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CREATE A TOLERANT & JUST SOCIETY~ LEAD BY EXAMPLE

To begin the acceptance of others that you see as “different” from you, it is important to understand that diversity among people can be an advantage to our communities, neighborhoods, and schools since it allows us to have more exposure to learning about things we, likely, are not familiar with. By not judging people by their differences (appearance, culture, skills, religion, etc.) we can help reduce conflict, hurt, and resentment that had been created by people who treated others poorly in the past.

To get some ideas for my essay and to spread the message of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s beliefs, I gathered the following tips from a diverse group of people by asking them to consider, “ What can [they] do to promote equality in [their] community, neighborhood or school in order to create a more tolerant & just society”.

- Do not judge a person for what they look like.
- Teach young people to be accepting of others.
- Remember that people are more important than material things.
- We are **all** different and that’s what makes us all unique (irreplaceable).
- Speak up when you see behavior that is hurtful and disrespectful to another person.
- Help others that are less fortunate than you.
- Do not participate in negative and/or hurtful discussions.
- Treat others just as you would like your loved ones treated.

The list could go on and on and on. This is a huge topic, which often relates to the importance of keeping in mind that we **all** have differences. The difference between people can range from small to large issues: such as age, race, ability, culture, faith, and/or background. Therefore it is very important to remind ourselves on a regular basis to avoid jumping to conclusions about someone by judging them on how they look, dress, or talk. The entire world needs to work with others to agree on common goals and interests to build more tolerant and just communities that are fair to **all** people.

Something that students can do in their own lives to fulfill Dr. King’s dream of living in a more tolerant and just society is to lead by example. I strongly believe that if other people watch me treat everyone with respect, they are more likely to do the same thing. No one is perfect and there are some people that you may just not get along with, for whatever the difference or reason, but by stereotyping and being negative to others you will miss out on the opportunity to meet some really wonderful people. Besides, even if there are things you don’t have in common with someone in particular, you never know if that person may be one of the few people that will support you in a time of need or help you pursue what you seek in life.