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We Shall Overcome Intolerance

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy" (Martin Luther King Jr.). People all over the world are facing many difficulties and one of these major difficulties is intolerance. Some people believe that they can treat others horribly just because of their race, religion, or nationality.

To all those who are facing intolerance, I know how it feels to want to hide underneath your bed covers and never come out. Not only am I a Muslim, but also a Palestinian. Sometimes it feels as though those are two of the most despised groups in the world. There are days when I go out with my family and people say hurtful things. There was a time when a man followed us into the parking lot and shouted, "I hate you all. You should just go back to your country." Now you've probably heard the common phrase, "Sticks and stones may break your bones, but words will never hurt you!" However, those words felt sharper than a needle being poked into your forehead, trust me I've experienced that type of pain too.

To all those who believe words are just words, it is essential to understand that Martin Luther King Jr. wouldn't agree, because he believed that words are more powerful than weapons. He constantly inspired people with his speeches. His powerful speeches were what brought about the greatest changes in American society. He encouraged people to make a change by using words. He inspired people to overcome hate and racism with his words. "We shall overcome," were the words that fueled the Civil Rights Movement. He encouraged all individuals to unite and speak up against inequality. Therefore, it is important to remember that words can hurt, but they can also heal.

So, on those days when you feel like hiding underneath your blanket, always keep in mind the gentle words of the kind people who stand up against intolerance. The ones who say they don't agree and that ignorance is the cause of the hurtful words, not hate. Let those phrases be a Band-Aid to your soul and bring us one step closer to overcoming intolerance. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "I believe that what self-centered men have torn down men other-centered can build up... I still believe that WE SHALL OVERCOME."

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We Shall Overcome Essay

~~2012-2013-2014-2015~~

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Overcoming things is a basic thought process, and part of being human. Sometimes it feels as if we cannot overcome, things like war, or inequality, or epidemics. Man has learned that fate is something we cannot control, but what we can control is our reaction. Overcoming is not waiting something out; it is not waiting for the clock to pass; it isn't a passive activity. It requires action. It requires unity. History proves this quite strongly. We as a human race have overcome hundreds of global issues by collaborating internally and externally.

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For example, political disagreements during World War Two could not be stronger. Adolf Hitler believed in his domination and superiority over others. The world disagreed and fought against Adolf. Even Russia and the US became allies, and the US President was committed to this alliance to defeat a common evil.

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In this country, human rights were abused during the period we allowed legalized slavery. Slavery was overcome by men and women sharing their views against this injustice, not waiting. If they just waited, we may have still had legal slavery today.

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We have overcome pandemics such as the Black Death by simply isolating ourselves, and avoiding illness. But we now have a global economy so coming together is the best way to overcome global illness. We did this during the Ebola crises in 2015. During the Ebola outbreak, the World Health Organization mobilized the rest of the world to bring their best doctors, and their best minds to overcome the disease. The world could have suffered from no action. But instead together the best of human kind was on display. We overcame that threat by working together.

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The message Martin Luther King always gave was, to overcome the injustices of the day, we had to believe in the power that man is good and can come together to fight for a common good. This message has played out in our history and continues to do so today.

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Our Truth

119 Sometimes, I sit back and I have to escape from what I see and hear every day. I put my headphones on and let the music take me away. I move to the beat and try to think about life and what everything means. When I do, I come to the same conclusion... we are in a state of chaos. In the city in which I live, I hear and see examples of chaos almost every day. Little children are victims of senseless gun violence. There is too much black on black crime. As an African-American, that makes me feel depressed. Many people have lost faith in America and its ability to be a living example of Dr. King's dream!

69 The truth is faith and hope in what people can do, has been lost in the poor choices we make. We shall overcome has been lost in the lie of who we have become! So now, the real truth is, we need to rewrite our story so that faith and hope for a better tomorrow, is not only within us, but we believe it and we put into actions.

71 Our first truth is that we must start caring about each other. We need to be empathetic and try to walk in each other's shoes. We shall overcome when we begin to understand and accept each other. We shall overcome when we eliminate the negative and nasty comments people make about each other. We shall overcome, when we love ourselves and the people around us. Then, we become our brother's keeper.

92 Our second truth is that we need to have purpose. We are the future generation, therefore we must have an education to make a positive difference in the world. We are the future leaders, but if we don't have an education, we will accomplish nothing. We will overcome, when we use our education to make the world a better place. We will become the next President, law enforcement officers, teachers, doctors, lawyers, and law makers. We cannot continue to put the responsibility on other people. It is our responsibility as future leaders!

43 We must not allow the lies of violence, racism, and prejudice to be our truth. The truth begins with us. Instead of passing each other like ships in the night, we must fight until our truths stretch to the ends of the world.