

## Speak Up, Speak Out: Embracing the Significance of Our Voices

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How many of you have doubted yourself and asked, “Is my voice heard?” I know I have. We are being sucked into a world where popularity is valued over the message. No wonder we are constantly questioning ourselves about whether our thoughts, our ideas, and our voices are making an impact.

In our globalized world, we have access to information at the tip of our fingers, and we see people fighting for fame through social media platforms. They feel a constant need for attention in order to be heard. Due to this, we are pressured as if we are being judged by our every move, whether it is what we do or what we say, and this mindset is affecting us. We are losing the key ingredient that shapes us and our confidence. I always thought that I shouldn’t have my own voice. In fact, I thought that I should stay quiet since the popular people had a say in everything. I would look around the classroom to see when the majority raised their hands so I could have the same opinion. I would agree with everything, and I hated it when the teacher called on me. I felt their opinionated gaze creeping up on me, and with one wrong answer, they would criticize me. But I was wrong. Nothing happened when I expressed my opinion. They didn’t judge me; they weren’t criticizing me, and they probably had something else in mind. This is when it all clicked. Although I still hate it when the teacher calls on me, maybe having my own opinion isn’t bad at all.

Our voices are not random words that come out of our mouths but it is what makes us who we are. It is a unique tool for us to spread our knowledge and to tell a story and experience.

For us students, our voice plays a significant role when we learn and make friendships. We discuss our opinions, which allows us to engage more in our learning and develop how to speak up for something we truly believe in. When we make friendships, our voice shows our personality, and we are able to make deep relationships with each other. For teachers, their voices inspire

us, the younger generation, and nurture our minds to become intellectual.

Other than that, our voices make us more culturally connected. We live in a diverse world where people have different backgrounds and experiences. With our voices, we can spread our knowledge of different cultures, which allows us to be insightful people. In my old school, there was an event called International Day. We dressed up in our cultural clothes and had the opportunity to share our culture with our classmates. This allowed me to realize that there were many people with different cultures at a young age.

Our modern digital world has given us a new platform to spread our opinions. Although people dream of becoming celebrities, we don't need to be famous to spread our voices. We can find people with the same opinion and create awareness about a topic. Think of all the influential figures who have impacted the world. They all started with nothing but used their voices to get to where they are. Malala Yousefsai got shot while protesting for girls' education, but she used this unfortunate event as a way to spread awareness of the mistreatment that girls are getting in Pakistan. She started protesting locally and was able to spread awareness at the United Nations, where her voice was heard internationally. She is just one of the many influential people who made their own efforts to get their voices heard.

In the end, we must remember that everyone's voice matters, regardless of your age or gender. Our voice shapes and leads us to become better people. Even if your idea is small or simple, it may be the start of something huge. So the next time you find yourself doubting the importance of your voice, remember that your voice does matter and it will be heard.

Thank you.

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【Webページ】

BBC 「Malala: The girl who was shot for going to school」

〈<https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-24379018>〉

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