

An Essential Difference

In today's society, many of us are trapped in a contained environment where we do not consider the outside world. Instead, we get fixated on the small things such as fashion, boyfriends and grades. It is important to achieve at these things, however, is it not more important to achieve something greater, in particular, give another person a chance to achieve these goals?

I hate to say this, but we are extremely greedy, in fact, I am guilty of this. Who can say that they have gone shopping for themselves and have thought about someone else? One of my friends and I once saw a pair of shoes we both wanted and instead of considering the other person, we both snatched at the dazzling heels. Yet, we did not consider how the other was feeling, or maybe that they would need them more. This is a prime example of what we get caught up in, a minuscule confinement of greed. On this small scale, this may not seem a big deal, but on a larger one, people are dying and children are starving because of it.

Depression is a powerful word. Unfortunately, I know many people who have been on the brink of depression, but why you may ask? The reasons associated with their sadness include things like not having a boyfriend, hating school or weighing a few kilos more than 'the perfect girl', which is another issue altogether. It is a serious matter, however, the realisation is that there are thousands, in fact, millions of children in third world countries who are not receiving food, let alone an education or decent medical treatment.

Children are living in shocking conditions in many third world countries. Approximately one billion people, mostly children, do not have access to clean water. Instead, they are forced to drink water that is contaminated and dirty causing more health problems than to begin with. Clean water is essential to life, in fact the human body contains approximately sixty to seventy percent water and without this water, these children are not receiving a right. Not only is lack of water a problem, many children only receive a small bowl of rice or oats each day if they are lucky. Many children do not die of complete starvation, however, poor food and nutrient deficiencies cause malnourishment, stunted growth, extreme weakness and vulnerability to other illnesses, these are only some of the outcomes.

"18 000 children will die today" (Powell, J. 'WORLD IN FOCUS ; children will die today'. *The Advertiser*. Adelaide, 20 May 2006 pW03). This is a true statement. It is estimated that 300 million children struggle to get enough food. Their bodies are too weak from malnutrition to fight off the most basic diseases and infections and as a harsh result, eighteen thousand of them die every day. John Powell, the deputy executive director of the World Food Program states "they die because they did not have enough to eat yesterday; do not have enough to eat today; and will not have enough to eat tomorrow... they just die", however, every one of these deaths are preventable and we are the ones that need to change this.

Children not receiving an education is another problem. Roughly 100 million children whom are in school do not turn up to class because their labour is needed elsewhere in order to gain food for their family. Did you know that if we spent less than one percent on what we are already spending on military around the world, we could put

all the children who do not have an education into school. So, why don't we spend 98 percent of this money on military and get rid of poverty at the same time? Honestly, I do not know and at the moment, this world is in danger of inequality and we need to stop this.

When I see those gorgeous children in those ads, in photos or whenever, they are always smiling. Even though people in this world have been treated like animals they still have hope and inner happiness, which many of us can't seem to find. Mobile phones are blocking out our realisation that we live in a stable environment. I recently travelled to China late last year and realised how beautiful Australia is. We live in one of the happiest and most freedom filled countries on this planet and so many of us take it all for granted.

Every person on this planet deserves to be treated as a human being. Human rights are those basic standards without which people cannot live in dignity. To violate someone's human rights is to treat that person as though she or he were not a human being. Unfortunately, people, especially children in third world countries, are not treated correctly. Not giving them a chance to drink clean water, eat nutritious food, have an education and live in a sheltered home is taking away their rights to live their lives, as a human should. We need to help this situation.

Together, we can make this world a better place. Let us take this world into our own hands and build a better one. When we work together, we can do anything, so lets erase world poverty and save the children from hunger, pain and suffering. Lets give them a chance at the life we have had by helping out at every chance we get. Even if it is something small like participating in a forty-hour famine, you are making a difference. With a tiny sum of thirty-four dollars you could give a child a year of education and healthy meals – a gift not one person could steal. Everyone deserves a chance at being a human being, a chance to live, learn and enjoy life. If we work together, we can make a difference and that is all we need, a difference.