

Hi girls, my name is Saacha Moya and I am joined by Krisha Kumar. Today we will be talking about the importance of kindness and recognising your global citizenship in these unprecedented times.

There is a saying by Desmond Tutu *'My Humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be Human together.'* It is a saying that I wish everyone on this entire planet understood - because that would mean we could live in a world where we could focus on what it means to be human, rather than the colour of our skin.

As you may be aware, on Monday, 25 May, George Floyd was killed after Minneapolis policeman, Derek Chauvin, kneeled on his neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds. Floyd begged for his life as this officer pinned him on the ground; his last words: "I can't breathe." He was killed by an unjust system. He was killed because of the colour of his skin.

The killing of George Floyd has ignited waves of protests across the United States, as well as cities worldwide; including New Zealand. Protestors were asked to kneel and raise their fists in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement. The heartfelt movement sheds light on the effects of racism and oppression. Think of it this way. There are two people. One hurt and bleeding while the other – is completely fine. I have only ONE plaster. Naturally, I am going to give it to the person who needs the help - however the other person says that they also deserve the plaster, which is true - but. The person right now that needs it the most **is the one in pain**. All lives will matter when black lives matter.

Auckland Girls' Grammar School, is representative of a diverse community. We all hail from different cultures, speak different languages and hold different beliefs and values, yet why is it so easy for us to outcast one another before we love them for their differences? We all share more similarities than differences, and all too often, we focus more on the things that set us apart rather from those things that bind us together.

Do not forget that we are all human. We all need food to eat and water to drink. We need to use the bathroom, and we need air to breathe. We all want to learn, we all have hopes and dreams, and we have experienced pain and fear. We all have the same range of emotions, so why are people treated unfairly based on small differences? When we see others as being similar to us, it strengthens our humanity than if we view each other as inherently different. We are all more alike than we tend to realise.

Which is why we want to stress, especially in these times of hardship, the important value of togetherness. Togetherness gives us security, unites us, provides us with a sense of belonging and most certainly encourages us to love and support one another. Togetherness gives us the right results; it helps us achieve positive and significant change.

So, the next time you see a classmate or peer being treated poorly, hug them, show them that you care and support them. The next time you see an unpleasant post made about someone on social media, call the original poster out, tell them that their

words are hurtful. The next time you are out in public and witness someone being mistreated, ask them if they are okay; offer your words of healing.

We need to recognise our similarities, bridge the gap between division and create unity, for above all else, we are Human before we are a race.