

{Warning - long post - tried to keep it brief while still being thoughtful}

I will accept responsibility for any harm I've caused in this conversation, and I appreciate those who are holding me accountable. Accountability is what I'm asking for. I specifically want to apologize for any assumptions I've made - I do not want to contribute to unfounded rumors - so any corrections are appreciated. I will re-state the facts (as I perceive them) and my perspectives so that there is clarity:

- 1) I observed a white person on here using a racial slur.
- 2) I observed on this group (and participated in) an extended conversation related to Sharon Needles where I believe many of us, including myself, caused unnecessary harm through our behavior.
- 3) I want to make clear that I am not okay with slurs or advice targeted at marginalized groups if that advice is given in front of folks who are not in the group being targeted. I don't want to tell folks how to respond to their oppression any more than I want straight folks to tell me how to handle homophobia. If they choose to reclaim a slur, that's their business, and it doesn't justify me using it.
- 4) I was approached privately by an outsider recently - a person of color who experienced the group primarily only around the time of Midsummer and afterward, when the above events took place, and has since given up on the group. My understanding of his perspective is that he interpreted our actions as seeking healing for the predominantly white in-group while avoiding accountability for the way we treat people of color.
- 5) I appreciate him being courageous enough to share his perspective with me, and I shared it here in my words to give people a chance to speak up here and communicate their true intentions and actions regarding this topic, to clear up any misunderstanding.

I think I've spoken more than my fair share, so I will check my ego and take a step back for now (if you need further explanation from me, please contact me privately). I appreciate the steps that Hero mentioned that this community is taking to address these issues. I am also pleased to hear talk of ideas like sensitivity training that don't single one person out. I will do my part to hold people accountable for behavior I observe that I think is harmful, but I will also do my best to be kind and humble in how I do it.