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SOC 147

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Racial Autobiography

The earliest memory and concept of race were blurry in my mind. Although I had few chances to meet with people from Australia, Africa, and other countries back then, I always defined non-Asians as foreigners. After studying biology and history, I acknowledged that all human beings have a common ancestor. Therefore, we are family and must unite as one. Discriminating against each other is the most pointless thing we should ever do. That is the first stage of my racial awareness. As an overseas student, since I visited the United States. My point of view has altered.

Cultural diversity is a characteristic of New York. People from all around the world, with different cultural backgrounds, are living together. After boarding the flight to NYC, I suddenly noticed that most passengers were foreigners. Seeing people of diverse races were scary and exciting at the same time. Although I have racial consciousness, I was not willing to take the initiative to communicate with them. That is the second stage. After entering high school, I learned more about American society. I could answer questions in class fluently in English, make friends with students from different racial backgrounds, understand more about other religious beliefs, etc. Therefore, staying in My three-year high school life was the period of life I learned the most about race and diversity, which is the third or final stage of my

racial identity development.

I had plenty of negative experiences associated with my cultural identity. One of them is racial slurs. On the first day of school, one of my Chinese classmates taught me ways to identify racial slurs related to Asians, but it did not attract my attention. Unexpectedly, a few days later, an Italian construction worker was openly yelling racial slurs on the bus because an Asian student blocked his way. At high school, I kept hearing other local students making fun of the Chinese language by deliberately and inappropriately imitating Chinese name pronunciations. The most unacceptable reality is the non-stop humiliation got worse after the COVID-19 pandemic broke out. Former U.S. President Donald Trump calls it “the Chinese Virus” in his tweets, which stirs up a giant wave of discrimination and hatred against Asians. Numerous people believe the Chinese are guilty of the deceased during the pandemic. A Professor at my previous college asked me if I am from Wuhan, China (suspected infectious origin of COVID-19). It could be the most offensive question I am hearing through the years.

As a Chinese, I am never ashamed of my ethnicity. Our culture never mentioned anything about racial supremacy. The meaning of a famous Chinese Proverbs is to take a step back and there will be a bigger world in front of you. So, it encourages me to judge and solve questions rationally. I would never prejudice against anyone or any specific racial group unless they treat me the right way. The only concern about my racial past is that the Chinese are not likely to fight for their rights together. Too much tolerance will encourage racists to choose them as their main target. Minorities have the right to defend racial dignity.

For me, racial justice is the ultimate goal that I'm chasing. I used to believe that racism no longer exist in our society anymore. However, the reality is the opposite. Even though my ability is limited, I will try my best to influence the people around me. We all hope for a better tomorrow, so looking for solutions for the inherent problem is crucial and urgent.