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I walked through an endless alley, ran in a continuous circle, sprinted through an inescapable maze. I was small, helpless, and alone. My heart beat like a scared, wild animal's.

This anxiety is all too common to modern day kids. Its source is negotiating stereotypical groups that play a huge part in middle and high school student's lives. Stereotypical groups are formed by people not accepting other people for who they are. Instead they focus on an individual's appearance, who an individual's friends are, and the gossip that is spread about the individual. If you ever pluck up enough courage to approach one of these groups, you'll be shunned away before you even open your mouth.

You could be requesting anything from friendship to a just pencil but who knows when denial is the predetermined immediate response. This denial locks many kids into small groups and isolates them from others. Denial and isolation are the beginning of a bigger problem were kids become so anxious about approaching others that they completely give up and lock themselves away. They act like they live in whole different communities than everyone else, in small houses with no phones, no computers, no mail, and with no doorbells with a happy rings or WELCOME mats on the front door step. Are you part of the problem? In a kid's life, these stereotypical groups are formed mostly in the cafeteria during a school day.

As you look over the vast number of people you know that you can separate them into small stereotypical groups. You know that the skateboarders are over in the corner, the athletes in the middle, the class clowns over to the side, the band geeks in front of you, the nerds to your right, and the prissy

girls to your left. Have you ever tried to mix one of these groups or leave one and join another? This is one of the most challenging things in the world and is the main problem with stereotypical groups today. Once, I tried mixing into another stereotypical group. The Experience I took from it opened my eyes to an even bigger problem. The second I left the lunch line my heart exploded with fright.

Its rhythmic pulsations sending the deafening beat of a drum throughout my ear. I slowly walked over to their table; every step made my body feel more leaden than before. Slowly I sank down onto the icy cold table bench. I was alone while I waited for the skateboarders. In this moment of freedom from my energy draining anxiety, I forced my heart to a measured pace so that I could get words to actually form on my already trembling lips.

When the skateboarders came into view, they looked nastier than ever. They wore evil grins on their faces and were taking long strides towards me. My heart speed up, this was it. 'Hi,' I said. I barely had the chance to finish my sentence before they responded.

'Leave,' they said flatly. Even my friends within the group echoed the mocking jeers shouted by the others. That was it, my point was proved: you can't associate with other stereotypical groups. My friends had betrayed me for nothing but lies. They would rather have friends that followed the rules of these stereotypical groups than they would me. The truth is, stereotypical groups are that strong.

They use the power of peer pressure and popularity to bend and twist people to stay within a certain boundaries. If this power is strong enough to bend
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even the best of friends into denial, then isn't it unbeatable? The solution to this problem is not to give up and to group together. Friends give in to peer pressure. People who try to change groups give in to anxiety. Everyday kids give in to popularity.

These powers are strong, and the only reason we can't beat them is because of them. If we group together and don't give in to peer pressure, popularity, or anxiety then we have the power to change stereotypical groups. Like I showed with my story, these groups alone can twist friends but together we can change lives.