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[START OF TRANSCRIPT]

Emily: Hi, I'm Kyle Khachadurian.

Kyle: And I'm Emily Ladau.

Emily: And you're listening to another episode of The Accessible Stall.

Kyle: Where have been Emily?

Emily: Well, kind of a funny story- except not at all- I was traveling for work and then I got really, really sick and Kyle just decided to up and go on vacation for no reason, for ten days. So I'm going to blame our hiatus on Kyle.

Kyle: And I'm going to blame it on Emily.

Emily: Well, I see we're at an impasse here.

Kyle: What else is new? What are we going to talk about?

Emily: We got a message from a listener.

Kyle: What?

Emily: Yeah, I mean that actually that happens more than you would think, we get some pretty cool messages from people, but this time the message actually contained a suggestion for an episode topic that we were intrigued by, so we want to talk about it.

Kyle: Yeah.

Emily: Should I read the message?

Kyle: Yes, you should.

Emily: Okay. Well I'm not going to read the whole thing in the interest of **[0:01:03 inaudible]**- just kidding this is not a doctor's office- we're out of practice folks. The message said, it would be nice to hear a frank conversation about getting a job outside the disability field as someone with a disability. I think that's worth talking about because I am that cliché disabled person who has a job within the field of disability.

Kyle: And I am not.

Emily: Although you have been.

Kyle: I have been and I'm lucky to say I have escaped.

Emily: So I don't know if we've ever actually talked about my original career plans on the Podcast, but I never thought that disability was going to be my life's work. I don't mean like some kind of wild mission here, I just mean I didn't think that it was going to inform what I did. I thought that I was going to be a high school English teacher, I thought that I would- I guess be an advocate for people with disabilities by showing them that I could do anything I wanted- not a job that had anything to do with disability and here I am.

Kyle: Yeah, how did you end up there anyway?

Emily: I had this quarter life crisis, I don't know what you want to call that- I mean when you're like 20...

Kyle: A quarter life crisis- yeah that happens enough.

Emily: I'm going to live to a hundred. That's not how math works, because 20 times four is not a hundred, it's 80.

Kyle: I know, but it is how it works if you count to- what are you talking about? It is how math works.

Emily: No, I had....

Kyle: You just optimistically assume you're going to live to a hundred that wasn't math that was your optimism on how long your life is going to be.

Emily: No, I was saying at 20 I had a quarter life crisis.

Kyle: Oh, maybe I was optimistic about how long your life is going to be.

Emily: So on that note see you at 80. But I realize that I didn't want to teach, I felt like my skills would be better used as an advocate. So I got it in my head that I was going to become a professional advocate and I had no idea what that means. Like 'Professional Advocate trademark,' and I dropped the teaching program that I was in, tried to pull myself out of the box that I had sort of gotten myself trapped inside and completely rerouted my career path. But I had no idea what that meant.

Kyle: And push yourself and then you find a new box.

Emily: Pretty much yeah, that's exactly what I did. I love what I do, but sometimes I feel like world's biggest stereotype.

Kyle: Yeah, but at least you do stuff though, like every disabled person is the world's biggest stereotype that way.

Emily: What do you mean?

Kyle: The disability community is filled with people just like you.

Emily: Yeah, and they all do something with it too.

Kyle: Do they?

Emily: No.

Kyle: Right, it's their hobby not their day job that's what I'm saying.

Emily: But it's also my hobby, and it's also the thing that I eat, sleep and breathe.

Kyle: I was trying to help you and you just shot yourself in the foot so, sure.

Emily: No because I'm aware. I know you were trying to help me out- make me sound like not-like I've completely lost it, but the reality is that I put myself into a box and I think that maybe why getting a job was actually not super difficult for me.

Kyle: Why? Because you were born this way- what does that mean?

Emily: Yeah, like the whole disability.....

Kyle: No.

Emily:yeah, the whole disability thing. I think for me it's an asset, it's a good thing to have disability plastered all over my resume. If I use that to try to get a job outside this disability box that would not necessarily be an asset to every employer.

Kyle: Doesn't that feel dirty to you?

Emily: What?

