



Hear Me Out: Voices from Within

A Collaboration between the students of Gateway
and the University of Redlands



I am intelligent, unique, caring
I am from the mall, movies and parks
I love my friends and family
I am afraid of God and death
I hope for a good education
I want to change my life, my train of thought
Art

Who Am I?

My name is Michael
I am sincere, passionate and confused
I am from poverty, sidewalks and street corners
I love my neighborhood, my family and God
I am afraid of wasting my life, hurting the ones I love and failure
I hope for success
I want to change my destiny
My name is Michael

Real Krazee

I am sober
I am from the City of Angels
I love beer, drugs, girls
I hope to get faded
Jose



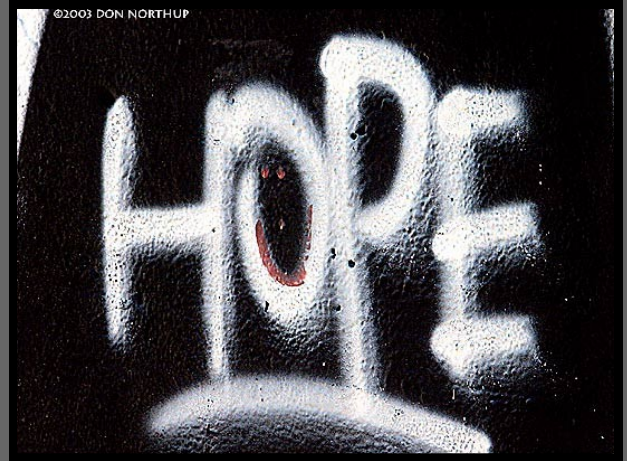
I am talented, forgiving and thoughtful
I am from a regretful neighborhood
I love my family, my girl, my life
I am afraid of death, punishment, losing someone
I hope for a better life in the future
I want to change my way of living



I AM...

I am 5' 10", black
I am from San Bernardino, Sunny,
Loud
I love family, good hearted people,
smiling faces
I am afraid of violence, responsibility
I hope for peace in the world
I want to change the economy

By Dennis



MARK

I am who I am
I am from a placed of mixed messages
I love pleasant surprises
I am afraid of not being accepted
I hope for endless sunrises
I want to change the lives of those
who've been rejected
I am who I am

JORDAN

I am athletic, calm and head-
strong
I am from basketball courts,
Sylvan park and football
stadiums
I love family, sports and
weightlifting
I am afraid of failing again,
losing a loved one
I hope for the best
I want to change my life
attitude

I am relaxed, creative, quiet
I am from tall buildings, noisy street,
active streets
I love my family
I am afraid of losing my family
I hope for my life to change
I want to change my ways of thinking

by William

I AM...

YEAH YEA CHANGE

I am a hustla, funny, serious
I am from the bricks, poverty,
nothing
I love money, my brothers and
momma
I am afraid of failure
I hope for a change in myself
I want to change the way I think
about things

JEROME

KELLY

I am curious, energetic, randomly
philosophic
I am from backyard swings and fan-
tasy things, but never any Barbies
I love the smiles of children
I am afraid of downtown cities and
the ice cream man
I hope for more green to bleed into
this earth
I want to release my inhibitions

I am Irish American
I am from soccer fields
I love family
I am afraid of anything happening
to them
I hope for balance
I want to change what I can and be
there for people facing things I
can't change.

CORY

LAUREN

I am loving, hopeful and concerned
I am from ocean sand and chlorine
I love my sisters and swimming in the
rain
I am afraid of the future
I hope for my own family one day
I want to change a child's life

Ali

I am unique,
ambitious,
hopeful
I am from a single mother, riding the
bus and hand me downs
I love learning, growing, basketball and
my family
I am afraid of being judged
I hope for a good future

Memories of CHILDHOOD



When I was young, some kids from the neighborhood and I went down the street to the cemetery to take a picture of ghosts. We ran up there, took a picture really fast and ran as fast as we could down the street. When we developed the pictures, there were little white orbs all around the cemetery. We were convinced the orbs were ghosts.

I think childhood is important because everyone needs a time in their life when they are naive, innocent, and taken care of. When you're a child, you believe in ghosts, fairy tales, and psychics. You still believe that anything is possible, everyone is a good person deep down, and that you are invincible and safe. If you have to grow up too fast, you don't have a chance to dream and make-believe. Creativity and the ability to dream of what you want is stifled. Childhood and ghost stories are important.

-Elyssa

Abuse

I remember the fiery anger when I saw my mom getting beat in an alley and the rebellious Warrior of my young self
I chased the man down the street with a hammer. The blood flowin' through my veins, crazy thoughts invading my mind. Why did this man have to put me and my mom through this struggle? I am only a child, but I have to be a man, this seems unfair, something I wish I could change but I can't.

By Mike
(With Kaitlin
and Ali)

Childhood is meant to be lost. Growing up means leaving behind. But childhood isn't meant to be stolen. You can't leave behind what you never had.
-Cory, William, Mark

What makes
someone a child

What makes someone a child is someone who can provide for themselves. What also makes someone a child is someone who doesn't know right from wrong. I would say someone who is under the age of 21 is a child. I really believe that age is really just a number it's all about maturity.

-Dennis

YEAR 18 0000

Voices from Within

I think that what separates a child from an adult is different experiences. Like a child from Hollywood will get to enjoy all of their childhood, unlike the other child who was born into nothing has to grow up fast. The reason I think this is is because I was one of these childs that grew up into nothing, born into nothing. I had to make something out of nothing.

By Jerome

A child is a child because of the way they act. Someone is grown when they have responsibilities or stuff to take care of. There is no certain age to be an adult, 18 is only an adult for the law. We all grow up at different times.

