# Twitter Thread by Kim (they/them) ■■

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**Last week, a white guy wanted white solidarity to undermine a minoritized group's access to a safe space. I was in the group he approached.**

**Afterthoughts now collected.**

**It's story time ■!**

**Comment if you'd like with any favorite readings on safe spaces by minoritized writers.**

Some quick terminology!

White solidarity - the tacit agreement that we will protect white privilege and not hold each other accountable for our racism.

This is the definition white sociologist Robin DiAngelo uses.

Safe space.

SAFE SPACES FOR BLACK FOLKS ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE; THEY ARE NECESSARY AND VITAL TO PROTECT THE MENTAL HEALTH AND SUPPORT THE MULTI-FACETED WELL-BEING OF BLACK PEOPLE.

This and more on safe space by Black writer Cameron Glover:

https://t.co/0wYUQQrvbS

White Guy (WG) approached a white-majority community I'm part of. They were upset and distressed. Being one of the group insomniacs, I was, y'know, up.

Upon inquiring I soon learned they were upset because they were white and had been excluded because they were white from a safe space for BIPOC being used to discuss an intra-community situation.

intra- = within, inside of;
inter- = between

(I often confuse these)

BUT I'M NOT BAD WHITE PEOPLE (paraphrased from memory; it's a common white-people-shenanigans theme)

We as white & anti-racist white people have caused & do cause harm.

We get trapped trying to prove we're "good" because intentions.

■ Focus on impact, not intent. ■

Even if we are that white person who has miraculously never caused harm (this is mythical, but let's roll with it) we look like the white people who HAVE harmed non-white people.

It takes a long time of ongoing rock solid anti-racist praxis and plenty of mistakes to truly reduce harm.

By the time we as anti-racist white people get to a place where we're consistently reducing or avoiding harm, we already understand why we may sometimes be excluded.

I struggled then & now to articulate this. I know this is true from lived experience. I've caused harm with my whiteness while: not knowing it, being called in/out & denying it, & while catching myself in the act. ■

Nobody needs any of that in an already stressful situation.

Having made my clumsy attempt to articulate this, WG's next point was that they are in solidarity with the community and therefore deserved solidarity in return from the community, including the non-white subset of that community.

(TBH, I'm still processing how i could've handled this part better. EXPERIENCED advice appreciated!)

Did my best to make the point that being excluded because we are white isn't personal, & that we CAN be in solidarity by respecting boundaries AND it helps build community trust.

By morning, others had chimed in with similar but better articulated responses.

I don't think any of it landed for WG because not long after this conversation, they felt the need to share themself rapping. Were they trying to prove they weren't white? (they're white.) ■

In the following days, they undermined requests from and talked over BIPOC leadership and were eventually removed from the community.

Several of us shared additional anti-racist resources.

I always try to leave room for folks to grow.

We shall see.

About that white solidarity: when a WG approaches your white-majority group with anything that sounds even remotely like a reference to reverse racism, right then is a GREAT time to review what white solidarity is, how it functions to uphold racism, and GIVE NO QUARTER.