Kyle: Getting a job based on an immutable characteristic that you had zero control over, not due to any of your skills. I mean of course you have skills and of course you apply them to your job, but to get the job on the basis of the fact that you sit in a wheelchair, doesn't that make you feel a little....

Emily: I don't actually think that's what happened to me.

Kyle: Well you made it sound like that.

Emily: Right, no you're right. I'm saying that disability was an advantage for me and I'm lucky in that way, because a lot of times disability is a disadvantage when you're trying to find a job.

Kyle: Would you say that you maybe work in the field of disability because it's probably the only field where that is an advantage and not a disadvantage?

Emily: Yeah, I mean there are these programs that are being started now, like disability hiring initiatives and there's a federal disability hiring initiative, so- I understand that it's an effort to be more inclusive, so I would say if I was looking for jobs in those particular areas- like in the tech industry, they make an effort to hire people with disabilities, although more people who are autistic rather than physical disabilities so much. But the point being that it was easier for me to get my job in the sense that disability was like street cred almost.

Kyle: Well yeah, but I mean I don't like that- it doesn't- it make me anymore valuable as a person.

Emily: Well, I'm not saying it's a good or a bad thing, it's kind of a fact.

Kyle: I don't even like to use it, I hate that so much. I can't even express to you how much I freaking hate that.

Emily: But at the same time it's a disadvantage in so many other ways that is it really such a bad thing if it's an advantage in this point [0:06:43 inaudible]?

Kyle: Yes.

Emily: Why?

Kyle: Because it shouldn't be a disadvantage at all. I understand....

Emily: Of course.

Kyle:because it is it should be exploited in the one field that it would be advantageous to use, unless you're not the best person.

Emily: Well then you're just a bad employer if you're really just hiring because you're picking the disabled person over the person with the right skills.

Kyle: Yes.

Emily: But that's not the person's fault.

Kyle: No it's not. I just don't- nothing I'm born with makes me better or worse for a job, period. Otherwise what's the point of getting educated and learning how to do stuff?

Emily: Yeah, in a way it feels like a disability version of affirmative action a little bit, and I'm probably going to get- I'm going to get so much crap for saying that.

Kyle: It's all right, no one's going to dislike you.

Emily: No, but the thing is I don't have any problems with affirmative action programs, but I think the thing about affirmative action programs is that they also look at a person's skills and qualifications within that minority pool. So that's the thing that I think about a lot, is- and in my case I really do think that I was hired based on skills and qualifications.

Kyle: I do too, but I happen to know a few disabled people who weren't, they learnt how to do their job, but I wouldn't want a job- I really wouldn't- if I found out that my company hired me because I have a disability- and I know they didn't, because as it turns out they had one of us in the office already- if I found that out I would quit, I really would I would not want to work there.

Emily: Yeah, I definitely don't want to be the token disabled person either.

Kyle: It's just- I don't know it bothered me to my core man. Having said that I've totally done what you're saying, but I don't like to do it, I don't.

Emily: Yeah, you hypocrite.

Kyle: I'm not a hypocrite, because I don't like it. I don't. It's like it shouldn't have to be street cred. It shouldn't- "Oh, you're an organization that represents the disability population, but you have no disabled people on staff therefore if you don't hire me, I'm going to bitch on Twitter and make you embarrassed in public." What kind of bullshit is that? That's what we do.

Emily: See, I don't like stuff like that.

Kyle: But, that's what we do.

Emily: That being said I don't think there's anything wrong with trying to put disabled people in positions that are connected to disability if it's for the right reasons.

Kyle: If it's for the right reasons, and the wrong reason is because they have that disability. Oh, I hate it.

Emily: No, I agree that just because you're disabled is the wrong reason to do it. I also think that I would like to see more disabled people doing the work and less non disabled people doing it for us. So that being said though, if you are a non-disabled person and you're good at what you do and you genuinely want to support the disability community, you deserve a job supporting the disability community. It doesn't matter if you don't have a disability, it really doesn't to me.

Kyle: It doesn't to me either, but...

Emily: Unless you took the job away from someone who was equally or more qualified who had a disability.

Kyle: Yeah, but I mean how would you know that as the employee? The employer would know that, but you wouldn't know it.

Emily: You wouldn't know that, but the employer would have to be objective.

