

Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover

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My class is like a micro-society. You see almost every kind of people - the social butterflies, the over-achievers, the quiet ones, the athletes, the class clowns, the troublemakers, the hipsters, etc. It may seem almost impossible for unlike minds to communicate, and yet we all get along. Not only do we get along, but we also cooperate and bring out the best in each one of us.

There are many kinds of people living in society, people from different social backgrounds or with different personalities. If our talents or potentials do not get recognized because of our differences, it will be a loss to all of us. Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, dropped out of Harvard and focused on creating the world's largest social network. Dropping out of university may sound beyond insane to many, but this was his choice. Finally, he became one of the world's youngest self-made billionaires. We are all different, and our difference is what makes us valuable.

Another example is Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple Inc. He quit college because none of the required courses on the university curriculum were of interest to him. He started living life on his own terms, and years later he became one of the most successful information technology entrepreneurs and inventors in the world. There is no predefined path to success. It would be narrow to judge anyone by any preconceived standards.

We should not judge a book by its cover, not only because we want to give others the freedom to flourish, but also because we want to give ourselves the permission to be all that we can be. This will be possible only when society as a whole tolerates, and more importantly, encourages differences. Just as Albert Einstein puts it, 'Everybody is a genius, but if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.'