

WE ARE COLOUR PALETTES

(Original)

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How many colours are there? There must be thousands, millions, and who knows there may even be billions. Each colour is unique, even if there are limited base colours, the tones and shades create new colours. In the same way, each person is a canvas given by beautiful cultural brushstrokes according to the unique context of each of us.

Many people may not appreciate the beauty of our colours, I lived it and I remember it very well. When once in a cooking workshop I was taking, I burned myself with some hot water, and I said: "Achachau!", an expression that in Quechua means "Hot hot!"; when I said that, a girl near me muttered "How vulgar it is...", I felt bewildered and ashamed. I felt bewildered and embarrassed, all my life I had said that phrase, since my family has Quechua ancestry and it was normal to use those expressions; I did not know that people found it vulgar.

Another time, my mom came to school and said, "How did my beautiful girl do today?", she had always called me that affectionately. Then I heard that some kids started spreading rumours that I was spoiled and that I was still being treated like a baby. When I heard what they were saying about me, I felt very ashamed and angry towards my mother for being the "cause of all the rumours".

The next day my mother was helping me with my homework, when she said to me in a congratulatory way "How can my precious girl be so smart?". "Precious girl", again she had said it; out of nowhere, I got annoyed with her and shouted at her to never call me that again, after that I could not hold back the tears that welled up in my eyes. Mum was shocked because it had all happened in an instant. When I realised what I had done, I apologised to her and tried to hold back the tears running down my cheeks.

My mother was now very concerned about why I was crying, so she asked me in a kind voice what had happened to me; at that moment, I blurted out everything that had been happening to me for a few years, told her about how different I felt compared to my peers, and how they talked about it. My mum understood my situation, comforted me and explained that everyone in the world is different and unique, some more than others, but that does not make us less or more important. She told me: "We all have a different palette of colours within us and what we paint with it will be unique and priceless". I could not understand that sentence at the time she said it, but I had been able to understand the message of everything else.

After that moment, it was very difficult, but little by little I stopped caring what others said or thought about me and started to focus on loving myself; as well as helping others who are going through the same situation as me.

Now I have finally come to understand what my mother meant to tell me on that occasion and her phrase has become the centre of my life. For the differences we have are not meant to separate, hate or reject each other; we are meant to unite, respect and love each other.

If there are green apples, when the standard is for them to be red; if the sky that is usually blue is tinged with orange and amber brushstrokes in the sunsets, why do people offend those who are different from them?

Although I still do not know many things because I am a child, I am very sure that if we ever observe or experience discriminatory situations, we must face them and not let the opinion of others keep us from being ourselves. We are the path that will lead to peace. Because a world of peace is not white where colour is absent, it must be a world where all colour palettes live together in harmony and will create the most beautiful canvas in all of history.