Free essay on achieving balance between cultural conformity and the self

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An individual is not able to exist apart from society. The society builds its implicit, unsaid rules, which guide our interactions with others. The society constantly analyzes our beliefs, attitudes and behaviors. If one looks at it from another angle, one may refer to society as a huge device with millions of interconnected mechanisms. When society shares our beliefs; and our behavior do not contradict with the norms that exist inside of it, the society accepts us as individuals.

Cultural conformity is caused by the human desire of being accepted socially. Conformity affects all the age groups of people and is not related with a young age and immaturity of a person. The strongest of the human fears evokes conformity – the fear of being rejected.

It is very difficult to distinguish oneself from that enormously big world in adolescence, but is equally important as difficult. That age is the time of trial and error, the time to understand who one is, deeply and importantly. But the personality of an adolescent is so unstable and contradictory, that the problem of a balance between cultural conformity and the self emerges vitally.

Finding balance may become an aim of your life, but you sure need to find it to become someone you are.

In my childhood I was a kid, who got parents none of the problems. But at my teen-age some sophisticated psychological device had gone wrong, and thus the severe changes in my personality began occurring. I was one of those rebelling kids who always try to prove something no matter for whom. At the age of 15 my worldviews were so extremely changing, and my attitudes began changing along with it. Shortly I obtained severe problems

with my grades and reputation among teachers; I gave up my theatre classes I had been enjoying so before that big change of my priorities, I began communicating with those who may be referred to as a really bad company.

If you asked me for the reasons of those changes in my life I would do some banal remarks about the influence of environment and society. Unique and unusual as you are, you still are under the influence of it. Millions of people all over the world find themselves in the similar situations. The reasons they got there are different but all the same –bad environment or pernicious influence of peers, domestic violence, low level of living and so on. From the moment adolescents get there, they split in two group - those in the first, who overcome this dark period and becomes a normal person after that; and those in the second, who do not.

I was in the first group. By the time of my graduation from high school, I had already repaired my omission with my studies, had put out of my life all the activities that would do me no good. Now looking back to this period of my life, which I am not very proud of, I may say that was one of the most important lesson life had given me. I was trying searching for myself; I just did it in the wrong place. The society among me was thrusting me the false priorities, but that was my personality that pulled me out of it. I was trying to find a balance between the conformity of peers and my own conception of who I was.

That is the negative example of non-beneficial conformity. The inverted reality of young people with its inverted moral issues and false interpretation of moral principles almost had conformed me, I was lucky to prevent myself

from that.

In our lives we get through great many of such situations. Even adults, who are presumed to be self-confident and independent people, need cultural conformity. Our parents, our friends, our colleagues and even neighbors are the components of our little private societies. Those little societies unite and build the big one, but there at the primary level they influence us the most. When I got my first job, I became crazy of it. I was constantly in work, even when I was not actually at my workplace. People I worked with never understood me. They called it abnormal to be addicted to work as I was. But it never influenced the quality of my working results. It seemed like I obtained some endurance of their disapproval of me. I found my balance. In fact, that is the condition when you treat with all your respect the feelings of others and never shatter the general moral principles, but your own principles are respected too.

Our life is always a compromise. If you want to live peacefully among people, you have to be ready for it. That is in fact an art – to unite properly your own principles and interests with the ones of the major circles of society. So, how can we achieve that balance between cultural conformity and ourselves? We need to listen carefully to ourselves, but conform our ideas to those of the society in which we live.