Kyle: Yeah, but I mean if they're a good employer then- but you know.....

Emily: One went home.

Kyle: Yeah, one would- exactly that's....

Emily: Okay, so what about you? Because you have done work not connected to disability and work connected to disability.

Kyle: Sort of, I mean yes, but not really- not in the same way you have at all, not even close. I would sooner say that I work in the digital marketing communications field and that I used to work for an organization- two of them- that happen to represent CP, but that's it. I do the same job now.

Emily: But would you say that would happenstance or would you say that your disability led to those opportunities which were then resume builders to get you to where you are now?

Kyle: That's a hard one, because the answer is sort of both. It was happenstance, but the factors by which it was happenstance wouldn't have happened had I not have my....

Emily: Oh my God that was so many 'h' words. What did you just say?

Kyle: So the way that I got started was somebody I know in a community that I'm part of happened to think of me as a candidate potentially for an internship. I wouldn't have met this person had I not being born with- so sort of. But my CP was irrelevant in the two interviews I had with them and it wasn't brought up until after I got there so they didn't know. The second time however my full-time job that I landed after the internship, I totally used it as a bargaining chip in the interview, because I knew they didn't have any disabled people on staff. I didn't like that I had to do that, but it worked.

Emily: See, I never had to use my disability as a bargaining chip, it's just always been a given.

Kyle: Well, it's not exactly an ace in the hole when you're rolling in a wheelchair Emily.

Emily: Unless it's a job connected to disability. It has been for me.

Kyle: You're right. It has been for me too. I just don't like it. I don't like that I don't.

Emily: Oh your wheelchair has been an ace in the hole Kyle?

Kyle: No my disability has [0:11:54 inaudible].

Emily: He's salty tonight.

Kyle: It makes me angry, it does. It does, I'm sorry, but it does.

Emily: So has your disability informed any of the work that you're doing with the organization that you currently work for now?

Kyle: No, not one bit and it hardly has in my previous jobs either.

Emily: So not even the insight that you have into some particular issue?

Kyle: It was supposed to be a part of my last job, but it was not very- it wasn't taken very seriously. But no, not my current job, not one bit. Not at all. Except maybe twice a month I'll make an edit to the website and I will do it a little bit differently than what my boss says- it will achieve the same results, but he looks it over he'll ask me why I did it this way and I'll say, oh it's for web accessibility, and he'll be like okay, that's about it.

Emily: So that I wouldn't say has to do with your disability in particular. But just a greater consciousness of the need for accessibility.

Kyle: Which I wouldn't have if I wasn't born this way, and I don't think you would either.

Emily: Oh no, not at all I....

Kyle: No, I wasn't calling you out. I just mean- I'm sure I would be an empathetic person, but in terms of like web accessibility- I guarantee I wouldn't know that 100% not a clue. I barely know it now.

Emily: Although there are plenty of people without disabilities who are very aware of what the accessibility and dedicate their whole lives to it.

Kyle: Well that's my point I'm saying I don't think being disabled makes you- I don't think it enables you to be conscious, I think it just enables you to have a greater likelihood of being conscious. But does that answer our viewer's question?

Emily: I don't know if it was so much a question, it's sort of a topic.

Kyle: Yeah, but I mean- I don't know because we're 16 minutes into this and we've already discussed what a disability does to you when you're looking for a job, and that unless you're working in disability it's a hindrance. That's totally wrong, it shouldn't be that way, it is that way. I mean I know were preaching to the choir, but it's just how it is. But unless you're not the right person, but I mean you would never know that.

Emily: Unless you apply for something and you're totally aware that it's a reach for you, but you're hoping that on the basis of your disability you'll get it.

Kyle: I wouldn't want- that makes me mad. That makes me so upset. The fact that there is a group of jobs that the federal government has to set aside for example- specifically for disabled people, because other employers are too lazy to hire us, or too fearful to hire us makes me angry. Such a thing should not exist.

Emily: I don't think that's their reasoning.

Kyle: What is?

Emily: They're trying to be more inclusive.

Kyle: You don't become more inclusive by forcing people into jobs. It's not inclusion. Forced inclusion is false.

Emily: While I think the law had admirable intent, I also agree....

