

# The things i learnt of being an indian- american

[Parts of the World, Asia](#)



The idea that being an Indian-American can be confusing is quite the understatement. It is a complex juxtaposition in which I feel that certain aspects of my being do not comply to the mold of what an American girl should be like. On the flip side, the western norms that have shaped who I am make me an outsider in comparison to my relatives back in India. It is a combination that seemed to leave me feeling as if I did not belong anywhere. All I had was this very collection of individuals, every other Indian-American seeking a place where their entity as a whole, rather than only half, can fit.

There are the people who would understand me like no one else could. These are the people who could completely relate when my Spotify shuffled from trap music to bhangra. They were also the people who made me feel less apologetic for who I was and made me forget that I did not have to always be conscious of the choices I made to better accommodate to one part of who I was. I was always cautiously proud of my dual identity, knowing that while it was a beautiful mix of traditions and holidays and people, I was still split between the two; I could not give my all to one side. However, as I grew up, I began to learn what a blessing it is to have the knowledge and customs of two different cultures ingrained in you, especially when it came down to respect.

. Being an Indian-American has taught me a lot about respect. Most Americans collectively believe that everyone should respect their elders, regardless of their relation to you. While that is believed in India, we take it one step further. Nursing and retirement homes are uncommon for the Indian family. Often times, even after their children get married, the parents will continue to live with them. Indians believe that your parents took care of

you for a great deal of your life and soon after, it becomes your turn to care for them. That is how we show our respect and say thank you for their sacrifices.

Our families and our household come first. Chores are almost universal and many times, children are given certain tasks by their parents to help out around the house and to learn responsibility. For me, chores had two reasons. My parents realized this would teach me responsibility and how to live on my own if I moved away for college. But they also made sure that I knew from a young age that it is the job of everyone who lives in the house to take care of it and its people. We do not ask for an allowance or anything in return. This is just a given within Indian culture. We don't rotate chores on a wheel or progress our duties with age. We are taught everything and should be expected to do it all. That is just how it works and how the dichotomy of independence and dependence was created within my house.

I won't lie. I still manage to feel as if my everyday life cannot relate to my peers in America while simultaneously feeling as if I have inherited too many American ideals to fit in with my family in India. It makes me feel like an alien, divided into two parts that create the person that I am. However, finding the people who are just like me has made me realize that this fusion of cultures has given me perspectives on life that you cannot learn. I have the knowledge and the thoughts in me that can only be inherited if you lead a dual life. Being an Indian-American has given me the chance to be the person I am today and that is something I would never change.