

Celebrating Diversity

It is not necessarily about someone's skin color, what they believe in, or what their culture consists of that makes this world so diverse. Typically, this would be the things I would look at when it comes to explaining how diverse the world is becoming. But what I did not realize and gained insight on, was that it has been very diverse all along. It does not always have to do with skin color, beliefs, or culture. It could simply be a left handed person opposed to a right handed person, blonde/black/brown hair, whether you participate in sports, if you are a pet owner, or if you are a sister, brother, aunt, or uncle. The list goes on and on with ways the world can be diverse. With so much diversity though, problems do arise.

Prejudice and stereotyping are always going to be present among individuals. Everyone is guilty of doing it, and it would be difficult to stop some from perceiving others as atrocious or out of this world. A specific activity I participated in during the workshop was "Group Reports." We made a list of several identity groups, of which I belonged to many. Each identity group contained a few individuals from the workshop that could identify themselves under a specific group (ex: man, woman, education major, cheerleader, female athlete, etc.). They discussed things they never wanted to hear people say about their identity group, and what good and important attributes came from their group. This really hit home with me. I belong to several identity groups, that people always have an irrational comment about. While I have always tried to put myself in others shoes before judging, it is different when you hear someone from that specific group talk about things that frustrate them. I realized again that everyone needs

to be treated and accepted with grace and comfort because we truly do not know what they are going through in their lives. I have, most definitely, regained a sensitivity and appreciation to all identity groups because they face struggles just like I do every day.

My thinking has not been transformed or nothing unbelievable has stricken me from the Celebrating Diversity Workshop. However, my mind and feelings have been reopened to the sensitivity and appreciation to others. Through the hustle and bustle of life, people tend to get caught up in what they are doing. It was encouraging to be reminded through various activities at this workshop, that every one deserves respect. The handout, *Recordings*, really caught my attention. It stated, “we are born innocent.” This opened my eyes to how much our societies, communities, families, and friends give us misconceptions of how things may truly be. We were given a word, and had to write down our first thought. I was surprised by many of my responses. I found a lot of things were negative, but in reality I do not feel that way about a particular identity group or thing. Once again, society, community, family, and friends may have influenced those thoughts..

In my future classroom, tolerance will be a must. No child or teacher will be singled out, manipulated, or ridiculed for their differences. I want my students to be embellished with a comforting environment, which will allow for the most learning to take place. Another way diversity will be celebrated and taught will be through games and activities. I want to introduce my students to new and unfamiliar activities. This will allow me to teach from a broad range of games/activities and allow my students to step out of the box, from the familiar to the unfamiliar. Students are constantly partaking in the common physical education sports (basketball, soccer, tennis, etc.). In my arena, a diverse range of activities will take place that have originated from different countries, states, or cultures.