

12/05/06

Dear Alex Buckman:

I would like to thank you dearly for sharing with us your heart-wrenching story about your life during the Holocaust. Your compelling presentation truly depicted a vivid picture which brought your traumatic experience to life, making it not only effective but unforgettable. What you have undergone at this exceedingly young age helped to realize how fortunate I am to be brought up in a society that looks beyond colour, religion, life style and faults. Our society is not nearly as judgmental; we are to some degree a relatively peaceful society.

Most importantly your story enlightened me as to what the Holocaust was exactly. I knew it was a great travesty but I had no idea that 11 million people were unjustly killed simply for what they were, instead of who they were. It's important for the younger generation to understand the mistakes of the past so they do not reoccur. I believe this develops empathy within young people. This was certainly the case for me.

After walking out the front doors of the Holocaust Centre I could literally envision the sorrow of being a Holocaust orphan. What completely takes me aback is the fact that human beings can be as vicious as animals. I always thought that what separated humans from animals, was our ability to think logically, implement fairness into society and have a moral conscience. What comes alive in my mind is the sheer brutality of the oppressors. I felt as though I was being suffocated just listening to the story; I can't even conceive what pain the women, who were being gassed, felt.

Your story of being an orphan during the Holocaust saddens me the most. Your experience makes me reflect back on my own life. Hearing your story makes me cherish every moment shared with my loving parents. They are always there so I never have to imagine a day without them. Your story opened my eyes and taught me that I should not take my parents for granted.

The Holocaust shows something amazing: the strength of the human spirit. Prisoners survived because of their sheer will to live, unwilling to be broken by the oppression of the Nazis. It is beyond our understanding to say how life truly was for those in the camps, the day in, day out, monotony of horror that grew into weeks, months, and even years. The fact that there were survivors shows that there is something in us that cannot be taken away no matter what.

Sincerely,

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