

First-Year Writing Seminar: The Podcast, Season 3

Episode Transcript: Keriyaon Cloyd on “Demonstrating Empathy and Respect for Difference”

“Within the third season of “First Year Writing Seminar: The Podcast”, this episode is spoken by Keriyaon Cloyd, who discusses which of the four dimensions of global awareness she chose that relates best to her story and why she thinks it is most important.”

producer: “Going liveeee in 5..4..3..2..1..”

Intro music in background “Hello everyone! It seems to me that we are on air, so welcome back to this episode within the third season of First Year Writing Seminar: The Podcast. Chilling with yours truly, Keriyaon Cloyd; I hope everyone is doing well on this lovely day. For this episode, I will be discussing with you guys my belief that demonstrating empathy and respect for difference is a very important dimension for global awareness. Grab your snacks and relax..and without further ado, we shall begin.”

transition song and/or transition sound effect

So. I believe that demonstrating empathy and respect for difference is a very important dimension to understand in order to advocate for more recognition in global awareness.

Don’t believe me yet? Let me give you a little background story then: I went to a public school called Menomonee Falls High School in a small village in Wisconsin. The place may not be all that, but I would be wrong to say the school was not diverse if anything. There were many different cultures and ethnicities present where one could have so much opportunity to explore what they wanted. It influenced my mind to be more open to different traditions if no one else. There was one particular moment, however, that really stood out to me. You could even say that it changed part of my life.

It was in the early morning around 9 o’clock and I was in study hall with one of my close friends. Let’s call her Bee. Bee and I were both into some pretty versatile things that not a lot of people were into. To help you understand a little more where I’m coming from, there wasn’t really a label for black girls who were into different things than the standard interests society placed upon us. We were seen as one thing and one thing only, which made young girls and women such as myself question who we truly were.

Back to the story: Bee was really eager to show me an artist (or actually artists) she was currently into. Without much thought, I willingly took that earbud and placed it into my ears.

Now, brace yourselves everyone because this is where things began to change. It was then that my mind unlocked a part of something that I had never even imagined would be my forever personality. The song that Bee showed me was not in English; in fact, it was in Korean. I had learned a lot about the K-pop industry before, and I was into another group I had no idea was in Korean culture. I was intrigued by this new group within the K-pop genre (the name for it), I found myself nodding my head and researching what the lyrics meant in English. It felt as if the beat was taking my heart’s hand and guiding it to the rhythm. I loved the feeling it was giving me.

That moment made me realize something that eventually became a new reality for me. I had reached this new aspect of the world that placed me into taking other people's perspective and the acceptance of their interests. Soon enough Bee and I began exchanging songs faster than we could solve a simple math problem off of one of our homework sheets. This new world of music captured me and I was not stopping it. I learned how important it was to open myself into considering someone else's interest despite what I liked and disliked; and thanks to this moment in time, I grew older with different interests, and my view of the world changed. I am a young adult now with unwritten chapters of college life. Everyday I walk with curiosity on how the world works and how other people write their own chapters to their lives. Being in another perspective other than my own excites me, and I hope to have this optimistic attitude the harder certain situations get.

Yes. It's still a challenge for me of course. Those emotions I felt sitting at that lunch table, jamming to the songs me and my friends were listening to, I wished that many people were open to listen to things without judging it because of the language barrier. I grew up listening to narrowed genres of music. Obviously I enjoyed the familiar tunes but deep down I knew that it was not satisfying enough. There was a time I remember where I attempted to convince my parents of different songs that were not within our culture. They were trying to explain to me how they could not enjoy it because they did not understand what they were saying. Boy was I frustrated; because I could not understand why it was so difficult to look past that language. I learned that everyone was not going to be as accepting as I was when I was introduced to different music. This moment was my test to use that dimension of demonstrating empathy and respect to my own parents; because I knew that if I had not, then there would have been unwanted tension rising within the relationship between my parents. I had to learn to look at both sides of the situation before reacting to it. Lessons such as that helped me learn to better myself before the present.

That's why I believe that this dimension is very important because of the barriers that we have within this generation and society today. I can say that as time progressed and there had been various changes within our world, there have been numerous counts of minor barriers that have been broken. The younger generation has started to notice the generational traumas within our society and has called them out continuously. However, that does not mean that everything is solved. There are still issues of accepting others and not being so judgmental and closed-minded.

I still encounter moments like those myself. I deal with all kinds of people that have their personal opinions on different hobbies; so, instead of getting offended with what they say, I place myself in their shoes. I try to hear them out and even try to explain to them my belief as to why it is important to try everything even if they do not think they will like it. No one can say anything if they do not even consider trying it. No one can say they do not agree with someone else if they never considered trying to understand where others are coming from.

That is why having both empathy and respect for difference is important, because if we all can accept others for who they want to be and who they are, the world will become more comforting and it is also advocating global awareness. So go out there and try something new.

Could be something you would have never imagined you would enjoy. Always be considerate of what the other person is trying to get you to understand. At the end of the day, nobody is perfect. If I can notice my faults and work on myself even to this day, then you all can too.

outro music

That is all for this episode today, I hope you guys enjoyed this message and got something inspiring out of it. I will see you all soon, you all have a good night.

outro music audio enhanced before fading out

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Anchor: Calm- Balti (used for both background music and transitions)