said that?

E: You know what? That needs to be said so many times. Over and over and over...and over. Pick you're damn battles!

K: Yeah

E: But isn't that exactly what we were saying, in various ways?

K: Uh, yeah. I guess, I guess so. You're right. And also, I would say that we also need to do away with the chips on our shoulder just I guess also related to everything else but like, just because someone doesn't know the intricacies of every aspect of the disability brand of social justice doesn't mean that their a monster, and nor does it mean that when informed they disagree that they become a monster. It just means that they might think of it differently. They might be a monster. If they just don't know and then disagree when they do know, that doesn't automatically make them “the worst!”

E: Although the more that I'm thinking about it, even though I said I couldn't really think of anything else, I realize that we've done a very good job of pointing out things we consider to be flaws that need to be worked on. And we've also done episodes on more positive things especially taking care of yourself. Which like Oh my God, don't let activism or arguing for your cause get in the way of actually being good to yourself. I mean that needs to be a resolution that everyone has.

K: Also, take care of yourself first, because if you're not presenting your best self when you're being an advocate then you're not being the best you can be, so make sure you're the best you.

E: Check yourself before you wreck yourself.

K: I think Dr. Seuss said that, right?

E: That was definitely Dr. Seuss.

K: No not, “Check yourself before you wreck..” not that!

(Emily laughs)

K: I mean, “You're the best you you can be” or whatever that was. “No one is you-er than you.”

E: “You-er than you.”

K: Yeah it's from, *Oh The Places You'll Go*. Which is like awesome

E: It's a great book.

K: It is a great book! Because there's a piece in it where he tells kids that sometimes life won't, no matter how much you want it no matter how hard you try, and that's such a necessary thing and it was just like, cool. Everything else was so positive and then there's like that one little bit, "Listen, not always alright?" And then he goes back to being positive, it's so good. It's way off topic, but still.

E: No that's a good reality check though

K: Yeah. Love that guy

E: Like you're awesome, sometimes things are gonna be terrible.

K: But never forget how awesome you are. It's like, what a freaking positive message!

E: I'm remembering the quote now. I think it's, "Today you are You, that is truer than true. There is no one alive who is Youer than You."

K: There ya go!

E: Is that in *Oh The Places You'll Go?* I think that's...

K: It absolutely is

E: Are you sure? I think it's in a different book.

K: Yes. I..I'll bet ya five dollars

E: It's in a Happy Birthday book. Dr Seuss has a Happy Birthday book? "This is Googling with Kyle and Emily!" ...And now...

K: Oh, and what would you say that we need to do? Like in relation to the Disability Community?

E: Oh, shoot that's a great question! I love that you turned it back on us. Cause here we are being like, "We can't tell you how to live your life." But here are five different ways to live your life right now.

K: I mean, you gotta turn the mirror back on yourself every once in awhile

E: Yeah I love it. Gosh, I think that we need to branch out.

K: I agree.

E: Um, and I also think that when people disagree with us, we need to hear them, we need to truly hear them out. But we also need to dig deep and decide if we are remaining true to ourselves.

K: So, listen carefully but stand your ground.

E: Well in my case I'm a "Sit my ground."

K: Oh well, I mean sit your ground

E: Yeahhhh. I can't sit on the ground.

K (*sighs*) Oh yeah that's right

E: I mean, I can but, eh

K: Well then you can't get back up.

E: So I'd rather be where I can get up. Anyway, (*laughs*) I also do think that we could stand to take our own advice more often.

K: That's exactly what I was gonna say

E: And not be preachy

K: Word for word. I mean, I don't mind being preachy but

E: But being preachy without

K: I mean, you gotta "practice-y what you preachy"

E: Yes. "Practice-y what you preachy?"

K: Mhmm. Which is hard to do honestly. But we're gonna try. We're also gonna try to be better about putting episodes out.

E: That's a good resolution! Should we say regular schedule?

K: I mean we kinda had one. But we should have one again! I don't know I think 2018 is gonna be a good year for us, and I think 2018 is gonna be a good year for the Disability Community. And I think it's gonna be a good year for you and I, separately, respectively. I'm just full of positivity for some reason! I think it's the caffeine in the soda I'm drinking.

E: Yeah Kyle's been drinking caffeine this entire time, at 10:30 at night

K: It's not like I have work tomorrow...oh wait!

E: But you do!

K: Oops. I don't know, Emily you got any resolutions, last minute resolutions? I mean...

