

The Difference of Skin Colours

I'm originally from a small town with a small high school which happens to be very full of diversity having students from all around the world. In school, I was a very outgoing individual who was friends with everybody in my class. However, in my grade 8 school year I experienced a situation which has really opened my eyes and changed my way of thinking about the idea of racism.

It was the first day of the new school year and I was settling into our new classroom with my best friends which happened to consist of all white males. Once the first bell rang, we all settled into our seats and our homeroom teacher started by telling a bit about herself. After this, we heard a knock on our door and in came our principle and a small brown-skin coloured boy with puffy black hair. After our principle introduced our new classmate who is from the Philippines, she left and he grabbed the open desk at the front of the classroom. Throughout the day everybody in my class continued in their cliques, so after noticing nobody had been with the new boy, I hung out with him for the rest of the day. After really getting to know each other through the week, we became really good friends and hung out all the time.

Eventually one day I happened to notice a few of my "friends" whispering to each other and giving me weird looks. After confronting them, I learned that they were weirded out because I was hanging out with a brown kid. I was very shocked to learn how racist they were being. At this moment of realization, I learned that people actually do judge a person by how they look. My new friend was such a nice and fun guy, and the colour of his skin did not matter to me. After talking to my friends about the concern, they gave him a chance and learned to realize how good of a person he really was. From this moment on, it's safe to say that we didn't let the colour of somebody's skin determine who they were as a person.

Looking back at this moment today, I learned that when a person is being targeted because of their race, the least that I or anybody else could do is simply just being a friend to them. Like my situation, when others see a non-target hanging out with somebody who is targeted because of their differences, then they will most likely learn to realize that besides their different colour of skin, we are all the same at the end of the day. As a student who attends post secondary school, I witness people of different skin colour all the time. Canada is such a diverse country, and if everybody can learn to not target individuals because of their different skin colour then our society can be all the more close and unified. If everybody could give a chance to these targeted people, just as my classmates did in grade 8, then the world would be a much safer and harass free place. Anytime I see somebody being targeted for their race or skin colour, I show that I am an ally to them and support them by being a friend who is always there for them. After all, as Nelson Mandela once said, "No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background or his religion. People learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, then they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite." As adults, it's time to teach younger people that having a different colour of skin means nothing and we are all just regular humans inside.