Kyle: Oh, yeah it has great intent, but what like, "Oh we have to hire five disabled people or else..." What?

Emily: I think it's a 7% rule for the federal hiring initiative. There's also targeted with disabilities.

Kyle: What do you mean?

Emily: Like specific types of disabilities that they also seek to target when it comes to who they're hiring. I see it as a good thing because disabled people are one of the largest unemployed groups in the country.

Kyle: I think we are the largest unemployed in the- we'll verify- I think we are yeah.

Emily: In that case I don't care how you get a job, because I want you to be able to put food on your table.

Kyle: I don't disagree with the fact that it's there. I disagree with the fact that it has to exist. There's a difference. It would bother me very deeply to know that I got somewhere not by my skills, not by my education, not by any sort of qualifying thing for the job, but by some mutable characteristics and before you say, well those jobs are set forth for people with disability. So everyone applying has to have one and then you were the best at your qualifications and your education, fine. But the fact that we had to have our own net- if that were school, if that were entrances to a place, if that were anything but hiring processes, we would be up in arms, we'd be like, no the ends don't justify the means, this is separate not equal. But in the case of employment we shut up, because we were just lucky to have jobs. I don't blame us for it, but can you not see it's similar?

Emily: Okay, so what are you mad at? Because you're clearly mad. Are you mad at the premise that there even have to be these inclusion initiatives?

Kyle: Yes. Nobody should get anywhere because of something they were born with.

Emily: I would hardly call that getting somewhere, when you've already got disadvantages...

Kyle: No.

Emily: ...against you.

Kyle: You shouldn't have to be propped up because the world pushes you down.

Emily: I agree with that but that's how you have to frame it. Because if you say that you shouldn't get anywhere because of something. I would argue disabled people aren't exactly getting places because of their disability in a serious way.

Kyle: Anyone anywhere should have the same starting position on earth as anyone else. We don't.

Emily: Yeah, equity.

Kyle: Yeah, we don't.

Emily: Exactly.

Kyle: There are plenty of people who also don't, and the criteria for the people that do change every week.

Emily: You realize that it sounds like what you're mad at is that they're trying to give disabled people an advantage to offset the disadvantage?

Kyle: Yes. But it's not- I'm not....

Emily: Even though I know where you're coming from, I also hear what you're saying and I think there are multiple ways to interpret it.

Kyle: Yeah, but I don't care. You know what I'm saying, I really don't. If you think that you having a disability means that you should have a job, you are wrong. If you think that having a disability entitles you to anything, you're wrong. It's wrong. Being born a certain way doesn't entitle you to anything, period.

Emily: Then that needs to be applicable to everyone and I know you mean that.

Kyle: I do.

Emily: Okay, but the way that you're coming across makes it sound like you're ignoring the fact that there are plenty of people who are not disabled, who also think that they're entitled to things.

Kyle: They're wrong too. The world doesn't owe you anything ever period. I don't understand why this is such a hard concept. Yes, disabled people are disadvantaged in every way, everywhere- probably in more ways than any other one particular group- knock on wood- I'm sure someone's going to yell at me for that. But....

Emily: Oh you just played some repression Olympics right there.

Kyle: But I- we're so low in the totem pole people forget we exist.

Emily: Right, so that's why we need these particular hiring initiatives and things like that.

Kyle: I'm not saying we don't need them, I'm saying I'm angry that we have to have them.

Emily: I agree with you, 100% agree, angry that we have to have them.

Kyle: It's just bull [0:18:45 inaudible]. And it's not like it's bull [0:18:48 inaudible] in the sense that I'm saying, well if the world was just a better place- no, no, no if employers weren't so afraid to hire us, if they weren't afraid to spend the extra like \$150 or \$200 or whatever to accommodate us. If they weren't afraid of us because they see a wheelchair and think rolling lawsuit, maybe we wouldn't have to have such a thing.

Emily: Yeah, and for that matter I think this sort of goes towards debunking myths. A lot of people think that accommodations or hiring someone with a disability is going to cost millions in either lawsuits or modifications to a building or something and I just wish that people would realize that A) there would be no reason for a lawsuit if you didn't give us one, and B) more to the point accommodations are not exactly that expensive.

Kyle: They're relatively cheap.

