

A Lesson to Learn

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“Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without,” -- Buddha

Buddha is trying to explain that we have the ability to find peace, but we have to feel it within us before searching out in the world for it. Our society is filled with many different genders, cultures, languages and sexual preferences. The issue about having many different cultures of people is that our minds are not programmed to accept the things that are different to us. While some people have learned to accept others for who they are, many people still are closed minded to the things that stand out. That can cause conflict because you can't escape the world from having variety. The only solution is acceptance, yet to have everyone accept diversity is a difficult concept; however, it is possible with time and work. One of the good things about our society is that we have come a long way in our quest to be more tolerant, but we still have to reach a further distance. Another good thing is that there are people like Martin Luther King Jr. and Harvey Mil who are willing to lead the world and step out of their shells to fight for acceptance. Many people are just searching to be accepted for who they are, but the issues circling that causes there to be a struggle. Bullying is unfortunately still going on, so we must educate people, shape our society, and reflect on our part in fostering change.

In kindergarten we learned that sharing is caring, so we have the mentality that what is mine is yours. Unfortunately, our teachers aren't the only ones influencing who we become. Our parents, our guardians or any adult that is around us the most are also the ones influencing the outcome of our personality. We form our religion, our language, our thoughts and our behavior towards others based on what these adults around us are teaching us. Then we go on with those life lessons and now we're being influenced by our society. Education doesn't just occur in school because it expands in the world around us; the lessons we learn from everything we do and say or others do and say. Bullying begins when we are taught that being out of the “norm” shouldn't be accepted within our society. That is when our role models should come in the picture and correct our actions. If someone in authority steps in to stop whoever from saying or doing certain actions, then eventually they learn that diversity is natural. Unfortunately, parents sometimes do turn a blind eye and that's when others should intervene to teach them right from wrong without verbal or physical abuse.

Our society is based on the forms of technology. When I was a freshman, there was this girl who absolutely hated me. She threatened me over the internet and called my phone constantly. At first, she was a threat but I eventually began to ignore her; I learned to handle her harassment maturely. Then, she stopped after a few weeks of tormenting me. Today, a few major things that contribute to bullying are sites on the Internet and texting. People have become bolder in saying things when they don't have to do it in person. A person can be threatened by being diverse. Social networks are good ways to have friends, but these formats provide an easier way to contribute to bullying and that is a dangerous thing about the Internet. These formats should not be deleted, but I think that software programs could be developed that have a way of tracking personal attacks to make their sites safe from everyone. Another form of technology that is popular is texting. Texting is less of a threat because you usually don't have a stranger's number, unless they have used friends to find it to make them feel bad about themselves. Nevertheless, texting is still a dangerous new technology. I think people should be educated on the form of texting and the dangers of it by their parents. Parents should take a stand their children know about the consequences they will face regarding harassment or that they will support children if they need help...

When we think of the word bullying, we point fingers where others are at fault. The truth is that most people have experienced bullying as a victim, or most have bullied someone themselves. We must first stop and look at ourselves and drop our own bias of even the little things. We must learn to accept others, even the people that threaten us or don't like us. Once we show that we are capable of acceptance, then more and more people will begin to break down their own walls and acceptance will become the norm. We are the key to the change in others. If I change myself then the world can change. If you can change, then so can the world. "Remove the log from your own eye before you remove the speck from your brother's eye" – Matthew 7.5.

It is time for us all to start being adults, stop being children, and learn from ourselves. Let us decide that we want peace and let that be the only lesson we want to give and receive. Go on the Internet to talk to friends; not to harass others. Text and talk about your days, but don't ruin the days of another. Reflect on yourself as not a person who damages someone else's soul, but someone to embrace their difference. Be a positive influence and the world will change around you. It starts with one person and it ends with a million. One leader can have many followers, so be a leader and lead into the right direction. Eventually bullying will no longer exist. Peace is possible, but we must have it with us to be able to look for it. Recognize the beauty in variety the world has given us.