A good memory is kickin' it with the homie, who's no longer here. I grew up too soon. I think kids need a childhood because it's something I didn't have.

-Jose

The moment I knew things would be different was that day she had us throw all my dads things on the grass. She had no emotion. I remember the day down to the CDs I carried, and how I didn't get what was going on. When my dad left later that night I thought he was coming back. The bliss of ignorance. After that day my mom started working late, fighting more and more with my sister, until finally fists started flying. One night I was playing with my Barbies under the table and my mom and sister came in screaming and yelling. My mom pushed her against the wall, grabbed a wooden spoon and started hitting her. A few seconds later the spoon broke and flew and landed right next to me. The fighting and hitting lasted about a year.

Family, friends, and even schools tried to intervene.

Finally my mom sent her to live with my dad. Because he worked from 3am to 9pm my sister did what she wanted. Stopped going to school, started doing drugs, and drinking every night. When my sister left was the day I grew up, my family completely torn apart. I started walking to school and staying home alone, and most importantly I started taking care of both my mom and sister. My mom was super depressed and my sister was always faded. Somewhere along the way I was designated the mediator, or rather jammed right in the middle, and had to develop ways to get them to be semi-nice to each other.

-Alex

A Childhood

You can learn

Everything is a new experience

Not knowing is forgiven

Time is plenty It is yours to explore

A Rough Childhood

What are some things that kids do?

Why is childhood so special?

I believe that it's special because kids do whatever they are born to do.

In this way they are innocent

and can't really tell right from wrong.

A childhood is a fun time in someone's life.

Anything could make you laugh!

Sometimes a childhood could be the worst time in someone's life

because of the hard times

they go through or the stuff they see.

-William



Childhood is not caring.

-Bergen

What Makes Someone a Child?

You're grown when you just wanna escape for a while

You're a child if you think you wanna live life runnin wild

You're grown when you gotta fend for yourself

You're a child when you can't monitor your health

Payin bills and writin wills

Makin Sure you get those daily 3 meals, that's grown

Wantin, needin, cryin, cuz you bleedin, child's play.

Havin adult responsibilities when you aint grown can be rough

Feeling like you got jacked for a part of you life is tough

You call the bluff

Make the call whether I'm a child or not

When I was not older than one hand I was handlin hot pots.

Didn't have a room, all I had was a cot.

We grow up faster than we intend

But like all wounds that takes time to mend

In order to know where you're goin

Know where you've been

That an tell you more than you can imagine

Life isn't a beauty pageant

It's a journey

So live it until you ride in that gurney

That time will be faster than you think.

-Willie

I think what makes someone grown is when you have to take responsibilities upon yourself. I feel like when people give up on you, and you grew up when there's nothing but fights and no communication, you just want people that will listen to you. But you choose the wrong people, older people that show you the wrong route. But that's all you've learned you stick with all you know. Especially when your family don't want you in the house because they don't want to deal with you.

so you got ta do what you got ta do just to live and try to maintain.



Neighbor- Hoods

This is me
This is where I'm from
my town, my street, my home
climbing on the bones
of an animal from long ago
had a hard day so I go
running in circles around the track
thinking about all the things that I lack.
with a grumbling core
I walk down to the corner store
a gaggle of girls
my permanent group of four
Subway for dinner
and a show of the crazies
summers in Houston
make everyone lazy
This is where I'm from
This is my neighborhood
The place where I was encouraged
to be the best person I could.

-Elyssa

MY NEIGHBORHOOD

I grew up in the ghetto
and I still live in my neighborhood
to this day.
I'm street smart around my neighborhood
because I lived there all my life.
I know where everything is at
so I don't have to walk and ask where
everything is at
I'm the one who tells them.

-By Jesse



My Hood I wish To Change

My neighborhood I live in is filled with
gang violence, police,
drug sales, and also hoes.
I would love to see the opposite of my neighborhood.
I would like to see each other helping each other find a
job or giving each other a hand with something.
I would also like to see young females wait to find the
right person for them, instead of opening their legs be-
cause someone just smoked a blunt with them.
I would really want every-
body to flush all the drugs
down the toilet instead of
setting themselves up
for failure.

By Dennis



In My Neighborhood

by art & alex

I remember waiting for school to end
to run & scream with all my friends
In my neighborhood one would see
how someone with nothing could be
I remember always being in the city mall
window shopping and walking tall

Sitting on the curb one day
wishing I never ran away
Walking with my mom one night
she speaks softly in the moonlight
She tells me "everything's gonna be alright"

My neighborhood has hope
going to school not smoking dope
In my dreams this place would be
community spaces, safe parks & streets
People talking on the streets
walking dogs & making beats
Different minds and different kinds
living together & having good times

To me, my hood represents excitement
because there's never a dull moment.
It represents pride and territory
because it's something I feel a part of.

It represents family
because we're all there for each other.
When I walk the streets, I see...
perfect streets, tagging, and the liquor
store.

The thing I love most about my hood is
I love everything about my hood

-Ralph

My Family

In My Neighborhood

I Hear sirens ghetto birds see patrol cars and cops
this means run and never look back
Because if you do you'll be smacked face first
into hard concrete cold cuffs clamps your wrist and
now you're in a cop car on you way to juvenile hall.

In your head you start to think, "Naw this is a
dream it's not real." But in reality it is.