Emily: Yeah, and so part of being a business is making sure that your employees can work to their full capacity. But I just think that employers are so afraid of getting their asses sued and of spending a lot of money, but neither of those things are actually the case if you just treat disabled people like humans.

Kyle: That's the same thing, that's the double edge sword of the ADA. It is, and that's one of our upcoming episodes by the way, FYI. That will be awhile though because we want to do it right. And that's not a bad thing- I mean it is a bad thing- but it's like it's a good bad thing in the fact that if it weren't there it would be worst. But if you're somebody who thinks that accommodations are like bull [0:20:20 inaudible] just imagine this, you hired Joe Schmoe, Joe Schmoe is a salesman right, Joe Schmoe needs a phone and a computer with internet access and on his first day you give him a milk crate in a cardboard box. Joe Schmoe cannot do his job, but all the other salesman in his wing they all have telephones and computers. Then when Joe Schmoe goes to his boss and says, "Hey boss man why didn't you give me my telephone and my computer?" Boss man says, "Well I didn't want to spend the money." That's how ridiculous that sounds right. You wouldn't....

Emily: Yeah, exactly.

Kyle: ...you're unprepared. If you don't accommodate for disabled employees- assuming that you've hired them, because obviously if you don't hire them then you don't have to accommodate what you don't have. But once you hire them, if you're not prepared by the time they start they can't do their job and it's not their fault.

Emily: I would say- the other thing too is being willing to work with the person, to figure out what will help them thrive in the given situation. So even if you don't have what they need on day number one, be willing to work with them.

Kyle: Sure yeah, obviously you wouldn't know exactly what you need. My employer didn't know what I needed on day one, my employer didn't know about my disability in the interview either, but that's a weird thing isn't it? I'm sorry I interrupted you, you want to finish because I have a whole thought process.

Emily: I don't. No I don't think you did.

Kyle: So, I don't need much, but I do have a specific one or two things and my employer is- it was just, yeah whatever we like you, here it is. If you're somebody with a more obvious disability like a wheelchair right, you can't ask about it in the interview because it's illegal and that's a good thing but how do you broach the subject? You can't wait till they're hired either- I mean I guess you could, but wouldn't you want to be as prepared as you can be before they start? It's a weird area where it's like...

Emily: You can't be like, do you have a disability? What is it? I'm going to need to see your medical diagnosis before you...

Kyle: No, of course not. But I mean can you say well, is there anything we can do for you to accommodate you?

Emily: Yeah, I really think that's an okay question.

Kyle: I do too, buy is it okay to ask? I think it is.

Emily: Legally, I'm pretty sure it is. If you're not a crappy employer I feel like you should ask that of all your incoming employees anyway. But the onus is also on disabled people a little bit, we can't just assume without disclosing or self-identifying that the employer is suddenly going to read our mind and know exactly what we need.

Kyle: You're absolutely right. In fact I would say after getting hired the onus is completely on you, because how are they supposed to know what you need?

Emily: Another point like regardless of whether you work in a disability field or not, as someone who's disabled, I still have had experiences with people who just don't know how to work with people with disabilities.

Kyle: I mean that's just plain old ignorance right, that's what we try to fight here every day on The Accessible Stall.

Emily: But yeah- so that's the thing it doesn't matter where you're trying to find a job, ignorance is everywhere. Do I think that whether you like it or not disability offers you some kind of advantage in this one particular field? I would say yes, but at the same time that's not going to suddenly change ineptitude within people who don't know how to work with the disability community, it's just not. I get lucky- I would say the one thing that is a benefit for me- I'm not talking perks here, but an actual benefit- is working with people who get disability in the way that I'm used to communicating about it, that's nice.

Kyle: I agree. That is very nice.

Emily: I've also been in situations conversely where I worked for organizations- and I'm lucky this is not the case right now, but I did work for an organization at one point where their views were just not at all aligned with how I thought about disability. I kept trying to push them to change their thinking- not to only do it my way, but to stop being so rigid in their way and recognize that there's more than one way of talking about disability and thinking about disability. That was frustrating. There's not always- there aren't always perks to being a disabled person working in some kind of disability field.

Kyle: I would say that- I mean for me it was hard.

