

The Inverse Pangaea of Our Minds

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Growing up was not very easy for me. I was hardly ever at peace with myself, always feeling like I belonged somewhere else. People who surrounded me did not seem to be good enough to be my friends. Constantly, I separated myself from the rest of the world, as if some dangerous disease such as “Mediocrity” would contaminate me and keep me from being part of something greater. However, in my mind I had the thought that things would be better, people would be better, if I could only move to a far away place; somewhere over the rainbow perhaps.

Finally, at the age of sixteen, I got the chance to travel abroad and be content at last. My destination was Charlotte, North Carolina – in the United States of America. Happier than I had ever felt, I spent two months studying English and learning about new cultures. Then, after these two months, I came back home and that wonderful new feeling rapidly faded away; along with the hope of being happy again at any time soon. Still disturbed by the utter lack of joy in my heart, I decided to go back to where I was once blissful.

I left home when I was only seventeen; I left everything behind just in order to pursue my dream to find this mysterious land filled with delightfulness where I could eternally rest my, until now, unquiet soul. But, during the time while I was out, things changed around here; I had changed. Where had my happiness gone? Where was it after all? Through my international experience I learned how to see the world from a different perspective, in which life becomes a much prettier and more magical journey; where “happiness depends upon ourselves” (Aristotle).

What learning is most need when traveling abroad is how to deal with cultural differences; that is what I learned the first time I had contact with people from other countries. Since now everything had changed, and I was still not happy, I had to look beyond the surfaces of these common sense rules for international social interaction. Inner reflection and acceptance of my own essence, who I am as a human being, made me realize that we spend too much of our time concentrating on others' dissimilarities instead of their similarities.

Even though having differences is what makes us unique, what brings us together are the thoughts, goals and hopes we have in common. By interacting with international students, no matter how different our cultures were, I noticed that we were seeking for the same things in life: knowledge, love, success.... I also had to be honest with myself and admit that I committed the same mistakes they did; that I was not perfect. Therefore, I was able to see myself equal to others, and from this moment I began to include myself as a part of the world, and the world became a part of me.

Today, I come to the conclusion that we have this awful habit of seeing the world like adults, whose definition for it is a concrete uneven sphere. Being part of something bigger, having faith and hope in people and life gave me a completely new meaning for this word. The world is what we think, the things we say and the energy of our actions. Like children, we should see the world in its more metaphysical and philosophical approach. I now see the world as this beautiful utopia, foundation of which is formed by the unification of its residents' thoughts and expectations of life, an inverse Pangaea of our minds.