In my neighborhood I see graffiti

This means your territory marked on the wall
like a dog pisses to mark his spot

In my neighborhood I see guns
this means protection

in my neighborhood I see church

this to me means faith and peace a place to get
away from the crazy world

But it also means grief, funerals, wakes and
homies passing on in my neighbor hood

I see liquor stores this means 40.oz, swisher
sweets, cigarettes and munchies

In my neighborhood I see grocery stores this
means food

In my neighborhood

I see a park this means kicking back all day playing
sports with the homies having BBQs and town fairs

In my neighborhood I see ambulance
this means bad news

in my neighbor hood

I see Evergreen Taco's this to me means the best
food in my city

In my neighborhood

I see neighbors this means family
this is my neighborhood and to me

neighbor hood means
unity



By Michael



Street

When we think about our neighborhoods, one main street stands out:
The street I grew up on, the street I'm from
There was a kick-it park,
Always thrift stores wherever you go.

When I wanted to hear about
my gang's history,
no one wanted to tell me.
I had to ask someone older.
But it's different now.
It's still changing to this day.
Killing each other.
People killing cops.
It's too much.

When you are a kid, whatever you were born into is your entire reality. You can't change anything about it. But you come to find out as an adult how many ways life can be.

You see that people's ways of lives are constantly changing.

You can see that they came to be the way they are now because certain things happened in the past. As an adult you become responsible for creating the environment your children will be born into.

-Cory



Everything for me was connected. The bus could take me from north to south, over the hills to grandma's house. I could walk to the store & see the same people everyday. I could hear the stadium as the football team played, I could hear as a plane passed over my front yard. In the spring & summer flowers would blossom. I got a cut in my leg from trying to cop em: with my camera that is cause my neighborhood was photogenic – lake across the path – broke-down church on the corner – quiet cul-de-sac – Escalade riding down the street blasting the bass. See for me everything is connected – and each one of my neighborhoods has shaped who I am today.



What my neighborhood means to me, where I live there's parties like everyday, gun shots every hour, there's some bad places where I live and then there's really fun places and fun things to do like quad riding, paintball shooting but we will get in trouble for shooting the wrong things like cars or people.

-Ricky



My neighborhood is real shady. I lived on the white side of town, there weren't designated black and white areas, but it seemed like that. Everybody said that the bad parts of town were the ghettos which were filled with primarily brown people. Adults said that was where the drugs and crime were, but me and my boys knew the truth:

We had just as many drugs and criminals in my neighborhood as anywhere else. No one expected it though. I remember watchin' all the parents getting off the train walking back to their nice houses. I always thought it was funny because those parents always were the ones talking smack about kids who grew up in the "bad" side of town. It was funny because their kids were the real criminals, their kids were drug dealers, addicts, rapists and robbers. I always thought their kids were worse than any of those other criminals because they were given hella more opportunities than those kids growing up in the ghettos. Made me think that it ain't the crime that makes you a criminal, it's where you're from.

-Bergen

I was born in my 'hood
I never thought it was grimy
'til I went to the rich part of the city.
My hood had so much character.
The people were unique.
The bus stop was always crowded
with diverse people.
An old Asian couple, kids going to
school or not going to school,
and people going to work.
I'm standing on the corner and I see a
bum on the street with a sigh that reads:
God Bless: Will work for food.
I see a group of men, young and old,
posted by the Home Depot,
waiting for work.
There is graffiti on the overpass and I
always admire it.
The 'hood looks dirty but some people
still have smiles on their face.
I'm proud to be from
my 'hood.



The best and worst days of School

Ralph
and
Kelly

Avoiding School
School was never
the place to be
Rather be in
the neighborhood
with my homies
smoking and drinking were
funner than school
hated most of my teachers
but Mr Cosme's pretty cool
Class was filled
with troublemakers,
nerds and acting out,
it was always pretty boring
I wanted time to shout
Time needed to fly
not crawl so slowly
we always ditched together
me and my homies
Social time was
filled with girls
talking and smoking
weed
overlapped class
time
then the teacher's
mad at me

Gabriel

Crowd of people talkin
Murals
School cops
Smelly bathrooms
Carls Jr. next door
Digital video Ms. Parker
I learned my ABC's and
How to read
I learned how to play basket ball in
school
I learned to stop at a red light
slowdown at a yellow light and
go at a green light
I learned multiplication.
I learned to be to school on time and
how to be Social

Security at school acts like its a
prison. Girls, beer and drugs.
Teachers could have been smarter.
Most of them just write something
on the board and tell you to look it
up. High school. Punishment didn't
teach anything except when and
when not to do stuff. All the coaches
sucked, HS hardly ever won a game.

Richard and
Caroline

Well, high school went bad for me like my first month in high school. I wanted to learn when I first started class, but my teacher she just told us what to do. Then she would go back to the computer without picking up a book and going through the problems that we don't understand. After that, I kept going on for like two weeks. I sort of felt like I wasn't really learning anything. I didn't talk to my counselor or anything. I just really made a bad choice and I gave up on school. I really wish I should have stayed in school and done the right thing. I probably would not be here locked up right now.

By Dennis

School Days

I learned how to talk to girls, and become socially sophisticated in school. I learned the right and wrong things to say. I learned how to spit game at girls and defend.

I learned how to sneak out of my school's door and break out

Bergen

My worst day was at San Bernardino High. I got into it with the teacher and he told me to go to the office because I was high and kept talking stuff to every body. So he tried to grab me and I pushed him and he got on the phone and I got a chair and threw it at him so I got locked up. So that's my bad day.


Jesse

One of my best days of school was when students were receiving medals for academic performance. I was getting a gold medal for being in the GPA range from 3.8-4.0. What made this so special is that it was the first time my mother came to see me. I had got plenty of medals before, but no one in my family would come to see me. Even though she had to bring my disabled brother and her dysfunctional boyfriend with her, I was happy that she came. She would brag to her relatives, forcing them to compare children the way she would talk about me to them. We would go there and get the dirtiest looks. It's the way my mother showed her pride. I'm addicted to praise and I know I benefit, but I just love someone telling me I did a good job, especially when I've earned it.