Emily: Can you talk more about that? I'm curious.

Kyle: I just- I mean there's not really much to actually discuss, but it was more- the two instances that I had working in the disability world were for organizations that happen to do with CP and- they're both good, they have their flaws but they're both overall good. On a whole there's more I agree with both of them than disagree with, but when you're an employee and you have the thing that they're fighting against or helping for whatever- it's very hard or it was very hard for me not to let my personal feelings on any given matter related to CP get in the way of the way the organization wanted to do their work, and that's my problem not theirs. It was one of the reasons why I currently do very similar work for an organization that has zero at all to do with disability. In fact that I did mention in the interview with this current company. Because they noticed, they were like, hey why do you want to- we noticed you do a lot of work with Cerebral Palsy, what attracted you to us? I was like, "Ah well the 2016 election was a complete **[0:26:03 inaudible]** show...."

Emily: I'm sure you said it just like that in the interview.

Kyle: Well, no I- no I was like- my organization that I work for now is related to government **[0:26:14 inaudible]** so I wasn't really- the whole thing leading up to what happened just didn't sit well with me and I don't think that there's anything wrong with saying that here. Also I'm so used to working with disability that I'm quite frankly...

Emily: What do you mean the whole thing leading up to it? What are you talking about?

Kyle: The election, my God Emily.

Emily: Oh, I thought you were talking about leading up to your interview, I don't know- I wasn't following that train of thought.

Kyle: That's all right, it's fine, I just meant- look what happened, look what we got, look what came out of it that kind of thing. I did my homework like the organization that I work for was kind of like, everyone's stupid. So it was okay to say that. It's not partisan if you're saying everyone is dumb, and so I- and they asked about disability and I was like, look I have enough disability in my life. I never said I had one- I mean they probably figured it out, it's not exactly- they're not stupid, but...

Emily: It's not a state secret.

Kyle: It's not. It's not, but you don't ask about it interviews and I wouldn't say those words in the interview anyway. But I told them, look I have too much disability in my life, it's- the Podcast was- this was on there, so they saw that as well as my employment and so I was like, look it is currently in every facet of my life and I'd like to have a place where it doesn't exist and they appreciated that answer. That I did say almost exactly like that. They thought that- they got a kick out of it, like they thought it was funny, but I wasn't being funny. I was like I just need an area of my life where I can be productive and not rely on this, if only to tell myself that I can do this job without it having to do with disability. That was a personal thing too, I wanted to know that I could do this work in a way that had nothing to do with how I've done it previously, and that goes back to your original point that you brought up right when we started, are we one trick ponies? Turns out no, I'm not. I doubt you are, sincerely I don't think you are, I think you're very talented.

Emily: I appreciate that and I think- I have not had good experiences when I've tried to go out of the disability box- not always, but in certain cases. I would say actually first a good experience would be my job in college, although again all somehow connected to disability, because I worked as a writing tutor, which I eventually would have made my way to that job anyway, because it was the right fit for me. The reason that I got the job was because there was a freshman essay contest and it was about a book that we had to read over the summer and the author was deaf. So of course I was like, I'm going to talk about disability and when I entered the essay contest, I ended up winning and the director of the writing center was there and she offered me the job. So disability was tangentially- very tangentially related to my getting this particular job. Then the rest of the job had nothing to do with disability, so....

Kyle: What was my job in college? Oh yeah...

Emily: You called the people for the...

Kyle: Yeah, I was the guy that you hate when you get a phone call from the college, sorry. You they haven't called me yet?

Emily: That's so funny.

Kyle: I imagine that the database they keep excludes people who have done that.

Emily: Or not and then one day they're going to call you and you're going to be like, I was you. I hate you.

Kyle: You know what, I've always said that if they call me and followed the script to the letter- because I still have it memorize- that I would happily give \$25. Because they won't- that's the thing they won't. They'll say something wrong. But that- the reason I'm bring that up is because play to your **[0:29:53 strength]**, if your disability hinders you from doing something that is something you have to do for another job- like walk, find a job where you can sit at a desk for your entire shift, which I did.