E: For us? For other people? In general?

K: I don't know. You got like an hour and a half before January 2nd so...You can't make a resolution on the second day, that doesn't count.

E: Oh! I understand. Um, no I'm not gonna add to my resolutions or make up a resolution. Because that doesn't feel intentional that just feels like I'm forcing myself to do something. And then I would be going against my first resolution, which is not having resolutions, and instead being intentional.

K: So what you're saying is by not having more resolutions, that you're in effect already not twenty-four hours after you declared it and the start of the year, practicing your resolution. That is dedication, the likes of which the world has never seen.

E: Sure (*chuckles*)

K: Also I just saw a very depressing headline.

E: What

K: From CNBC. "When a 1 Million Dollar Nest Egg Isn't Enough" and that's the future we're gonna live in. But you know, to hell with that! 2018 is gonna be good!

E: Who's ready

K: I'm ready

E: I'm ready, I'm ready! And we're now just gonna spend the rest of this podcast episode saying various affirmations (*laughs*).

K: Can they all be from *SpongeBob Squarepants*, or what?

E: If you had to choose one affirmation from SpongeBob what would it be?

K: Ummm. That would be it. I don't know, who knows? I just think that when it comes to everything that we do and everything that we are, we can always do better. That's the thing. I love this episode and I feel like it's great and all good advice but there's never, ever gonna be a time where you and I are gonna sit here and record this podcast and go, "Well, that's it everybody we've done everything!" And I think that's equal parts like, I don't know like upsetting cause your work is never done, and in a perfect world you wouldn't need to do this because there wouldn't be any injustice. But also it's like exciting and exhilarating and daunting. It's all these things and it's like, I don't know. Just gotta bite off more than you can chew, chew it, and post your podcast. That's my inspirational message for 2018.

E: I have another rev... resolution! (*Laughs*) Resolution, revolution whatever! Um, let's keep learning!

K: Always

E: And if we're not good, if we mess up let's do better. This is for us and this is for everyone.

K: This could be a *Mister Rogers* episode

E: Basically. (*Singsong voice*) "It's a beautiful day in the bathroom stall!" (*laughs*) "So won't you be my neighbor?"

K: And there you have it. My favorite part of that show was watching him put on his sweaters (*laughs*)

E: No, I know what you're talking about though!

K: Oh, and the Crayon episode! Oh I love the Crayon episode! I know this is so off topic but we're done anyway so who cares?

(*Emily laughs*)

K: The Crayon episode when it shows it was like about how Crayons get made and it was so colorful and you see all the inks and like everyone who was born between the years like, 1985 and 1996 like knows what I'm talking about

E: I like all the imaginary stuff too.

K: Yes

E: Oh man. Anybody just wanna quit while we're ahead and watch *Mister Rogers*? (*laughs*)

K: Mr. Rogers, like he was just like a bastion of hope for humanity! Love that guy. Of course now that I said that there's bound to be someone who's gonna go, " Well actually he was terrible, here's 17,000 reasons why..." I know. Um, I don't know do you have any final takeaways, Emily?

E: Live each day like it's your last

K: Uh, can't top that! I can't do that because if I knew for sure that tomorrow was my last day, I would do much more risky things than I would do betting that it's not. Like I would probably jump out of a plane. And I would never actually skydive, cause I'm afraid of heights. But if I knew that I was gonna die tomorrow, who gives a sh*t? But yeah, that's still good advice! I don't know, 2017 was cool, 2018 will be cooler.

E: No, 2017 was yes...

K: Personally cool. 2018 will hopefully be personally cooler....Cool. And on that note..

E: Yeahhhh...Alright! 2018, slow clap (*Starts slow clap, laughs*) Oh my God, in case anyone is wondering why I've been weird this whole episode, I was up really late. And I think I ingested some Silly String so for whatever that's worth...

K: Wouldn't it be like terrible if we found out that like ingesting Silly String causes like mild psychosis temporarily? Or like I don't know, some like weird I don't know stuff like that? Anyway goodnight everybody!

E: Thank you!

K: There will be a much cooler episode next time where we talk about things and stuff. I don't wanna say what we're gonna talk about cause in case we change our minds.

E: I'm gonna say on a quick sappy note, Holy Moly thank you for listening to us in 2016 and 2017 and sticking with us in 2018. We promise that not all our episode are not going to be lax and poetic like this but we're glad you're here.

K: We love you guys

E: We do. But not each other, we don't love each other!

K: No