Willie



more School Days

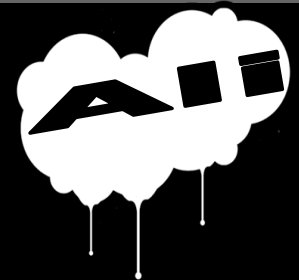


My Best Day of School Ever by: Ben

A lot of people mentioned girls and sports in the things they remember. My best day of school ever involves both. I remember the first time I asked out a girl. I was a skinny little nerdy boy. I had friends, but most of them were nerdy kids too. I had a crush on this girl Carolyn. She played volleyball, so one day I stayed after school to watch her volleyball game. I had gotten one of those giant pizza sized cookies for her, because I knew she loved chocolate chip cookies and had them almost every day at lunch. On the cookie I had them write "Carolyn, will you go to Homecoming with me?" I was so nervous after the game when I went down from the stands to give it to her. She said yes, much to my surprise. I was so happy! The date turned out to be really really bad, but at least asking her was fun.

A Day at "George" (My School)

Go to first period, do your work, talk with friends
Second period same thing, just chill.
Doesn't take to much to pass class.
If you want a C, show up.
If you want an A, do the homework.
At break I hear one of the Gomez brothers
Is gonna fight Sal's little brother after school.
We all plan on walking down the block to a
court
down the street to watch the fight
Word spreads during the day
At lunch we go to "the tree"
The tree is where I first learned how to roll a
blunt
Never thought I'd learn that in school,
but my homie Karla J was a pro
and insisted knowing how to roll a blunt
was a valuable skill.
I learned but I never hit it.
My homies would puff it and pass it
but I would just pass it.
I was an athlete and damn scared
what my mom would think if she found out
so I never thought twice about it.
Goin 'to the rest of classes
a few of my friends were high
but could still get by
cuz class wasn't all that serious.
After school we all mob down the block to the
fight.
We're all in a ring, about 60 kids
all looking forward to seeing two kids fight.
When I saw blood, I knew it was time to go.
We all bounced. Rolled back to Jack in the Box.



I'm gonna start off with my worst day of school. Well from what I remember this was my worst day. A teacher of mine knew I got locked up. Because I missed a week or two of his class. I had a D in his class and I got out in time before the quarter ended and there was a 150 point project due. and if it was completed it counted as a whole letter grade. So I knew I had to do it to get my grade up to a C so I could be eligible for football. Because my coach told me he's let me back on the team if I could raise it up. Even if I was locked up and missed hell week. He said that they needed me and I was determined to raise that grade because our first game was going to be broadcasted on Fox Sports Net. So I completed it. But I didn't mention that my teacher was also my basketball coach and he never liked the fact that I would get in trouble with fights or outside of school but still end up making grades and play good. He liked all the goody two shoes players and that wasn't me. So anyway I turned in my project knowing for sure I did it good and he gave me a 149 points which was an A. But for some reason he still didn't give me that C, and I knew it was because he didn't want

The Best and The Worst by Jordan

to see me play. That's just how it is its politics and that really pissed me off. Cuz I knew I should have got that grade and my football coach also knew it was done intentionally. So this turned into my best day of school my football coach fixed my grade and said I would be playing in the fame on T.V. that was a good feeling. My motivation for school is Football and Basketball. If it wasn't for that then I wouldn't be much of a student.

...so it turned into my best day of school.....



One of the worst days of my life happened when I was in middle school. I was walking from across the street to school when a school bus passed me. As it passed, one of the kids on the bus yelled at me, "Fatty!" I was so hurt that I spent the first couple of periods in the bathroom crying. My high school never failed me. I had the privilege of going to a school where half my classes were vocal classes. I got to sing for half the day. We ate lunch in the parking lot and bought stuff from bake sales. My Spanish teacher had us memorize Spanish songs and then we had Spanish idol.

Elyssa

I cannot think of a whole day the memories are vague but I can think of a moment in time I used to remind myself of the anger in my past in the deepest part of my soul I am in an English classroom in Middle School on the border line of two cities I am a shy quiet little boy I don't have much joy We are reading a book in class we called it group reading Everybody knew I did not know how to read and they used it against me But that is just life The pain hurts like a knife I was sitting in my seat and they purposely called on me and I tried my hardest but nothing good came out It was so emotional I wanted to shout The class laughing and pointing It was so annoying

But all and all I took it and put it deep down inside And used it to thrive And now I am sitting here my moment to shine Reading my poem Sitting on my throne.

Michael

The Worst Day at School Erick

School was out and me and my homies were in the back of the school. The school was my hood school. Some one came up to me. He said to me, "Where you from?" So I let him know and he said the wrong thing. So I hit him. Then someone came to stop it, but my homie did not let that happen. When I looked up I seen my homie on the floor. I got the kid that had my homie on the floor. And when I got down with him someone came running up and he hurt me but I did not know till I got to the homies pad on the next street. When I went to the homies pad I didn't feel it, but I seen it. Then I went to the hospital and that's all I got to say.