Emily: Oh, but then I also wanted to mention, so another experience where I suppose disability was tangentially related, but the job was not related to my disability per say, was I tried to be a teaching assistant at a school for kids with developmental disabilities and I was like this is great, that's definitely a population that I would be excited to work with, and when I disclosed that I was a wheelchair user I was suddenly the wrong fit for the job.

Kyle: I applied for a teaching English as a second language job in Italy and one of the fields there was, do you have any medical...

Emily: You did what now?

Kyle: Yeah.

Emily: When was this?

Kyle: A couple years ago, maybe the year we met.

Emily: Interesting.

Kyle: Yeah, and they asked me if I had any medical needs and I put down CP- and I put down CP because I was told by a friend of mine who had done that exact thing that you don't walk, you ride bikes in that section of the world and I just- that's one of the five things that CP enable- I can't do it. I tried to...

Emily: They asked you that?

Kyle: Yeah, they can because they don't have an ADA, I mean they have an ADA, but they just- they don't have an ADA that's like, oh you can't ask these questions in interviews, it's against the- no it's not America, of course they can do it. They don't have to follow our laws. I didn't have to answer either, it was a required thing, but I answered because I

was like man if they're going to make me ride bikes they should know that, that's useless. Even though I had the exact same qualifications as my dear friend and was much more handsome and had a much better voice- if you're listening to this, this is a joke- I was not a good fit, and they asked my friend back the same year and he didn't take it, because he had something else to deal with. I don't think- well I like to tell myself that it had nothing to do with CP, but it probably did. It probably did, because they were like....

Emily: That's one of those things where I feel like you were a little bit asking for it though if it was optional.

Kyle: It was optional to fill it out, but it wasn't optional because if they were going to make me do that every day- what was I going to do show up there and be like, "Oh yeah I can't do that. Well I'll see you. Because you can't get to the job," you know what I mean? Yeah you're right and it was probably for the best to be honest, because if they did hire me and there was no alternative I would literally be stuck in a foreign country where no one spoke any English on purpose without any way to get anywhere, except from walking some weird amount of miles from where I would be staying to my work. Blessing in disguise I suppose.

Emily: I mean, I'm realistic in the jobs that I apply for, but realistic for myself. If you have a disability and you think that you can do a particular job that might seem out of reach to me, then by all means do it.

Kyle: Right, I mean there- I mean in terms of the job that I was talking about I can teach English, nothing about my CP prevents me from doing that, but I probably couldn't get to the job, so it sort of indirectly did.

Emily: I suppose that being a teaching assistant might not have been the best thing for me because of the reality of having to run around and keep up with little kids and lift children potentially and things like that. In retrospect I understand, but I also think that they could have given me a shot.

Kyle: They could have. They should have in my opinion- in my opinion of your retelling of the story with no background information whatsoever, but whatever we did all right.

Emily: We figured it out. But I still cannot help sometimes but think that I'm just the cliché stereotypical token disabled person. I struggle with this all the time.

Kyle: You know what though, you might be. I don't think you are, I think you put yourself in that box, but I think you could take yourself out of it, but you just don't because you're good at this, but I don't doubt that this talent you have for what you do can be applied to anywhere else- except for maybe specific field filled with jargon that you just don't understand, because you're not part of that world. In general, I don't think that there's anywhere that you can apply that you can't do this job that you do for other fields of work. But having said that- I've said before on our episode with Carey, right now if you

want to pay me to be your disabled guy, I'm good. I don't like it, but I do like being paid more than I don't like being tokenized- like a lot more.

Emily: Yeah.

Kyle: So right now, it's all good man sign me up. I'll be your moral code.

Emily: You know what gives me a good feeling though, is that I actually genuinely enjoy what I do, I'm happy working in this particular field and I know that there are other disabled people who are working outside the disability field. I know they're not unicorns, I know they exist. Just today I found out that someone who has the exact same disability that I do lives in Denmark and studied law and he's a politician in a Danish political party and not in the inspiration part way, but like yeah, go get them, that's awesome.

Kyle: How could that possibly be inspiration for him, that's just plain old cool. Disabled politician is cool.

Emily: Yeah. It is really cool, and...

Kyle: And it's the right kind of inspiration, because you know what...

Emily: That's not inspirational to me, that's aspirational and I think there's a huge difference.

