

Perception shift

[Profession](#), [Teacher](#)



Everyone in the world has different beliefs, opinions, and perceptions that shape how they live their lives. Some people choose to be very opinionated while others tend to be more laid back. The varying behaviors and beliefs of different people can be attributed to how they were raised and who they associate with. I grew up with parents who taught me to be very accepting and respectful towards others. I feel that throughout my life I have never hated any other group of people although growing up as a male, there is a tendency to look at being gay as wrong or disgusting. I myself am not gay but in my lifetime have discovered that sexual preference does not define a person. When I was in eleventh grade, I began taking an AP United States history class. Being the second oldest child in my family, I had many teachers that my older brother did not have, and going into school the first day, I did not know what to expect of some of the unknown teachers. When I went into this class and the teacher began talking, it became evident that this man in the front of the room was gay. My first impression combined with my negative views toward homosexuals at the time led to me feeling somewhat awkward that I would be learning from this man the rest of the year. I did not know however, that my new teacher was one of the kindest and smartest teachers I would ever have. He singlehandedly changed the way I view the gay community and I am very thankful for that. To begin, he took a college class and taught it in a way that was not only manageable, but also fun. Secondly, he was able to connect with the age group of our class so well that I learned more about history than I ever had in my life, and was able to remember a lot of the information. Throughout the course of my junior year, my history teacher became one of my idols, as he was a brilliant

man and an amazing athlete as well. The fact that he was gay meant nothing and he did not preach or flaunt his sexual preference even once. At the end of the year, he was given a character award by my school, which is only given out to two people a year. I am very grateful to have had this man as a teacher because throughout the year because he taught me way more about life than just social studies. Various stories and life lessons were incorporated into his school lessons. On top of all this, his dedication to students was unmatched, he would give extra help and even study sessions to assure all students did well, especially on the AP exam at the end of the year. Overall, this man was a role model, he was dedicated to his job and was an incredibly caring person. The fact that he was gay did not influence the class or my view of him in anyway. Once you got to know him, no one cared about his orientation or the way he talked but instead just wanted to listen to what he had to say. Having him as a teacher truly changed my perception on the gay community as it was one of my first prolonged encounters with someone who is gay. He made me realize that being gay is very different from the stereotype that we are taught to believe. Now, when I meet someone who is gay, I tend to not get an “awkward” feeling but instead just talk to the person normally. I feel that this will help me to succeed in all aspects of life from now as I cannot see a situation where being accepting of others is negative.