



**NICOLE SHRIVER**

Nicole Shriver is a freshman at Twinsburg High School. She has been active in her temple's youth group for two years. Her favorite subjects are history and algebra. When she finishes school she would like to be a historian specializing in Judaic studies or the Holocaust or a chiropractor.

I attend a Jewish camp In Zionsville, Indiana. During an activity one day, we were discussing how certain religions and people of different sexualities tend to be hated and are subjected to bullying and discrimination. My good friend Oliver\*, who lives in Pennsylvania, told his story that day. Before I retell it I would like the people reading this to know that he is not a bad person at all. He is quite possibly the strongest person I know. At his school he was bullied for being a Jew and because of the way he dresses, many thought he was homosexual. He never confided in anyone and he later resorted to self-harm because the physical pain distracted him from the emotional pain. He used hardcore drugs to distract him even further from the emotions rushing through him. He told me he's tried almost everything including oxycodone, morphine, clonazepam and any other hallucinogens, anything he thought would help him. He left school and was placed in rehab and online schooling. At camp he felt free to be the real him, without worrying about hatred. He is doing much better now. He is out of rehab and still participates in online schooling.

After hearing Oliver's story, I was disappointed in society. Hate is a terrible thing and the fact that it is overlooked is completely atrocious. People end their beautiful lives every day due to the hate they are exposed to. The way I reach out to others who have experienced hatred is on a website called Tumblr. On this website anyone can make an account and post/reblog multimedia items however they please. I am friends with a few people on Tumblr and we go on other people's pages and leave anonymous messages telling them how amazing they are, how their life is valuable, and that even though it may seem like no one cares, many people would be affected by the loss of their life. Lastly, we tell them how much we care about them. By doing this, we have saved quite a few lives and brightened many people's days. We have been recruiting more and more people to help our cause. Even though this doesn't reverse hate, it does help bandage the wounds left behind.

I believe hate is inevitable. There will always be hate in the world. However, anyone can always help fix the effects of it. By doing this, there can possibly be a decline in the amount of hatred in the world, because the main reason why people can be so mean is the reaction that is the product of their actions. If we give them the attention, they will not stop. By gaining confidence and support, hate will become a thing of the past.

*\*Name has been changed*