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Average American Girl

Who am I? is a question that is seemingly easy to answer, but after many judgements, it has been proven to be quite the opposite. Some may think I am a spoiled, white, privileged, American young female. There are so many judgments that come with being your “average American teen girl”. My peers who don’t know me are the ones who choose to judge me the most. Society finds it easy to view me as self-centered, ungrateful, unsympathetic, and someone who gets handed everything in life. They think it doesn’t affect me, but their actions and words are more powerful than they think. However, in some situations their assumptions might be true but that doesn’t make me your “average American teen girl.”

Unfortunately, we live in a society that encourages people to have entitlement, but not all. In today’s world, young adults have grown more self-centered than previous generations ever have and I’m sure there have been many times when a stranger looked at me and thought “She definitely only cares about herself”. This mostly happens when someone judges me before they get to know me. I’ve had this happen when I played hockey. I didn’t even know these girls and they decided to make assumptions about me just by looking at me. Maybe I had an RBF, or my blonde hair was too blonde for them. Either way their assumptions lead to them not including me or wanting to be on the same line. It eventually started to affect me and other girls on the team by causing selfishness and a lack in chemistry. If you know hockey, then you know it’s important to work well with your linemates to be successful. Once I got to know the girls, with no hesitation

they told me, “We thought you were so stuck up but you’re actually the complete opposite.” In that moment I thought to myself, you can’t judge someone as being self-centered when you never had the chance to figure out who they truly are. It’s like the famous saying “Don’t judge a book by its cover”. Another incident where someone viewed me as self-centered was when I didn’t attend a friend’s surprise birthday party. She thought I was being inconsiderate by not showing up. It was never my intention to make her feel that way, but the real reason for me not attending was that I had to work. People shouldn’t be so quick to assume I’m self-centered when they don’t know the truth behind my situation.

In addition, I’m stereotyped by others as being spoiled and privileged which causes people to think I’m ungrateful. For example, during Christmas time my friends and I will share what we received and were gifted with one another. Some of my friends will make comments like “I didn’t ask for this” or “This isn’t the exact one I wanted.” Moments like that are eye-opening and make you realize some young adults are ungrateful but that doesn’t mean everyone is. My first instinct is to always be appreciative for what you’re gifted or have because something so little to you can mean something so big to others. Most people only focus on the big things and never appreciate the little things in life. I know for a fact some people may think that I come off as ungrateful, but I appreciate whatever I’m handed in life no matter if it’s big or small. As a young adult, I’m grateful for just about everything I have. If there’s ever a time when I sound ungrateful, I remind myself that anything is always better than nothing. Of course, there probably have been times where I’ve sounded ungrateful but that’s never my intention. I understand why people may view me as ungrateful because I tend to find myself making the same judgments about my friends when it comes to certain situations. Every day I try to be

appreciative by saying thank you to someone who has done something helpful, kind, or meaningful to me.

To add on, there are always people who think my character is unsympathetic, that I have no emotion, and think I'm not friendly because I'm above everyone else. We all have struggles and even if someone seems like they are doing better than others, that doesn't mean they don't have hard challenges. Or they won't be empathetic to other hardships. In my case, people who view me as a spoiled, white privileged female think I don't have sympathy for others. There are times when my family and friends are grieving and how I show sympathy might look different than others do. Showing sympathy to me looks like being present in the same physical space as the grieving person, listening, and saying little words of encouragement like "I am thinking of you" or "I care about you". Showing sympathy doesn't take much effort, can be done by anyone and goes along way. I get there's people who chose not to be sympathetic towards others because they simply don't think it's needed in relationships with others, but it surprises myself when I happen to be easily targeted as unsympathetic.

Being privileged isn't as perfect as others make it up to be. My peers believe everything comes easy to me because I don't have to work for it but just because I'm privileged doesn't mean everything gets handed to me. Society thinks I don't work hard for what I have accomplished in life. My senior year of high school I became captain of the girl's hockey team. Some of my peers were not happy for me or thought it just got handed to me. They were either jealous or didn't think I deserved it. I remember when my name was announced as the next captain and the look on some people's faces were surprised. What they didn't understand was what I had to do to become captain. The countless hours of on and off-ice work, encouraging my teammates always, staying positive despite how hard it was, and continuing to show my

dedication to the sport when I wanted to give up at some times. Despite all the doubts I continue to be the best I can possibly be to become successful in my future. Others' negative opinions about my work ethic aren't true. This goes to show I'm driven to be successful and accomplish what society thinks I'm not capable of. I've witnessed some of my peers getting everything handed to them and never being told "no" mainly by their parents growing up. Personally, I think there's a right time and place when people need to be told "no" because it teaches you nothing is just a given. Privileged or not, it doesn't matter. Either way, nobody should be handed something without working for what other people strive to have in life.

Therefore, with everything that has been stated, society likes to judge me as someone who is self-centered, ungrateful, unsympathetic, and a person who gets handed everything in life. I've come to terms with why people can be so quick to judge me. Being seen as your typical American teen girl can lead to many assumptions about who I am as a person. These judgments can be frustrating, as they don't indicate the truth about my character. I've learned that many other young adults or even some of my peers run into the same problem and hear similar judgments made about themselves. The good thing is we can change our perspective on just about everything because it's always later when we come to the realization of who people are.