

## Odd One Out

As a child, I was born and raised in Birmingham with my family. However, my family; especially my parents, are not from Birmingham. In fact, they originate from China. Moving from China to England was a big task for them. They had to consider the fact that these are two totally different places and that not everyone is expecting to think the same things as them. In addition, they had to get used to the language, the food and daily life. Also, the jobs and the education that Birmingham gives. My parents learning English took over a period of time, years even. I had to help them with some certain phrases and manners. In fact, they are still learning it now and they are improving more and more as the days pass by. Just like I was helping them with English, in reversal, they were assisting me with learning how to write and speak Chinese; obviously growing up in Birmingham, they don't offer a lot of Chinese lessons. I remember when I was growing up, I always used to have the fear of the fact that I am the odd one out in the class because of my ethnicity, afraid that people will judge me as who and what I am.

When I was younger, I went to a Primary School where there were rarely Chinese people. In fact, I was the only Chinese person there. When I was younger, I didn't understand the concepts of being the only odd one out in the class, however, as I was getting older, I understood that being the odd one out in the class; it can be like a devil or angel to you. You can be confident with yourself and that you are lucky and special to be the odd one out of the normal social group. On the other hand, it can make you feel that you are left out from certain groups and it can decrease your self-esteem. I thought that people in my class would like me for who I am, but evidently not. Because of this, I have grown up with anxiety of being the odd one out. However, as I was growing up, I have learnt that you should not try to change yourself just to be part of the "cool" group. If you are afraid to be yourself, then who are you supposed to be? Some people will accept you for who you are, not who you want to be.

Entering Secondary school, I was able to meet new people from different backgrounds. It made me realise that I spent those years in Primary school worrying about nothing. I am now friends with a lot of people who come from diverse experiences and have different races.

Birmingham was known to be a very British city, with only white people and occasionally a few other races living there. However, Birmingham has developed to become a multi-cultural city, with different races living in one area. This boosts my self-esteem, as it means that I am no longer the odd one out in the class and that I can eradicate that feeling of anxiety in the pit of my stomach and be who I am.

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