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## We Disagree and That's Okay

Shawn Wilkins · May 30th

Ashly Lorenzana put it best when she siad, "It's okay to disagree with the thoughts or opinions expressed by other people. That doesn't give you the right to deny any sense they might make." A lot of times in the design and development related communities, you see people who disagree with what other people are doing and some become very vocal and crass about it. The majority of these arguments come to surface when they go from disagreement, to hatred, to vitriol. However, we rarely see proper conversation, thought, and any sort of agreement once you've gotten to the point of pure hatred for one's opinion. One person can prefer a flat design to a skeumorphic one and another will spend their entire day arguing against whatever it may be that they're trying to explain or have a civilized conversation about. While it's perfectly fine to hash out ideas to each other and discuss why you think one thought process, idea, design technique or scheme is better than others, it's ridiculous to sit around and forget that discussion can lead to new ideas. Taking someone's idea, saying it's horrible and bypassing any kind of discussion that may come from it is not the way things should work—especially within a community as close as ours.

When looking at the way the communities have grown over the past few years, you see these sorts of egos only existed on a higher level. You expected these types of egos from people who didn't have a Twitter account or simply didn't care about the public opinion. A good majority of people who exist on higher levels in the respective fields (literature, gaming, etc.) don't spend their time and hours talking about their plans for their new album, new movie, or new book. They simply put their all into it and let the ideas they have do the necessary talking. If people disagree, that's okay, because someone will love it and cherish it—and that's their goal. When you protrude into their area of expertise with your opinion on a personal level, that's when they'll decide to talk. However, nowadays, you see people (who will remain nameless) go on these tangents, these abashed rants about how one person is wrong and another is right. It's all because of egos.

Not long ago, one developer of an app was on a podcast talking about his app. His app was new, fresh, had a decent design, and practically revolutionized the way his genre of app was being created. He went on to compare his app to various others and, out of respect for their respective developers, didn't drop any names. However, one developer took this comparison as a public attack even though his name or app was never mentioned. He attacked and berated the developer on Twitter for his opinions and claimed he did it out of malice. Knowing the former developer on a semi-personal level, I knew he'd never attack anyone for any reason. He simply went on to talk about how excited he was for his app and the ideas that lead him to create what he and many others deemed an incredible app. However, when one person's ego decides that the light is no longer being shed directly on them, they take offense. They take offense that you aren't kneeling at their feet and praising them for every decision they have made up until that point.

The point of discussion isn't to try and shove your peers down and seem like you're right 100% of the time. Building these relationships, helping out people, pushing the envelope in new and exciting ways always makes people see your thought process. If you create an innovation and someone doesn't like it, roll with it. The problem comes when people have to put themselves before all others mentally.

You see, the disagreement is fine there. What's not fine is the method of making everyone else *wrong* and establishing yourself as *right*. No matter the situation, you shouldn't be able to hold your light over someone's head and make them feel worse about their opinion because you have more followers on Twitter or because you have this preconceived notion that you're a better person than them. You can disagree with something—that's fine. What's not is letting that disagreement evolve into hatred.

Another fitting example is when someone requests help or wants to state a thought they've had. It will usually result in people giving their opinion or something to the contrary of what they believe and it will simply grow and grow until it reaches that point of boiling anger and frustration. Let discussion happen and don't sideline it for the sake of aggression. They're too prideful to admit their mistakes. They're too caught up in themselves to care about this person who has less followers than them. They simply don't view that person as worth their time or any respect at all. It's sad to see great designers lose respect from fellow designers simply because they're being jerks or, better put, being assholes.

The entire design community is supposed to help on another. It's the pure definition of community. You're supposed to help the little guy up. You're supposed to bounce ideas off of each other. I don't know why people need to walk right passed the idea of thought, progression, and mind-bending discussion for the sake of always being right. Learning is something we all have to do. Regardless of our positions, disagreements will arise, but we have to collectively tell ourselves we're no better than the next guy and his ideas are just as relevant as ours. To push someone aside because you think they're not knowledgeable in the field is flat-out denying that you've grown at all in your area of expertise. Don't let big people knock little people over. Help the little guy up.

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### Shawn Wilkins

As creator of Culture Milk, I bring excellence and creativity to a site that's bred in thought and intelligence. Being able to have full articles that discuss popular topics here on Stemmings, I plan to show what the tech world is like to your average person and what your average person is missing. It's a race with multiple finish lines.



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