School

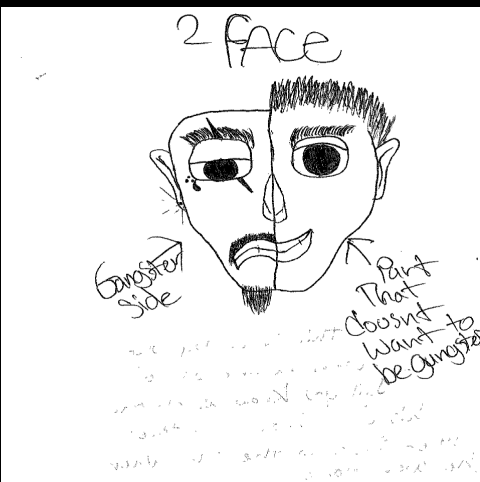
It was crowded a lot
The bathroom smelled bad
It rained always
Tired from walking around
all day around the school.
Crowded,
fighting a lot.
Food fights,
everybody fighting in line,
everyone ditching,
in detention.
Good times in PE.
Tether ball

Ben and Jesse

School failed for me, and I think for most people, because I never wanted to be there or appreciated what it gave me. The things that I learned that are important, I learned elsewhere. I think schools are focused on the wrong things. The intentions are misplaced. Kids can see this better than anyone but aren't given that credit. I think schools should be more flexible in order to offer an experience that means more

to the students. If the students feel they have more of a stake in the experience and a chance to make it good, they will try harder. Trying harder they are going to get more out of it. But most of the time I don't think it is really about the kids.

by: Cory



My worst day of school was when I had straight F's and our report cards were coming home that day. I felt like that day was moving faster than any other. I just didn't want to go home because my dad was mean. I ended up getting home beating my dad there, so I could stash it and fall asleep so nothing would

happen. But when he got home, I was woken up with a big smack and yelling saying, "Where's the report card that was in the mailbox earlier?" So I gave it up and got my but whipping. From there on out I wasn't having it anymore so every time that situation came up I just ran away.

AFT

Juvenile Justice

Jesse

My life being up on the system. At first i could not stand it but now I'm used to. When i get locked up staff no who in. i know on one's going to trip on me because the people are there you were locked up with last time.



"some people have a key to take a trip through your mind, but you have to be willing to let them in "

Darrick

What's the meaning of it, it could be good or bad, happy or sad. emotional, or it could be the greatest outcome, that you desire, if people don't understand what goes on in your mind, you could take step after step, to make that person acknowledge your deepest thoughts, make them understand all the humans that you kept inside. all the people who probably hurt you in a physical way or in a emotional way, some people have a key to take a trip through your mind, but you have to be willing to let them in, and you both can find the spot that makes your mind humble.

Dennis

Juvenile Court System

I would say the juvenile court system helped me a lot. I also dislike the (jcs) because some people stare at you like they haven't seen a human being before.

Juvenile Justice

Richard

Screams

What I learned from this sentence is that no one can help you when you are trapped in a box. Especially when that box is your own mind. The longer you are in that box the more complicated your life will be when you're released. You will be like a sleeping dog locked in a kennel then when letting it out it doesn't know what to do.

“my screams have no voice no matter how loud I shout...”

Zack A.

What I learned was how to never show weakness. I had grown up in west valley since I was twelve I grew attached to some staff and they grew attached to me to. I learned some good things like how to keep my room and bed made I learned how to make a spread. But the bad things I learned was how to always keep my guard up. Some of the staff practically raised me because I spent more time in jail then home.

Arturo

I think this J.J.S doesn't help you because most people don't choose to let it. If you really wanted to you can its up to you. People are capable of following orders or directions by staff members and maintaining just fine because we choose to, because there consequences Right? But we cant follow direction from our mom's and dads that aren't as bad as probation orders. Were always gonna follow order whether its your parents or someone else. So the J.J.S could be a learning experience, it may take some time or more but people will learn along the way.

Michael

Its almost been one year sense that horrific thing has happen it tears me apart I don't think about it much but today I'll give you an opportunity to take a journey into my mind I take you to a lonely slanted street in east L.A that rolls down hill and never stops my homeboy Cisco running down the street at top speed losing his breath breaking a sweat he just murder three enemies off an impulse a fire in his heart he starts to slow down he sees the gang unit he's afraid of life in prison he shots at the unit they fire back he was out numbered and out gunned now he's dead I got this letter almost a year ago I was sitting in my cold box of a cell tears start to roll down my face they didn't even want to give me the letter they were afraid I might start some thing I wasn't there for him I didn't even get to go to his funeral the jj system robbed this from me and I'll never forget it.

Juvenile Justice



Travis

About the things I learned growing up
Some of the poem stood out to me.
It came down to the part where he had to take care of his little girl.
He didn't know what he needed to support her.
All he knew was gang related and institutionalized.
He needs someone to help him to take care of his baby
but all he gots is his homeboys
but his homeboys don't know either
and he really doesn't have anyone else
but his family and I guess he wasn't depending on his family.

Bergen

I think that my experience in the Juvenile Justice is the same as many others. I have been booked several times, and brought in even more. I wasn't doing very serious crimes at least the ones the ones I'd been caught for, and they didn't seem to think so either. The court room is a joke. I didn't even feel like I was there. they slapped me on the wrist and sent me back.

**Hear Me Out:
Voices from Within**

**We may Be
Locked up But
we're still thinkin'**

By Porscha

I feel stuck
I'm a mutt
Half white
Half Ecuadorian
I'm stuck
Never White enough
Never Hispanic enough
One foot stuck in one world,
One in the other
I'm stuck
Who am I?
What do I do?

Race & Ethnicity

Two Worlds one girl

When I was growing up I had two worlds. One made of gold the other made of trash. One of community the other of drugs. Yet one felt like home and the other I imposed.

When I was growing up I was able to pass. Never truly feeling like I belong I traveled between two worlds on white and one brown One weekend spent at garden parties the other immersed in Puerto Rican culture.

