

# Selfishness is a Sickness

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Certain groups of people are severely mistreated in our society. Homeless people are an example of a group that our society has tossed to the side. Many people have succumbed to the idea that homeless people are inferior. The idea that any person is somehow lesser than another is an idea that has made its way into the roots of our society and stuck for many generations. This is a serious problem of selfishness that our society needs to fix before it is too late.

A research study that “showed the participants pictures of homeless people, found their brains reacted the same way as when shown images of vomit” (Proscia). This research shows that people think of others who are not like them in a negative way. I believe this is due to selfishness. Most people have a deep rooted selfishness that controls their thoughts and opinions on people. A person who is consumed by selfishness is George from *Of Mice and Men*. He tells Lennie that he “could get along so easy and so nice if [he] didn’t have [Lennie] on his tail” (Steinbeck 7). George and the people in our society think in a way that makes themselves seem superior to others. This way of thinking leads to many problems.

Selfishness leads to conflicts and bad decisions. In *Hotel Rwanda* the Hutu people were very selfish. They were trying to wipe out a whole group of

people because they were angry with them. Their selfishness led to a genocide. Genocide is never the right way to solve a conflict. Selfish nature took over and killing took place before any rational ideas or negotiations could be brought to the table (Hotel Rwanda). George made a selfish, snap decision when he “raised the gun and steadied it, he brought the muzzle of it close to the back of Lennie’s head. The hand shook violently, but his face set and his hand steadied. He pulled the trigger” (Steinbeck 106). George kills Lennie. He had always thought of Lennie as a burden he had to deal with. At least a small part of him wanted to kill Lennie and be able to move on with his life. Selfishness controls people’s minds and ends up causing them to make decisions that are not morally just.

This problem of selfishness in our society needs to be addressed. Majority of the people living in this world have more selfishness than altruism. This is not always the case though. A person who showed true selflessness was Paul Rusesabagina. He was willing to help the Tutsi people out of the goodness of his heart in their time of need. He knew that he would get nothing in return from the people he was helping, but he still risked everything for their safety. He could have easily fled the country to safety, but he decided to stay (Hotel Rwanda). This is the kind of altruistic nature that our society as a whole needs more of. Paul’s status in Rwanda was one that could keep him safe, but he chose to stand with

the people that needed his people instead of with the oppressors. In an article called “Disposable Humans” it says: “Status truly does divide us from each other and the more conscious we are of that, the more we can impact it.” The article recognizes that status often times divides people and deters them from helping people who don’t fall into the same class as they do.

Recognizing the problem and wanting to take action is the first step to fixing the issues of our society. It is imperative that we see that we are selfish human beings. Learning to put aside differences will greatly change the way we view others. When you focus on the real human being, the chances of seeing them as anything less than an equal will greatly go down. Put aside selfish behavior and focus on love and kindness towards everyone.



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