Tom Belluomini

Vulnerability is the Root of it All

As it is posed in Carolyn Hax's column about a person's subconscious decision to select the negativity in life rather than leaning the opposite direction, human nature avoids vulnerability at almost all costs. More specifically, in this instance, by accepting the fact that a negative thing is influencing their life while not attempting to look past it and discover the positives that are counteracting it. Being optimistic is intimidating since it draws us to understand that life has its up's and down's but the key to pushing through it is remembering that there will be up's while you are in the middle of the down's. There is always difficulty in an atmosphere that isn't natural to someone, making the transition to a vulnerable approach that much harder.

In a similar tone, you can see human vulnerability through interactions with other humans. It is rare that you can walk past another person on the street and be greeted with a bright smile and a warm, hearty "Hello." In today's world, humans are prone to making judgements about each other before even speaking a single word to one another. From the article "The Power of Hello", Howard White describes that this fear of opening up to one another disallows us from being able to get a glimpse into another person's world, or to let them see ours. A large portion of that fear is anchored in the racism and stereotypes that have plagued the society we live in today. It is increasingly difficult to look past the ever present boundaries that are made up for us, when in reality there is a simple bonding that we should be looking at. We are all humans, so essentially we are all the same. Just like finding the positives in the hard times, this vulnerability would open us up to another world, that world being the life of another human. Just by saying a simple "Hello".

In an attempt to counteract these issues, the student government set up a system of respect and equal treatment within the Student Code for the University of Illinois. An overarching theme in the code is the emphasis that the students be protected in this environment that they come to learn in. The code also emphasizes that these values should reflect those shared by the University as a community, meaning the community as a whole should become a place that vulnerability is accepted and encouraged so that it will be able to thrive and expand together.

When looking at the larger scope of these three pieces of writing, it can be seen that the commonality amongst all three is the examination of the trait of vulnerability, but each attacks it in its own way. Through these examinations there can be a deeper understanding of how vulnerability can be a spark to progress humanity as a whole.