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Fluid In Different Worlds

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Fluid in Different Worlds

Emjay Díaz

As a queer first generation Chicana college student, I have faced many obstacles throughout my life. I have had to manage between worlds: the American world through the English view; transition to the Spanish world – proud of being Mexican; and a Queer world – where I was always being judged. The worlds I navigate through, up to this day keep alienating me. Not two worlds, but three worlds – in one colonized globe. People keep judging and oppressing other people based on their identities.

As a child, I was told by my father that I was no one in this world, just another nobody in society. According to him, I had the "wrong" friends, made the "wrong" decisions, and "wrong" actions became what I did. I rarely had anyone pushing me forward to succeed. Teachers tried to encourage me to engage more with my education; however, at the end of the day my home always shaped my point of view in the world.

Change and a long process has brought me to where I am now. Everything seemed to go from wrong to wrong, making it right. One afternoon I was walking the streets of downtown LA with a friend. Suddenly, a green vehicle pulled us over, one of the passengers pulled out a handgun and pointed it straight at me. They were looking for someone. My mind went blank; that someone was me. A loud scream from the guy holding the gun, Plah! The gun went off. All I heard was laughter coming from inside of the vehicle. My mind was still blank, while the anxiety was rapidly building-up inside of me. I could not have told my mother, never mind my father!

Somehow, my mother knew. She always found out, always without my father's help. She sent me away. I was only thirteen years old, surviving the challenges from living in a gang-affiliated neighborhood. At that moment, my identity and view of the world changed drastically. I lost half a year of school when I had to leave L.A. Eventually I returned, and I was a different. Life is change, a work in progress.

When I was fourteen, I had no choice but to confront my family. I was returning from a long day at school, keep in mind every day at school is a long day; my family (cousins, siblings, aunts, uncles, my mom, and not my father) were just sitting there, staring at me – often I felt hostility at home, but this time it was suffocating. I had no choice, I mean the way I dressed already had given my relatives an idea.

They trapped and cornered me. They needed to judge me. I confronted them and spoke my truth. I got acceptance, rejection, and mixed feelings. Two months later, I chopped off my long beautiful thick hair. Chopping off my hair set me free from a floating cage of judgment. High school was another world, one that got me to where I am now. After four years, high school led me to the changes I have done in my young life up to now. Leaving home was the best thing I could have ever done for myself.

After such an experience, my views will still be in constant change. My self-love, self-acceptance, self motivation are still works in progress today. I choose to believe in myself beyond what I think I am capable of doing in this world. I choose to love myself, and feel comfortable with myself. Encouraged by having succeeded beyond my early dreams, I stay optimistic for myself and for the future ahead of me. If I do not take leadership and control over my life, then where will end up?