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Peoples lives can always be seen or judge in different ways. It can be for different reasons and some being because you're an immigrant, or because of your specific gender like being a girl/women, or because your gay, lesbians etc and many other reasons. Today I decided to interview my best friend name lury. lury is a theater student at The City College of New York and he is a gay 28 year old man. Me and lury meet last year when he was an actor for a school production called I Am Not King Lear which I was the assistant stage manager to and ever since then we clicked and became best friends. He's always been someone I looked up to because he's an amazing actor, he gives great advice but because of how amazing of a best friend he is.

lury is someone I decided to interview because I am a big supporter of the LGBTQ+ community. I hate when I see so much disrespect towards the people in the community just because they are gay or anything else along those lines. The good thing I have noticed is that the world is becoming more open to the LGBTQ+ community. The whole world hasn't accepted it but it gets better and better everyday. With this interview my main goal is to really see if the world is getting better, but at the same time see what are the struggles because I feel like they do go through a lot just because they are being themselves.

I was nervous when interviewing lury because even though he is my best friend, I don't ever want to cross a boundary and disrespect him with just a simple question. When I saw lury, he wasn't nervous at all. He actually wanted to do this interview more than me because he just kept telling me, let's do it let's do it so I just calmed down because he was calm and that gave me more energy. When I started the interview, he introduced himself by giving me his name and saying he goes to CCNY and he's a theater student. I told him I will ask him question about sexual orientation and how that affects him in different ways.

The first question I asked was "How would you describe sexual orientation and what does it mean to you personally?" I wanted to ask this question because people may see sexual orientation in different ways and I wanted to see if his point of view of sexual orientation is different than mine. His response was a "Um, I feel like sexual orientation is how, um, in my opinion, is what you identify yourself as. So it's like, in my case, I am gay, so I don't feel attraction towards woman. So it's just like, you know, I'm attracted to, um, other men. That's what it means to me. It's just like the way that I live my life. It's, it's not a choice. I don't like when people say it's a choice. Um, it's just, you know, I was born the way I am." When he told me this I can see he was right in his element. He looked comfortable and not uncomfortable. I can tell he is who he is and he's comfortable with that. Along with that I see that we both have similar agreements because I do agree with what he was a saying. In my head im just thinking how it's not a choice , its something you love and you cant force yourself to be different.

I then asked him, "how would you describe your awareness and understanding to sexual orientation and how it has changed the world view?" HE starts off by saying how he is Brazilian, and how both the USA and Brazil are very open and how he feels its very welcoming to the

people in the community. It also goes ahead and explains that he feels appreciated and he feels like he belongs and not like it's a mistake because the USA and Brazil is very open to the LGBTQ+ community. I then went ahead and asked "Do you think that the media plays a role in how the LGBTQ+ community is viewed and how it has affected your life?" He 100% agrees by saying "A hundred percent. Um, I think it's also depending on, you know, from what country you are you were from, or what cultural background you come from because in Brazil, um, growing up in Brazil was a little different. Um, you know, they would never show two men kissing each other or two women kissing each other but, you know, now things are different. So I feel like, um, when you go and go home and watch a movie, or you watch a cartoon or whatever, and you see people that are like you and they're doing and they're loving the way you love others. And you see that, I feel like it makes you feel, um, important. It feels like you matter. It makes you feel valued. So I think, a hundred percent, I think that I think media plays an extremely role in the LGBT community." The last part I agree with a lot just because, in my opinion yes we can only make ourselves feel better, but how the world talks about us and whether they accept the people can also play a role in how we ourselves see ourselves and decide if we are comfortable or not where'd we are at physically and emotionally.

I then proceeded to ask if he believes there has been any changes in how the world sees sexual orientation and if not how do you think the world can change? He at first didn't understand what I was saying so I basically explained that what I'm trying to ask with the question, is that basically in the past the LGBTQ+ community was seen negative, and if he thinks it has become more positive the way people see the LGBTQ+ community. He tells me **"I feel like people are becoming more understanding of each other's, um, um, you know, like, um, you know, people understanding who people are and respecting that and understanding that, you know, like some people, um, see themselves as maybe they, them or they wanna use it from pronouns."** At first I was a little confused but then after taking it all in I realized that he meant, people are starting to respect the community by using the people's pronouns for example because some people use different pronouns that what they may have been born with and with people using the pronouns that the people in the community want it is showing a growth of respect for the community. I also asked him if he believes discrimination plays a role in sexual orientation. He thought it was an interesting question but of course had his response for it. He thought about how to elaborate his answer because I asked a closed ended question because I was getting distracted because all of a sudden the area where we was doing the interview got super loud. But besides that he elaborated his answer which was yes and explained that if you're someone who's living in hate the way you see the world will all be hate and that's all you will give to people especially if they come from a different cultural background, ethnicity, race or any community in general.

Another question I asked was what type of impacts do you think sexual orientation has on individuals self esteem and sense of identity? This answer opened my eyes because its reality. Lury said "I think accepting who you are, um, allows you to live life at your full potential." This opened my heart because I have trouble accepting myself for different reasons of course, and if I'm not gonna accept myself am I really living life. I then proceeded to ask him more personal questions which made sure to tell him before asking and the next two were similar as well and the questions were "Is there any personal experience that has changed your life regarding being part of the community" and the other question was "can you share an example

on how your sexual orientation has changed your life for the better. For the first question he states Um, high school, for instance, um, I was bullied a lot, i wasn't seen. I wasn't respected by my sexuality. Um, I was embarrassed of letting people know that I was gay. Um, I try behaving or acting in a way that wasn't me, just in order for me to fit in. And, you know, I wanted to make friends, so I had to kind of change who I was so." When he told me that my heart broke because I never knew he was bullied and, being someone who was bullied because of how I looked I understood him especially trying to change yourself just to be liked. Now the last question he answered with "Um, high school, for instance, um, I was bullied a lot. I wasn't seen. I wasn't respected by my sexuality. Um, I was embarrassed of letting people know that I was gay. I try behaving or acting in a way that wasn't me, just in order for me to fit in. And, you know, I wanted to make friends, so I had to kind of change who I was so." I'm so glad that he had someone to speak to which was his mother. Before people would tell me how they are too afraid to come out because of the fear of not being accepted by their parents but his mom did. Right then in there he knew he belonged and that he is who is his and he's proud.

When I finished my interview I thanked lury and gave him a hug because he has helped me not only with this but he has helped me love the community more. My idea in how I view the LGBTQ+ community hasn't really changed. It hasn't changed because with lury explaining what he explained I saw that the world was changing for the better for there are still major problems we have to fix. Social media is something everyone uses. Let's be honest, social media is literally majority of peoples lives and people put either very positive or very negative things into the world and we will never know what we will get, but there's no need to post hate especially to the LGBTQ+ community just because they aren't like how "normal" people are because in reality what's normal. Another thing is when he mentioned the world was changing I can see because every year for example the PRIDE parade gets bigger and bigger and more and more people go. Not only because Moore people are coming out but because people are accepting that no one is different. We all are just who we are and we each love what we love. My idea that social orientation is changing for the better, but should still change even more is 100% confirmed and I thank lury for opening his heart and letting me in into such a personal space because if I was him I don't know if i would be able to do that. Hes an amazing guy and im sure if you was to meet him you would love him just as much as I do.