

I noticed yesterday that someone saw me  
Differently than I really want to be seen  
It was much like me believing I am a flower  
But their vision of me was way off the beam  
So they excluded me  
Being separated from others in this way  
Is the worst kind of pain that I have ever felt  
Even worse than the physical harm done  
When I was beat as a youngster with a belt  
Because they excluded me  
It was not the difference in the colors of our skins  
Or that my hair was short and theirs was long  
It was that how they spoke about me to the others  
For as the person I am they had me all wrong  
And they excluded me  
They just took a single look at me to determine  
What I thought, and the kind of person I am  
Without allowing me to even say a single word  
As if that was the way they designed life's plans  
So they excluded me  
It would have been easy and so much better  
If they asked me the questions in their mind  
Instead of assuming all that they did about me  
And I thought it would have really been so kind  
If they included me

### **ABOUT GEORGE COOK**

Served in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam Era. Spent 25 years working for social services as a teacher or a substance abuse counselor. Lives with a physical disability.