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Will You Accept this Twitter Apology?

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Will you accept this Twitter apology?

On October 28 2017, feminist author and speaker Katie Harding tweeted, “I am sorry for all the times I stabbed men, just a little, in my previous workplace. After years of counseling, I stopped stabbing men.” She continued, “My childhood was bad, I barely even stabbed them and some of them are liars. But I am truly sorry & will be spending time with my family.” This was in response to men’s twitter apologies to women who accused them of sexual assault, pointing out how ridiculous some apologies have been. It’s common knowledge that stabbing someone is wrong. And yet, these “apologies” repeatedly showed a lack of claimed responsibility, issue deflecting, victim blaming, and attempt to place blame on unrelated situations. Nothing excuses sexual assault, yet there are an average of 321,500 victims of sexual assault and rape each year in the United States.



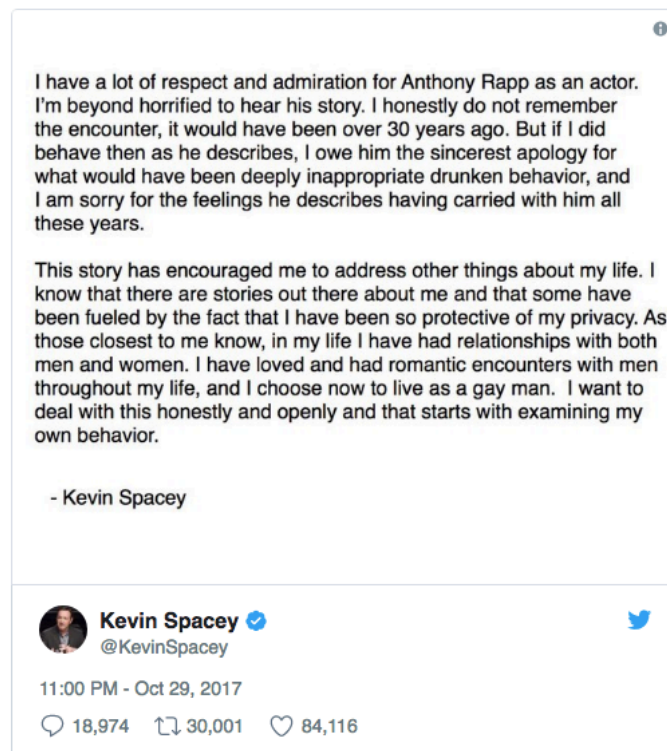
While sexual assault is something that is shushed, embarrassing, and assumed to be “kept to yourself”, the #MeToo movement took sexual assault to the public in social media form. Women flooded Twitter with #MeToo’s, personal stories, and posts that called out the men who harmed them. In the first 24 hours of the initial hashtag, it was found to be tweeted nearly a half million times. The initial ‘Me Too’ was posted by [Alyssa Milano](#), with the caption “Me too. Suggested by a friend: If all the women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote Me Too as a status, we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem.” Me Too has proved to be a way that the millions of

women can bring their experiences forward, myself being one of them. Since Harvey Weinstein's initial controversy in October of 2017, many other big name celebrities have been accused of assault. This is a [complete list](#), as of early January 2018, of the "A- list" men who have been accused of sexual assault.

Twitter provided me with a safe space where two simple words held an entire story. There was no face that I had to watch drop when I shared my story, there were no follow up questions, there was no "I'm sorry this happened to you" because, to me, saying sorry will never be enough.

While Twitter has become a place for women to come forward with personal experiences, it has also become a place for public apologies by high profile men. Twitter has empowered women and created a supportive platform and [community](#), while simultaneously has allowed perpetrators to make unproductive apologies belittling their victims.

Kevin Spacey was one of the first to issue a Twitter apology. In his apology he claimed that he did not remember the events of the accusations, his intoxication was the reason for inappropriate behavior, which he also paired with coming out as gay.



Although the words "I'm sorry" are in the apology, they are sandwiched between "I don't remember doing this because I was too drunk." Being drunk will not excuse this behavior and neither is trying to protect your private life. This is not a sincere apology. The

argument can be made that Twitter doesn't lend itself for a sincere apology, that Twitter is impersonal and public. But there are moral [guidelines](#) that can be included in any apology, as well as an online apology. This statement along with many other celebrity apologies, do not meet the guidelines. In this time of public Twitter accusations and apologies, men need to do better.

Not every survivor wants an apology from their assaulter, but to some the apology allows the healing process to begin. For those unsure of how to apologize, here is a template:

- Explanation of the harm done to the survivor.
- Take responsibility for the harm done.
- Try to understand the harm you caused.
- Be specific and clear in terms of what you are apologizing for.
- Express sincere remorse.
- State what you will do to make amends.
- Don't expect forgiveness; you are owed nothing.

A halfhearted apology can do more harm than good to victims. However, no perfect apology will be able to take back what happened, repair the life of a victim, or result in immediate forgiveness. I hope that one-day we can get to a place where women are not assaulted. In the mean time, men don't say you don't remember the events. We can never forget them. Don't victim blame. We are risking careers and reputations to speak out. Don't blame your sexuality or sex drive.

Women will stop stabbing men, when men will stop assaulting women.

Women will stop saying Me Too, when men treat us as equals and not objects.