Does it Really Get Better

May 24, 2011 By Aundaray Guess

For those not in the know there's a viral campaign on the internet of famous and not so famous people who are creating personal videos under a project called, "It Get's Better" which can be found on Youtube. I have mixed feelings about the campaign. On one hand I think it's great that someone is doing something as I learned it's easier to criticize than to do something about something.
So I speak of this not to speak out against but to question the long term effect of the message.
Does it really get better?
As a man in his forties I say, yes it got better for me but it took me until my mid thirties to make that declaration. They say when you're coming out you're always coming out. Which even I can relate to as even now depending on the situation I'm in,maybe for safety reason, such as riding the subway at 1 in the morning, I'm not going to flash my sexuality. The reason is not because of shame but I know the realities of this world and the tolerance. I'm also aware of the ignorance that exists. and for those in school they have it rough as they may experience homophobia not just from their peers but even from the people who are suppose to protect them, their teachers or the teaching staff. it may feel like they have no one to turn to.
The message of "It Get's Better" also comes off as passive to me. It's almost like , "hang in there and take it, the sun will come out tomorrow" By then it's to late for many, especially youth who have been hanging there and can no longer take the abuse whether verbal or physical.
Here in NYC with the increase of violence against LGBT some ending in death, I think a clearer message would be, "This Stops Now".
The hate, "Stops Now"
The verbal abuse, "Stops Now"
The hindering of my rights, "Stops Now"
I don't want to wait for it to get better. I don't want something that belongs to me, 'the right to be me" i now have to wait for you to dispense it to me.
And as an African-American man, even if it gets better I still have other factors to be concerned about such as racism and even rejection from my own LGBT community based on the color of my skin.
I want that to "Stop Now"
So yes it gets better but it's not going to get better with you holding out for it. You 're going to have to fight, and scream and make yourself visible for it to get better. take back what's yours, the right to be.
And if people feel the videos are really effective then I would like to see more color representation and hear their stories. I saw some people of color but most were middle class or represented an LGBT agency. And it's not just a color thing, I want to hear from those in rural areas where they're more at risk than a large city or people with different religious faiths.
I want to hear the voices of people in poor or neglected communities. I want to hear how it gets better for them. I have yet to see their stories.
But to those young and reading these words, there is some truth. It does get better but it's not going to happen overnight. and you have to be wise because if you're underage living at home and come out, make sure you have a a support system in place. I know to many kids who have been kicked out of their

homes and become homeless. You have to sense who’s safe and who will accept you after your reveal.
We should help folks feel seen-by trying our hardest to see them.
But let’s lose the passive tone and start making some noise!!
That’s the only way it’s going to get better!

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