Kyle: No, that's inspirational to me. It is, it's also aspirational, but I think that- I think Stephen Hawking is inspirational. Go ahead, come at me for that one.

Emily: I'll let my face do the talking and just so everyone knows, I'm making a big whole face at him. You know what I....

Kyle: You do astrophysics in your head.

Emily: I'm inspired by what he does, I'm not inspired by that he's disabled while he does it.

Kyle: I am. I am and I'll tell you why, because such a diagnosis would- if it were me that would've depressed me for the rest of my life, it would have. I know myself and I know that this me is fine, but if this me got completely worse overnight then...

Emily: Let the hate tweets roll in.

Kyle: If you hate because I would feel sorry myself if my disability got worst, you need to recheck your life. Sorry, I'm not apologizing for that.

Emily: I'm still feeling it. I'm still...

Kyle: Why is that a bad thing to feel?

Emily: I'm not saying it's a bad thing...

Kyle: I'm not saying that you're saying it, I'm saying why do you think that, that is such a taboo thing to admit? That you could be the smartest man in the world and then have something happen to you that makes your life physically, infinitely harder. You wouldn't think that for most other people that would be devastating? Sure it would. Okay, in our world yeah, you're not allowed to not like disability, but people who weren't in our world and now are, aren't the same kind of people.

Emily: That's a whole other episode.

Kyle: I like Stephen Hawking so you know.

Emily: Oh no, he's a baller. He's a cool guy. I just am not inspired by him in the same way that I'm generally inspired by a lot of things related to disability.

Kyle: But I mean- I don't know. I feel like what we call inspiration sometimes isn't and I feel like sometimes what we think are...

Emily: I'm careful about how I label that.

Kyle: Yeah you play it safe. You only call things inspiration porn that nobody wouldn't. But for example like- just off topic- there was this body builder named Steve that made the rounds on **[0:37:29 inaudible]** one of those stupid **[0:37:31 inaudible]** click bait video Facebook pages, and- you know the one I'm talking about look at your face, you know what I'm talking about- you might not have seen the video, but like tasty with their stupid 30 second recipes that every white girl thinks she's going to make and then doesn't- those things. He's a bodybuilder with CP, that was inspirational to me too, you know why? Because I can't do that.

Emily: I don't like people who live for the sake of being inspirational for others, but I also understand....

Kyle: He wasn't.

Emily: No I- no, no, no but there are people like that.

Kyle: Oh yeah, I don't like them either. I don't like them- I just didn't want you to think he- I don't like those people either. That to me is actually- I don't say this very often, but people who do that is- are in my opinion detrimental to the greater good of our world, because so many people do that to us already that we really can't stand to do it to ourselves. I don't really care if you're someone who does it, I just think that if you're going to do it, you really need to think of the bigger picture. I really don't normally say that kind of thing, but that is probably one of the only places where I would say, really think about what you're doing.

Emily: Unrelated to any of this- want to take a trip to Denmark and meet the guy who is a politician who has my disability, because I do- I think that's so cool.

Kyle: You want to go before or after we go see the virtual realities...

Emily: Yeah, which one of those things is never going to happen?

Kyle: Either of them. All right, and on that note what is your final take away Emily?

Emily: My final take away is that you sounded super angry in the beginning, but I get why and I'm also angry despite not sounding like it, but I am, because it's so frustrating to me that disability is this card that can be played or a bad hand dealt and it can never just be.

Kyle: Yeah, the reason I was angry it was just because it's so cyclical, right? I'm not mad that it exist, I'm mad that it has to exist and that it has to exist, but it has to exist because the world is the way it is. The world is the way it is because of why it existed in the first place and it just keeps going around and round and around and it just seems like a Band-Aid to a much bigger problem that everyone's willing to acknowledge exist, but no one's willing to try and fix with anything other than the legal equivalent of band-aides, bubble gums, string and straws. It's just not enough, that's what makes me angry it's just not enough.

Emily: On another note, I decided I don't want to go to Denmark and meet this person, because his website says, "The only real disability is a bad attitude," and if I hear that quote one more time, I'm going to poke my own eyeballs out with a fork.

Kyle: Good night everybody.

Emily: Thanks for listening.

Kyle: Bye, bye.

Emily: Bye.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]