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A Matter of Lives

I am a white male born in 1990. I grew up in the country of a small town that, at that time, did not house any black families. I didn't go to school with any black kids.

For the matters of black lives, I do not have enough, really no experience, on the struggles the black culture faces. The little I do know about black culture; slavery, and how poorly they were treated, etc., from history classes. I have heard some first hand stories and have seen the seemingly endless media stream of violence towards blacks.

My first "real" racial conflict happened when I was 16 years old. I was being detained as a juvy. We were lined up and ready to walk back to our cells from the 'chow hall'. A black teen behind me whispered, "I heard you hate black people." I responded with, "someone lied to you. I don't have any problems with black people, especially since my cousin is black." In juvy I was around several races I had never been around. the majority of the kids seemed to be black. The whites followed, then the hispanics. After that the asains, if any at all, and little to none of another race.

As an adult, I have had little issue with racism or my beliefs called into question. If they have been, I respond with, "I don't discriminate, I differentiate." Meaning to me, that color does not change they way you are. In all races and cultures there are the good, bad, and ugly people. I have heard it said that 'white people rule the world and black people rule the prison.' Honestly, I think it is more about WHO you LET "rule" you.

Thinking back, I can see how I was subtlety shown racism.

For instance, if working on something, and you didn't have the right parts, you use what you have. People around me growing up called this "nigger rigging." I don't like or use that slang term. I prefer something closer to home. Such as, "backwoods wisdom."

Another racial "subtlety" is joke telling. I have noticed the majority of jokes I have heard are racial "jokes." Of all the jokes I've heard over the years, I would guess that, about 80% of them are racial to blacks, 15% are goofy kids kind, and 5% are those about whites, blondes, and other races.

Personally, I do not condone racism or violence, in or to any race of people. Black lives matter. ALL LIVES MATTER. And coffee, black coffee matters too.