Running head: My Personal Development

A Paper Describing My Personal Development

Carney F. Coopwood, Student
Chicago State University

A Paper

Presented for the Course PSYC 217 (01) On-Line

Lifespan Development

Fall 2007

Abstract:

This paper in it's' entirety will not be complete with an abstract. I will therefore attempt to complete such without boring my reader(s) or short-changing myself.

Life begins for all of us pretty much the same way; we're born, we grow, and we learn to make choices. Many will applaud some of those choices; others will cause much grief and distress. Either way, they're made.

As a mid-aged African-America, I have seen and experienced much ado about nothing. The years of struggle for civil rights, equality, fairness and less bigotry, after going from being Colored, to Negro, to Black, and finally African-America. Choices I was told and expected to accept by the social norm.

Incidents, situations and multiple circumstances have shaped the lives of all minorities in this country and that should be understood first. The socioeconomic environment influences every aspect of America. Minorities first, and African-Americans hardest.

The thrust of this page, following the flow of our text, will demonstrate the effects of that influence on a personal level, and perhaps even identify with the open thoughts of James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, Conrad Rivers, Lorraine Hansberry, and Angela Davis and yes even Eldridge Cleaver. Blacks who at earlier points in time face and dealt with the institutionalized racist environment in America.

"It reaches to the highest mountain and down to lowest valley…"

Early Childhood:

Born the last child in a dysfunctional family and surviving, after four (4) siblings dyed within a year of their birth, I spent lots of time with my mother and therefore grew accustom to her presence. I was never without her warm or the touch of her hand. Was she a loving person? That was not important then…she was there. I was secure with her presence…and always protected.

The day-to-day activities of my early years are not easily recalled. But they did lead to …*entering my social world*.

School-Age Childhood and Adolescents:

Off to school. The first days of school were not so unusual; we sat and napped, on our personal rugs that were donated by the Blind Foundation of Gary. I remember doing everything with the same group of children for four (4) years. The playground, naps, class exercises, gym time and lining up for home. We bonded pretty well. These were our friends…we did not know anyone else except our parents introduced us to other family members or church members. These were choices we had no control over; choices made for us, for our well-being.

In the third grade, our teachers begin to change and we begin our periods of adjusting to change. New teacher, new classroom, new challenges in skills to learn. Our personalities are beginning to develop and we begin moving into our interest groups. If you like what I like, then we can be friends.

It's here that our greatest challenge was to improve our penmanship. The teacher, Mrs. Bibb, was a very firm woman of about thirty-something and always carried a ruler. Her habit was to crack us across the knuckles when we went outside the lines on our paper during our writing exercise and pull our ears as a means of discipline-as she lead us into a corner to stand or the washroom to drop our pants (little girls always pulled their dresses tight to take their licks). Most of us grew to hate her equally as we passed on to 5th grade and Mrs. Bennett's class. Mrs. Bennett was much nicer and we had a sideshow attraction in class, as her son was our classmate. He always drug his feet. We learned from his continuous demonstration that the teacher would not allow any of us to drag through her class. We were all equals. During these years, I remember very well that I begin noticing that the only time I saw Caucasians was either on television, from a distance or when there was trouble for a colored person. Their presence did not represent a good time.

Expanding My Social Horizons. After my sixth (6) grade graduation, my classmate and I were off to Jr. High and High school. All housed within the same building. There we would meet students from other schools and other parts of the city. This was before bussing and shortly after **Brown vs. The Board Of Education**. Which, I

might add, did very little for us then or now? There were no Caucasians in our neighborhoods because of the 75,000 residents in the city, 55% were Negro and only about 15% of them lived or were school among or with whites. This environment forms my first and most lasting schemas about racial matters.

Rites Of Passage. For me, because I was not a fighter, and was pretty much reared in the usual Judeao-Christian fashion, public fight was not to be one of my avenues of testing. I was taught and embraced the work ethic. Joining and moving in circles where others were learning much the same things, earning merit badges, winning contest, developing moral character were the yardstick used to gages our growth. This continued through out high school and helped form many of my earliest decisions-the first job as a paper carrier, the Para-military groups I joined, the branch of service I eventually joined and the social causes I attached myself to while in high school. In reflection, I can say that my rites of passage were many because as I developed and got stronger, more was required, and expected of me. To remain abreast of my peers, there was a kind of group-thinking that we possessed as we *moved onto the adult social world* together. I think it was unique because fed each other and as opportunities presented themselves to us individually, we, one-by-one, left the safety of the group. I joined the US Air Force.

Young and Middle Adulthood:

Becoming an Adult. I assumed I was grown after returning home from

Viet Nam. Little did I know then, the other "test" that awaited me before manly maturity actually set-in…nine (9) years later? Then I had stop flexing my youth, and boasting of my conquest. I had finally grown inside. I had a better understand of myself, the world around me and my place in it as a man of color; a veteran of an infamous war; an individual fully aware of the multiple racial issues that exist in this country. Between the ages of 20-27 was my daze-of-rage, the period when most African-Americans are very vulnerable to the backlash of white America. I like so many others had the famous "wake-up call". Realizing the difficulty my behavior caused for those I love and who loved me.

Being With Others. This became a nightmare. It was difficult because of the extra excess baggage from the war and my daze-of-rage. I can to hear all too often, baby will you stop hurt yourself? Will you stop hurting us?

But the cry's were not heard nor understood.

The brashness of youth defies care and concern for others. It only acknowledges itself. I was very selfish in my relationships and each of them ended for the same reason. Me.

While I have children from some of those relationships, I shiver when I hear my children say certain things because I've heard it before. From my own lips.

Work and Leisure: At this point in my life, work is no more than a vehicle

to keep the bills paid. Leisure is very special and treated as such. I work alone because most of my co-workers do not have the same work ethic, nor do they share the same objectives. I get a sense of satisfaction from my work as a result. Afterwards, I take weekend get-a-ways. Anywhere within 2-3 hours drive can provide a nice break. Indianapolis, Milwaukee, St. Louis, Rockford or Springfield. Once I return, people generally say, “Oh Carney, you look well rested”.

Making it in Mid-Life: Because those weekends get-a-ways works so well now, I think as I move into my sixties, I’ll be doing more of them. I think it’s called getting old gracefully…. something we all want to do. My views are now more concrete and no longer need to guess about my place or anything. My confidence level is firm.

To this end, I have a stable self-awareness and self-concept.

And that’s not to say I have all the answers and will stop learning, but I just believe that the best is yet to come.

***THÔNG TIN LIÊN HỆ**:*

Nếu còn bất kỳ thắc mắc nào hoặc muốn tìm kiếm thêm nhiều tài liệu ESSAY, ASSIGNMENT mới mẻ khác của Trung tâm Tri Thức Cộng Đồng,
Liên hệ dịch vụ viết thuê assignment, dịch vụ essay:
https://trithuccongdong.net/viet-thue-assignment-dissertation-essay-thesis.html
Hoặc qua SĐT: 0946 88 33 50 hoặc email: ttcd.group@gmail.com để được giúp đỡ nhé!