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 **EFFECTS OF RACISM IN TODAY’S SOCIETY**

Racism is something we've all witnessed. It has existed throughout human history. Racism is defined as the detestation, or belief that someone is less than human, because of skin color, place of birth, and mores. All these arguments are based on a false understanding of race. In fact, some contemporary scientist could argue that the classification of races used today is inadequate, and there are more meticulous and proper ways of categorizing humans. What may seem to be considerable “racial” differences to some people, such as skin color, hair, and facial shape, are not of more scientific significance. It has been said that there have been greater biological differences between people of the same race than if we were to compare the same trait to a different race.

Many people fail to believe that race isn’t a biological category but an artificial classification of people with no scientifically variable facts. In other words the distinction we make between races has nothing to do with genetic characteristics. Race was created socially, primarily by how people perceive ideas and faces we are not quite used to. The definition of race depends on where and when the word is being used. In U.S. history, the meaning of the label *“white”* has changed over time, eventually adding groups like the Italians, Irish and Jews. Other groups, mainly African, Latino, American Indian, Pacific Islander, and Asian descendants, have found the path for worldwide social acceptance much more difficult. The irregular border of ethnicities touches educational and economic opportunity, political representation, as well as income, health and social mobility of people of color.

So where did this type of behavior begin? There are many ideas thrown around as to how racism began, though the truth lies in the history of mankind. Before people were able to travel and experience different groups of people, we predominantly stayed in the same kind of area with the same kind of people. The truth is, racism began as soon as people faced those of different races. It seems that if racism has been around so long we would have been able to overcome it as our species developed, but contact with those of whom we are afraid of often lead to disputes, which, in time, is what caused racism to transform from people simply disliking each other, to the permanent and indestructible foundation of common racism and prejudice.

Racism is said to have been derived from many places, one of the most common ideas being upbringing. As a child, you are reliant on your parents to help you become who you are. Part of that involves their own. They need the help of their parents, and this is often where the problem starts. If you were told that all Asians were sneaky or all Whites are evil or all Blacks are criminals, you can bet that you are going to feel this way about them. Another suggestion as to how racism makes its way into our heads is through the almighty media. As we grow up, media becomes a factor of our lives whether or not we want it to be, and is also a major source of how racism keeps itself active. Since the 70’s, the media has been giving us racial labels, one of the largest supplies coming from shows like ‘law and order’, and ‘CSI’. When dealing with crime, people of color are reflected in the demarcation of *“them”* and *“us”.* Whites are often represented as the *“good guy”* or strong, law obeying citizens. They often target people of color, sometimes without any sort of evidence. This always promotes racism.

But how does racism really affect society? Visibly identifiable members of racial and ethnic oppressed groups continue to struggle for equal access and opportunity, particularly during times of stringent economics. Often, the targeted race has a harder time doing things such as finding a well-paying job or house. While there have been some sizeable gains in the labor force status of racial minorities, significant gaps remains. Racism is rampant in all areas of employment. For many members of exploited racial and ethnic unit, there is always an economic depression. Studies show that people of color are the last hired and the first fired. As a result, budget cuts, downsizing, and privatization may disproportionately hurt people of color. The unemployment rate for adolescent of color is approximately four times that of white adolescent. What’s more, in America, the majority of unemployed men is black, and compared to other races, Blacks and Latinos on average have disproportionately low income.

Other than simply getting a job, getting a house or keeping one is often a difficult task for those of color. The job of a landlord is to rent out houses to reliable people or families, though a racist landlord could make it difficult for a family of color to find a home. By law, property owners may not refuse to rent or sell housing to set different conditions or privileges for sale or rental of a property, impose different rates and terms on a loan, refuse to make a mortgage loan or discriminate in appraising property due to a client ethnicity, and because racism cannot be seen, these rules are very vague.

 Available evidence suggest that Blacks and Hispanics face higher rejection rates and less favorable condition in securing mortgages than do Whites with similar credit characteristics. It has been reported that blacks pay more than 0.5% higher interest rates on home mortgages than whites do and that this difference persists with income level, date of purchase, and age of buyer. During the Great Depression, people of color had a much harder time getting past financial hardship because of the racial stereotypes that had before been thrown around.

Racism creates huge destruction to individuals. These effects includes the destruction of one’s self esteem, causing serious mental problems. However, racism can even create division in the society. Communities, students and staffs in work place and schools can be separated because of racism. It does more harm than good. Because of the beliefs of these racist, innocent people are suffering every day. People of color are being killed or assaulted in one way or another. They are now afraid of living because of the fear that a white man, especially a police officer can pull up on them at any time and assault them.

“No one is born hating another person because of the color of the skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can learn to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite”. Agree or not with the words of the great Nelson Mandela, this quote truly defines that racism does not occur naturally or already exists in the society but rather chose to be acted by the people.

Often what causes people to act racist is the fact that they have learned to conceal fear with racism. Many individuals react with fear towards those who look or appear different than them. Fear is what makes us uncomfortable, making us need to protect ourselves and defend, mostly causing pain and discomfort to the person or object of the fear. Instead of attempting to fix and deal with the differences, the wall between the two mountains; union and agreement are never attained.

So how do we put an end to this? The sad fact of the matter is that, during this age, we won’t. People were born differently, and it’s only human to retaliate negatively to things or people we aren’t used to. Scientists believe there is the tendency in all animals to selectively preserve their own kind even at the cost of a different animal type, which is in essence what caused racism, not to mention prejudice in general.

As human kind progresses, our way of thinking becomes more complex, as does the world around us. The values we once had aren’t forgotten, but replaced with new values as our old ways hide in the back of our minds. Though they are present and may re-emerge if a change in life conditions calls them up, they are no longer the dominant. This genuinely is the hope for mankind in the fight to end racism. In the future, if we can surmount the silliness of racism to the point where no one senses it, we will be in fine condition. The most effective way to begin this, through the words of Morgan Freeman, is to “Stop Talking About It”.