Alex

Jose & Kaitlin

Mexican is me

Mexican is me
The food, the fights, *hotboxing*
Mexican is me – real, never
Putting on a front, always
Reppin' the true me
Mexican is me – the clothing, my
Homies the way
I carry myself
Mexican is me, and forever will be

Jose & Kaitlin

Good Memories

My mom makes the best fish. She puts it in the pan fries that stuff up but first she batters the flower on the fish. She has the stove running and in the pan olive oil so after the battering she puts it in the pan and waits a little then you dig in. Put some lemon or lime on your fish then you're good to go.

I like listening to all kinds of music, my mom likes Country, and my dad likes Classic Rap like Dr. Dre, Ice Cube, and Classic Rock and I like a lot of what my dad listen's to he got me more into Classic Rock and Rap

and it helps us bond.

One day, when the 3rd time I got in trouble that day me and my dad were bonding we were in his truck going to get something to eat and when a tight song came on we would go all out just nodding are head to the music it was "loc to the brain" by brother linch and It was pretty cool.

By Gabriel



HEAR ME OUT!!



I had to act different in front of one of my ex-girlfriend's parents. She liked me and she wanted her parents to like me. So I had to dress and talk different around her parents. After a while I gave up on being fake and started being myself and her parents started hating me.

By Zach

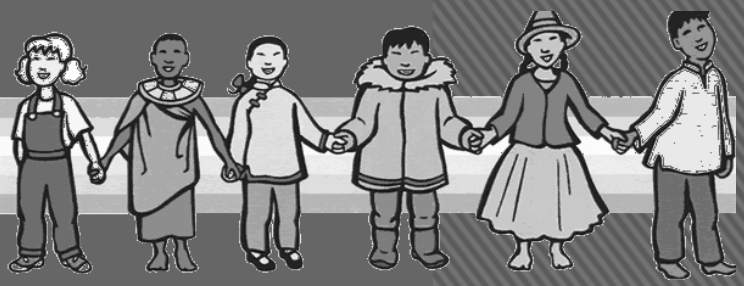
My favorite thing about my culture is my food. I'm Italian and Mexican so I love Italian and Mexican food. Pasta, lasagna, spaghetti, meatballs, enchiladas, tostadas, taquitos.



By Jordan

I know a kid in the halls who was locked up 13 times and never went to placement or anything. He would fight his case and still get a release date and everyone made fun of him because he was white.

Zach



Being A Man

Robert

What is a Man

What is being a man this question is asked often and has many different perspectives and no right answers.

I don't think my answer is good for anything but

I will give you my opinion if that is what you are asking for. Being a man is more than having it all; girls, clothes and cars. Being able to make a child, even buying alcohol and tobacco products. A man is somebody responsible, kind, caring, strong, willing and always there for his family. Never gives up and gets the job done.

Michael

Being a man...

It is a very hard thing to do. My way of being a man would probably not meet what other people are looking for.

A man to me is someone who is smart and knows how to take care of business when business needs to be taken care of.

A man is someone who shows loyalty and respect to people who deserve it.

A man knows when to quit.

A man to me is someone who can handle any problem that comes their way.

A man is someone who stands up for what they are.

Me, I know a lil' about being a man.

But I'm from the "counts" and I'm going to change, but not because I'm scared or because someone tells me to. I'm going to do it for my own being.

A man is someone who doesn't need guidance.
A man is also someone who can provide for themselves and also their family.
A man can get up and go to work everyday without taking off, if it's not an emergency or he's very ill.
A man can pay bills on time and take responsibility for what it's worth.

Dennis

Being a man was being wild and playing an instrument every weekend at a house party. As well you always needed your glass of rum and coke in hand. My dad was the life of the party. Always roaming around and being social. Playing music and laughing loud. Being a man was loving your family.

Anonymous

Being a man to me is someone that handles his business. A man would not let anyone disrespect him in any way. Also, if he has kids or a family, he would do anything necessary to take care of them. And if anybody comes at his family disrespectfully, that's coming at him twice as disrespectful. A man to me never gives up in what he believes in, no matter if it's bad or good...he would stick with it until the end.

Joseph

Manhood

Fathers

Alright.
How I learned to be a man.
My dad was always there for me throughout my life.
He was almost like my hero, he taught me everything I know.
But he was my coach.
And just not an ordinary coach. He was a varsity high school coach and coached like Bobby Knight. My mom didn't like that. But then again I hated it at the time but now I thank him.

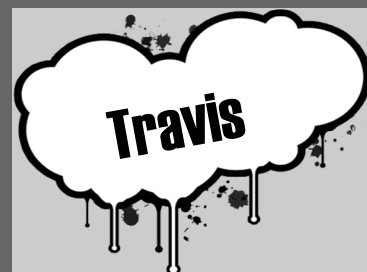


Jesper Christensen

Really hard on me.
He taught me all the fundamentals of basketball and without all that I wouldn't have developed into the player I am today.
But one thing that I didn't like is how my dad wouldn't know when to stop coaching me.
Like when it was time to be Dad its time to be my dad not my coach.
And sometimes I'd see too much of that coach and that's what started problems.
Like if I had a bad game he'd make me run sprints when we'd get home.

And I learned a lot from his mistakes that'll make me a better dad.

Jordan



I am writing about what kind of father I would be.
I will be the father,
that my father wasn't to me,
I would be there for
my child,
love them,
and do what my father
didn't do for me,
I also would be a good role
model, everything
I didn't have.



What I learned from my father

When I was 4 years old
my dad left me with his aunt
at the time I didn't know why.
He told me he was going to get groceries
but he never came back.
The people he left me with were
drug addicts
and I lived with them for 7 years.
When I got older
I found out why my dad left me with those
people.

