



WHY THE WORLD THRIVES ON DISCRIMINATION

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We have attached certain tags to specific regional differences that we have. For instance, people from my particular native region have been known for being stingy. Those hailing from a particular region are said to be boastful and have an inclination for bragging. Those from another region have been known to be hotheads. There have been many other tags that are not even worth paying attention to, much less devoting time for. But one thing's certain: we attach certain tags to others just because they come from a different part of the world (not our region), and the challenge of acceptance is harder to take than the challenge of name-calling and classifying. It's easier to degrade others than to find ways to embrace them.

We find justifications for discrimination quite readily. We are threatened by others when they are patently different from us, thus the only convenient escape hatch is to make fun of what makes them different from us. It can be easier to hurt than to soothe, to drive away than to find out what's worth embracing. We choose to keep our distance because it's quite safer that way, and we often feel uncomfortable in establishing too close ties with other people. So, we do the next best thing: we discriminate.

Many of us have fought against discrimination in its various forms. These individuals choose the less-beaten path and instigate measures to get acceptance. We have numerous movements, countless advocacies, and many organizations that aim to throw light on the befuddled minds of many. Those of us that support these different movements join runs for a cause, fundraising efforts, outreach missions, etc. just to drive home the message that such advocacies espouse. It's not easy to be different, but gathering support from large numbers always creates an impact, a hard-not-to-notice one at that.

Time will also come when such movements can not be so easily pooh-poohed. Plucky movers and advocates will somehow obtain the objectives they want for equality and recognition. It is a sincere hope that the discrimination against all that is different will someday disappear. But the road will not be easy and light. There will always be challenges along the way. We may get accepted for being who we are and what we are, but seldom for what we stand for. That's a more difficult phase.

The world does not thrive on differences quite as easily as it does on uniformity and exclusivity. It's easier to tear down others because of their differences than to search for means to like them. That mostly depends on the strength of our individual principles and our purpose in life.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Read about Rosa Parks and her struggle for civil rights for African Americans. Be able to talk about her achievements in class.
2. What makes discrimination of whatever form hurtful and divisive?
3. Why is it easier to discriminate than to accept others as they are?
4. How can discrimination in whatever form be eradicated?
5. How have people fought against discrimination? Be as specific and detailed as needed.