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## Snowflakes

“What lies before us

*And what lies behind us*

**Are small matters compared to**

*what lies within us.”*

This quote represents, to me, the meaning of equality. It says that no matter what life has been handed to us, no matter what has happened to us in our past, no matter what awaits us in the future, we are still the same. Although everyone may have different skin colors, underneath it all we are still only human, and therefore there is hope.

The problem with humans is that we seldom take the time to look for the similarities, usually it's the opposite. We instantly identify things that make other people different from us. We see what we aren't and, though maybe unwittingly, we judge. This is easy to do, because we are all quite different...on the surface. Everyone is unique, with different religions, skin colors, cultures, and interests. We're like snowflakes, each with an individual crystallized pattern that makes up our being. All so different... but if you step back and take a moment to think you would realize that no matter how unique a snowflake may be, all of them are still made out of water.

We are like snowflakes in more ways than one. We are all delicate...from the tiniest infant to the strongest MMA fighter. Everyone has emotions; everyone is affected by the choices and actions of another person. Like ripples in a pond every word we speak and every move we make sets into motion a chain of events that grows until the benefits, or destruction, are far beyond our reach. Though we may be unconscious of it, each of us has an enormous impact on the world.

Common sense should tell us that each human deserves to be treated with respect. Because, when one is damaged or killed, their pattern can never be recaptured. The person leaves us forever, taking away their thoughts, their opinions, and any chance they had to help this race.

Now, what can we do to promote equality to create a more tolerant and just society? How do we ensure that Dr. King's dream will continue to bloom and grow for our posterity? There is only one fail safe way: **OPEN YOUR MIND.**

Nothing is black and white. There are a million ways of looking at anything, the way you see it is only one of them. When you cut yourself off from any point of view, due to prejudice of ethnicity, appearance, religion, or the like, you lose a whole side of the world, and any opportunity that comes with it. Most importantly, don't be hypocrites. If you want to get respect you have to *give* respect, which means showing compassion to everyone regardless of their differences and accepting people, even if you don't agree with them.

It's high time we break the cycle of narrow-mindedness and live up to the dream of history's heroes.

*We have a dream.*

It's time to live up to it.