ABIDE BALLI

SOC147 NOS

Dr Nathaniel B Perez

Racial Autography

I was born in West Africa, in the small nation of Togo. Growing up in a developing country, I experienced a cultural immersion that shaped my adult perspective. I had the privilege of attending a local school, where I received a quality education in French and English.

When I was 13, I moved to the United States with my family. I experienced culture shock and had to adjust to the new customs and ways of life. I was also exposed to a different type of racism and discrimination, something I never expected to encounter. Nevertheless, I was determined to remain strong and resilient in the face of these obstacles, and I was able to persevere.

My earliest memory of race was when I was around 13 years old, coming to the United States from West Africa, Togo. I had no idea what to expect from the new culture and environment. It was a huge shock as different racial backgrounds surrounded me. In addition, it was very intimidating as I was the only African in my school, and I felt like I had a spotlight on me all the time.

I had negative experiences associated with my racial identity in the US. People would often make assumptions about me and ask insensitive questions about my culture. I was often the only African in the room, making me feel like I had to be an ambassador for my race. I was also constantly reminded of my race by people's stares, comments, and actions.

I became racially conscious around age 15 when I started understanding the complexities of race and the different forms of discrimination. In school, I had to take classes about racism,

privilege, and learning about different races. This was when I started to understand the struggles and injustices of people of color in the United States.

My biggest influence in learning about race and diversity came from my family. My family was very open about discussing race and taught me the importance of embracing my culture and standing up for my people. Through conversations with them, I was able to understand the systemic racism and oppression that affects marginalized communities.

In terms of my racial identity development, I have gone through a few stages. At first, I was in shock and denial that racism still existed and that I was affected by it. As I got older, I became more aware of the injustices faced by people of color and started to become an advocate for the cause. Now, when I get a chance I like to educate others and bring awareness to social issues.

What concerns me about my racial past is the fact that I was not always aware of the systemic racism and oppression that exists in our society. Growing up, I was not exposed to the realities of racism and inequality that still plague our country today. I regret not being more educated and involved in the fight for racial justice earlier in my life. It took me too long to recognize the need for change and the seriousness of this issue. I am now committed to educating myself and becoming an active advocate for racial equality and social justice.

What encourages me about my racial past is that I have learned and grown from the experiences I have had and the people I have met. I am proud of my progress in my understanding of race and diversity, and I am grateful for the support I have received from family and friends.

I “do” racial justice because I believe everyone should have equal rights and opportunities regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender. I want to use my platform and the skills I

have to educate and empower people to advocate for social change. I also want to help create an environment where everyone feels welcomed and accepted.

As an adult, I continue to use my voice and experiences to help spread awareness about the unique challenges people of color face. I believe in the power of education, dialogue, and advocacy to help create a more equitable and just world. I am proud of my heritage and work to preserve my culture and pass it on to future generations.