



EPISODE 12 – ROYAL OAK HIGH SCHOOL **ROYAL OAK, MICHIGAN**

- *Bullying, prejudice and cliques are fixtures in schools across America.*
- *Challenge Day is a one-day program that aims to break down these barriers.*

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Royal Oak High School is located in the suburbs of Southeastern Michigan about 10 miles outside Detroit.

Featured Students and their roles on campus:

Kari – “Student Council”
Ashley – “Emo”
Brian – “Jock”
Mitch – “Class Clown”
Nicole – “Choir”

Cliques and the stereotypes people form about various groups on campus are a painful reality in every school.

- What are the cliques at your school? What stereotypes do you attribute to them?
- Have you or any of your friends ever been hurt by stereotypes or by being associated or labeled as a member of any of these groups?
- Do you relate to any of the students in this episode?



THEMES TO EXPLORE AND DISCUSS

1. Misconceptions and Differences
2. Sexism
3. Tomorrow is Not Guaranteed

1. Misconceptions and Differences

Notice

- How well do you really know the people you go to school with? Are there any people you judge or shy away from before you really know them?
- Who in your school or in your life do you judge as most unlike you? How do your judgments and perceived differences affect the way you view or relate with these people?
- In this episode **Kari** admits she would never have guessed in a million years all that **Nicole** has had to go through. Who if anyone in your school or life might be different than you think? Has anyone ever surprised you? Are you friends with anyone today that you once negatively judged as very different from you in the past?

If you NOTICE that judging people because of differences is a problem in your school or in your life and you CHOOSE to Be the Change – you can ACT by doing one or more of the following...

Act

- Step out of your comfort zone, and do what you can to find out who your classmates really are. Start a conversation with someone who appears very different from you on the outside, and get to know him or her -- see if you can find anything that you have in common.
- If you find yourself negatively judging someone based on what you perceive as the differences between you, do your best to discover the truth about who they really are.
- If you notice someone making negative comments about someone that they perceive as different, let them know that it's not cool. Encourage them to actually get to know the person – they might be surprised by what they discover.



2. Sexism

Notice

- After Challenge Day, **Mitch** mentions that he has heard thousands of rude or sexist comments towards the women at Royal Oak High School. Why do you think sexism is so widespread in our schools and communities?
- During her “If You Really Knew Me” share, **Nicole** tearfully reveals the effects that sexist comments have on her. Who, if anyone, in your life might know how it feels to walk in **Nicole’s** shoes? What can **Nicole** or others in her situation do to deal with these types of comments?
- In what ways, if any, have you been affected by or contributed to the hurt caused by sexism in your school or community?

If you NOTICE that sexism is a problem for you or those around you and you CHOOSE to Be the Change – you can ACT by doing one or more of the following...

Act

- If you find yourself falling into the habit of making a sexist comment, stop. Once you notice what’s happening, do your best to change your behavior. Apologize for your words or actions.
- If you or someone you care about is being hurt by sexism, get help. Talk to a parent, teacher, counselor or someone you trust and ask for support.
- The next time you hear or experience sexism, speak up. Let your friends and others know that their comments are disrespectful. Make sure they know you don’t appreciate negative comments or actions toward women. Try asking how it might feel if someone said or did the same thing to their mother or sister.

3. Tomorrow is Not Guaranteed

Notice

- In this episode **Kari** shares the pain of losing her brother. Although they were not getting along at the time of his death, she still misses him and wishes she had a chance to share life with him. If the people closest to you were to die today, would you feel proud of the relationships you’ve created? Is there anyone in your life that you have problems with? Is there anyone you’d like to feel closer to?



- Have you ever lost someone unexpectedly? How did you handle the loss? Aside from the loss, did you have any regrets? Was anything left unsaid? If things could be done over again, what, if anything, would you change?
- If you knew this were to be your last day on earth, what, if anything, would you change about your life and relationships?

If you NOTICE that your relationships are causing pain or problems in your life and you CHOOSE to Be the Change – you can ACT by doing one or more of the following...

Act

- Take some time to examine your relationships with the people closest to you. Does anyone deserve an apology from you? Is there anyone you need to forgive? Someone you'd like to thank? If so, make things as right as possible. Write a letter or tell the person face-to-face whatever it is you need to say.
- If you are dealing with a loss, find ways to get closure. Share your grief with someone you trust, and work through any unfinished business.
- If someone close to you is dealing with a loss, do whatever you can to help them heal. Offer to listen to whatever they have to say.

LEARN MORE AND SHARE

- If stuff going on at school is impacting your emotional health, check out <http://www.halfofus.com>.
- To further discuss the issues in this episode, head to <http://ifyoureallyknewme.mtv.com>.