When I was 3 years old
he stole me from foster care
and kept me at his house.
One day he got in a fight with my step mom
so that's why he left me with those people.
He didn't know that the people he left me
with taught me a lot of negative things.
Now I sit here at Gateway
and think back and think about what I
learned from my dad.
I learned how to get locked up and all kinds
of other negative things.
Just because he left me with the wrong
people thinking he was helping me.
If my dad never left me with those people I
wouldn't be here today.

Fathers

“How a Father Should Be”

I think a father should be there for you at all times.
I also think if he's not there he should at least try to keep in contact with you.

A father should never try to make a baby, if they're not in the right state of mind.
Meaning that if you're not ready to take responsibilities don't create infants that you can't provide for.

I think a real man should wait until he has a job, car,
and at least an apartment to start making babies.

The reason for that is because, I'm the type that would want to put a child into this world for the right reason, not just to get into a girl for the feeling if you know what I mean.

From my point of view,

I would feel good about myself to have a good running car, job and a house or apartment because I would know my child has a place to sleep at night;

I would have a car to get my child to the doctors,

and I would have a good ass job to provide my child with food and clothing.

From my point of view.

Dennis

My Bad, Dad

Sorry Dad,

I didn't listen and learn the things you tried to teach, and had to learn another way. I regret being hard headed and taking this path. If I would took what you had to offer I would have been a better person. You had a lot of good things to offer and teach me like sports, work hard, and just be like you in general. I apologize for not telling you how I feel, but I just thought there was a right way to tell you because we've never talked this way before. But I know now to just say what I feel, and I'm sorry for everything you had to put up with from you oldest child. And we will catch up on all the old times we never got to express or anything to each other.

Art



To me being hard is to show no weakness, that weakness has to be shown only when it's necessary. Being hard is necessary when someone else is acting hard against you.



Hard: a Brainstorm
Fighting
frustrated
Mad
Ready –
Ready for whatever
Ready for US marshals
to arrest

Being hard you can't describe it. You show it through body language. Like Zach's 1st time going into the hall, his mentality was "no one's gonna mess with me."
I don't know. It's like when you see someone you can tell, it's a look in the eye or something.
-Zach (written by Porscha)



Being hard to me is someone that thinks they have to show who they are or maybe thinks someone might start to trip because some people don't know that you don't have to show it all the time. Just be you. That's what I think.





Being hard...

You must be hard to let it be known,
If you don't soft is definitely gonna be shown
but don't get me wrong, there's nothing wrong with being soft,
just as long as when someone crosses
that line you better let off.

And snap back to hardness
Just don't let down your guard kid,
'Cause if ya let down your guard,
you could end up with scars,
from letting someone ride on you
Don't let no one take flight on you
Sometimes you just have to show that
fight in you.

All i'm sayin' is, just show respect,
'Cause when you respect,
you should expect the same.



A hard person is a
soft person, a person
that acts hard is fake.

I don't think that
you gotta be hard,
be yourself.

Walk away from
it. I think that I
am kind of a bully,

but only to people
who are bullies to
other, smaller kids.

You have to pick your
fights smart, I have to
walk away because I
have two strikes, if I
get in trouble I'm
screwed.





I think being hard comes instinctively. If someone crosses that line, you just let them know, don't go there, because you don't allow that. But you could always have another side of you. I wouldn't say that it's soft, but soft hearted, in a way.

The way I learned to be hard is when the other little kids being hard thought they could always leave me out. I just went off one day and showed him what I'm capable of doing. I was just being myself during that, and after that everyone made fun of him. So that's an example of just being yourself and that the hardest one can be the weakest. Even though you're hard, you're not bad.



Being hard has to do with a lot of different things. Being hard is different in different environments. Some environments you got to put it out 24/7.

Other environments, when needed. Sometimes it means you don't think before you act, just do what you want without regard for consequences.

There is a big difference though between being hard and being strong.

A lot of fools bluff it. In that environment everyone wants people to think they are hard so some got to front. Some are really scared though. Some are weak. And if you really are strong, maybe you act hard and that's real. Or maybe you don't act at all because it doesn't matter what people think. You know what you are capable of. In that way you can be hard and still show emotion or let your guard down, 'cuz you are strong enough.' What people see isn't what matters. But then again, in a 24/7 environment, some of that stuff gets shut down, it serves no purpose there.





My First Fight

When I was 9 years old, I got in my first real fist fight.

It was kind of dumb but I will never forget it.

The kid's name was Eric we used to call him

“Gay Eric.”

It was at Elementary School in the field towards the backstop.

I was making fun of him so he pushed me.

I pushed him back.

My cousin Bogie was there and he said

“hit him!”

So I punched him in the eye, he grabbed me and I kept hitting him. Then I tripped him and kicked him a couple of times then the supervisors broke it up. When they helped him up he had a black eye.

I felt powerful.

I thought in my head

“damn I could do that to someone.”

I was suspended for three days.

I went home my mom was pissed but didn't say much.

When I went back to school everyone was telling me

“you messed him up.”



Zach

I felt cool as hell and from then on

I would just punch someone that made me mad and kept that train of thought for a long time.

RELATIONSHIPS



By Richard

For Her-

My best friend came to me crying
About a boy that had treated her bad.
He slapped her and she hit him back
A mirror of her relationship with her dad.

I love her, my affectionate, kind friend
But that she could forgive him I can't understand
I know she has horrors in her past but
I'm hoping she'll heal if I just hold her hand.

In secret, their relationship scares me
Because it reminds me of one of my own
He didn't hit me but he broke my heart
I couldn't give him up. I couldn't be alone.

