

## **Ahu Undeger**

Individuality and the self are made up from individual identities, traits and interactions which are usually constructed and set through the results of social interactions, environments, families and the education of the individual (Bandura, 1966). A person's identity (or individuality) differs from everyone else around the world, all though one might find closer personalities to themselves. This uniqueness allows not only the individual to grow and become stronger, but through individual's coming together, and their preferred roles in social groups or interactions; the society will also be very much affected and developed because society and social groups are made up of unique individuals coming together, forming a larger community (Bandura, 1966). Above said, to an extent for the benefit of the community, each individual should prioritize their own good; under the rules, laws and values of the groups, which would lead to the greater benefit, and common good of the community. That way, everyone would protect themselves, their belongings and make efforts to thrive and excel in their lives, education and preferred professions or roles; which could collectively lead to the benefit of the whole society.

In Turkey, we have a saying that roughly translates to; 'If everyone cleaned and swept the entrance to their house, that road would already be clean'. It demonstrates that if everyone did a little bit, collectively we would be achieving bigger goals. For example; if everyone in the world donated less than five pounds to forests, or the Arctic; we would be achieving significant steps in preserving the environment, species and possibly making world-hunger better. The saying is not only used for 'cleanness' but has a general meaning which also correlates to being nicer to your environment, people around you, and being more respectful and contributory in every sense. It also correlates to the idea of 'kindness opens all doors', and if one individual is kinder to themselves, this would lead them to be kinder to others, and directly other's response would also be more positive. This would be for the benefit of the individual but also collectively better for the community too. If individuals contribute to more than what they need to be doing, and became less selfish, more observatory of surroundings and cared about more than just their small circle of people or living-space; the world would collectively be more positive and this would develop a higher realization that we are in fact not just alone in the world. This could relate to the idea that; if unique individuals worked on thriving and being better in general individually, that community would directly be affected by those values and generally become better and more functioning. One could also argue that, with time; if more people started doing more for others, and not just be selfish; this would also be thought to next generations through observing and social learning (Bandura, 1966) parents or grandparents, and through this understanding create a more global idea of respect, love and kindness all around the world and humanity.

This being said, it can be discussed that for the general happiness and positivity of the community, individuals should in fact learn to be happy on their own, and teach their small circle the meaning of being content with themselves. As a Turkish who was raised mostly in the UK, this gave me an insight of being able to look objectively to my own culture and make comparisons to life here in the U.K. By observations I was able to realize that in Turkey, people are usually under a lot of stress economically, politically and through other country-relations. The stress is also related to the feeling of not feeling safe, leading to a more stressed, unhappy and judging society. Inhabitants of Turkey are usually able to feel this distress in their daily lives, even though they may not have had problems that specific day. I was also able to discuss these observations with friends and family, remembering what my mother always tried to teach me; to be happy by myself, and be enough company even alone. With this kind of education from my parents; I will now hopefully be able to teach my kids to be content without needing others, or outside forces to make them happy, but teach them to be content and create happiness to themselves. As my mother always says; just like sorrow and unhappiness, also happiness is contagious and even easier to distribute. I had an experience in Regent's University; which reminded me of this. I was leaving the university's library around late-night, and said 'good evening, hope you have a great night' to the guard at the exit. His face turned to me in shock, which made me sad, and realize that not so many people do this kind of thing without having anything in return. Just like the 'butterfly effect' would suggest, my simple and very little kindness, made his night and

possibly he went home a little bit happier. Another example to a similar instance is when I come to the university really positively in the morning, and hear others tell me how bored or tired they are, and how they do not want to be here; I suddenly get more tired and down. If something is obligatory, like going to school; instead of making harder to yourself by saying how much you do not want to be there; I think the best thing for myself and others around me is to take as much of it while I am there, and make the most of having fun and learning. For a more fulfilling and long-term happiness; individuals should create happiness within themselves first, and then try to include this to the community; for example by helping others, or contributing in charity.

When looked at moral values; one could ask the question of ‘What would I do if I was stranded on an island with others, and a boat was coming that could only take one person in regards of weight of the ship; would I save myself, or would I allow someone else to be saved?’. The idea of this directs us to the idea of answering this essay as “To an extent”, because in this case the good for one individual, would not be good for others. For example, If someone is younger, and has a longer time to get educated and contribute to the society in ways of which we can not even think ourselves; then the answer to this question could be saving the other person. However; if everyone is same age and generally acquire similar values; I would save myself, because I would innately and biologically think that I have the right as anyone else does to continue living, excelling and thriving, as equally the others do too. Coming back to the idea of individuals in a community; if another person does not (in the opinion of a specific person) have more value such as possibly saving someone’s life, or being very young and having more years to develop themselves; It would be beneficial to save one’s self, and get on the boat to survive. This example shows how; to an extent, individuals should prioritize themselves; and through thriving as an individual, making the general community better and stronger. This is an example of how in some instances, the individual’s interests sometimes do not align with the common good; because the individual would be leaving others to be stranded on the island. However; this could also be looked at as; once that individual reaches a port, or a way of communication, the other people who were stranded on the island would also have an increased chance of survival, because they could send someone to save the others. However; if the individual’s fight and violently do not allow anyone to get on the boat because they become selfish under stress, that would limit the survival of more people. In this instance; one should get on board, and when they have the chance; send others help.

Politically, a countries self-interest may also not always align with other’s or may disobey treaties or contracts. In this instance; it is important to understand that individuals who are in important roles in deciding the future of the country; and have been voted democratically as people who are eligible enough to make decisions; would have the say in deciding if they would like to break contracts and treaties between their country and others; which would have consequences, or stay silent and put their own countries under jeopardy. A very recent example of this is also happening in my hometown; Turkey. As maybe the readers are aware; at the moment U.S.A and Turkey are undergoing a rough patch when looked at politically, legally and also ethically. There has been a terrorist group called P.K.K reigning terror (Criss, 1995) around the Syrian and Iran border of Turkey. This has been going on for years however; very recently the U.S.A has sent them ammunition and gave them courses on how to fight even more violently. The U.S.A expected that Turkey would be too scared to break the bond in between them, and stay silent to such an incident. However; this time Turkey had more to loose within itself, than loosing the relationship with a high-power. The result of this has caused the bond between two countries to shake, and tremble. This example shows how Turkey prioritized the safety of itself and its people above the relationship with another country which is equally important to trade, tourism and much more.

By given examples, it is possible to conclude by saying an individual should prioritize themselves first, by obeying orders and laws; and then by developing and excelling in their preferred roles in society; contribute to the general well-fare of the community.

**References:**

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