And I see that attitude in her
When she hooks up with guys every night
But I hoping my past experience and advice
Will give her the strength she needs to fight.

I love her, my affectionate, kind friend
And I want her to have the best.
I want the man that she loves to realize,
forever
and always, that he is blessed.

By Elyssa

I never like to deal with relationships. I was that guy who stayed single, not because I was forced to, but because I really felt like I needed too. My dad left my mom right before I got into high school and that really messed up my mind with relationships. I felt like if I was in a relationship, I'd end up like my mom and dad, which sucked. I think my mind flipped all that when I realized I'm smarter than my dad. I would never abandon my children or hurt my family, and I will never be like him. This helped me learn that I can get in a relationship. I aint ever gone be like him, I had to teach myself how to act in a relationship, cuz my dad wouldn't.

Bergen

Relationships

FORTUNATE

I'm fortunate to have you girl
I'm so glad your in my World
Just assure as the Sky is Blue
I bless the day that I've found you.
I look into your eyes and See
Sunshine

Dennis

Life's like a game the more work you put in the higher level you get but if you die and lose your life game over.

There was a part in my life where I hated my mother. She had kicked my dad out, then my sister when I was six and had left me at home alone for years. By the time I was 14 she had me someone new. He had a daughter only a year younger and it was expected that we would get along. However, I hated her as well, she was the most self-centered, spoiled, little white girl I had ever met. As they started to get closer my mom expected me to be fully involved, to be part of this family she dreamed would be happy and cohesive as fast as cooking a tv dinner. Throughout high school as I wanted more and more freedom, and anyway to define my independence she tried to keep me at home. Tried to give me the cohesive strong, loving family she thought I never had as a child. And man did we fight! While she wanted to have me stay home for family dinners, got out to movies and have game night, I wanted to explore the world around me, meet new people and definitely definitely not stay home with a family I didn't want any part of.


The thing is this family my mom thought I never had I really did. While I was growing up my mom needed to have two

jobs and I barely saw her. So my dad and older sister would pick me up and I would stay with them. I loved them and felt at home and had a great family support system. When I would go with my mom I felt awkward, lonely, quiet, wanting to stay at my dads house all the time. My moms wasn't a part of this family which made her over compensate while I was in high school. She would cry and yell at me and guilt me into wanting to be a part of a family I couldn't be a part of.

And while I had so much hate for this woman I really loved something had to change. After just three years physical distance has changed everything. Talking to her only a couple times a week and having the freedom and independence I needed has created a bond I've never expected.

The hate is gone, the hurt is gone and instead lies a deep bond between mother and daughter.

AROD



There is only one relationship I wish I never had and that is with my babys mom. There is times I wish I never met her, because when I left her it was really hard for me to forget her. I used to act like I never felt nothing for her in front of all my homies I didn't want them to laugh at me and make fun of me, but deep down inside, I did care for her, I just didn't know how to show it. The only reason I broke up with is because I thought she deserved better, I been away from her for a month. She had our baby this months I been away from her so long I fill a little for her I know its going to be hard to forget about her. That's why I wish I never had the relationship with her.



My ideal relationship would look like this:

I would be able to have intelligent conversations with her. She would call me out when I'm wrong or out of line. She would be my constant reminder of how to treat women and respectful of culture. She would give me pride while I represent her wherever I go. She does the same for me. We could talk about any issue, not just after just some form of intimacy. I know that one person wouldn't have all these things (or I haven't been made a believer as of yet). She should be aware of how the world sees color as a dynamic in functioning society and use that to further our ambitions into a common effort to challenge issues that we care most about. Having multiple levels of passions, hobbies, and drive is key. They say opposites attract. But people who like the same core things will provide a better chance of achieving more psychological wealth and longevity. I'll keep my eyes open, but if you see me, and figure out what my life is geared towards, you could probably tell what kind of relationship I would find ideal. If not, ask, I keep it on standby.



MY MOTHER

The relationship I wish I had
is like a headache
a bad dream you can't wake up from
this relationship is with my mother
the person you are supposed to love the most
the host of your growth
your world the most important girl in your life
the pain hurts like the sharp end of a knife
being stuck through your heart twisted repeatedly
the slow agonizing heartache is enough to bring any body to their knees
only the strong survive
my mom disowned me causing the anger and pain to build up
and boil over like hot water in a pot
instead of letting it break me
I put it in a certain spot letting it make me
twisting and molding it turning it into motivation striving toward success
desiring to make it for that special lady that unconditional love,
mom just hold on you got to roll on just a little bit longer and
I'll be at the end of the road just a little bit stronger

MICHAEL

Verbal Violence in relationships.

Violence in relationships is sometimes good, but not physical relationships is never good. The reason I feel violent relationships could be sometimes good, is because when everything is going so well something is wrong. For example, when a couple do argue or exchange words they usually get their problems out. Then later on laugh or talk about the issue in a good way. Like for example, one would come over to the other and say I'm happy we got it all out and we were able to get our problems out.

By: Dennis

Thank You Mom

She was young and beautiful and free
She was only 15 when she got pregnant with me
People told her to think twice
Having a baby is not all that nice
They suggested abortion or adoption
But she knew giving birth was her only option
She loved me so much and must have known
That she would be raising me all on her own
She had me at 16 and struggles we had
Dad was not around, making me sad, and making her mad
She had so much love for her little baby girl
She didn't have much, but told me I was her world.
I am so thankful for my mother
I would not be here if she listened to the others
Thank you moms for raising me right
All because of you my future looks bright.

Ali



Hear Me Out: Voices from Within

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