

My first memory is finding out what the word "terrorist" meant. My dad had picked up my brother and I from school and we wanted to go to the park. It was a nice day; not a single cloud in the sky. When we arrived at the park, we burst into a game of tag. My dad chased my brother and I, up and down through the slides until he finally caught me. I tried to tag him back, but he swiped out of my way bumping into a tall man. My dad apologized but the man wouldn't let it go. I remember him so clearly saying, "next time watch where you are going terrorist". My dad's posture became stiff, his eyes widened, and he clenched his mouth. The reason I remember this so clearly is because of the way my dad looked at me. He was embarrassed and not for that man but of himself. I could feel it just from his eyes. My dad then told me we were going home and I did not say anything. Before we got into the car I gave my dad a hug and I squeezed as hard as I could. I learned that day not exactly what the definition of terrorist was but how it felt. How my dad wore it. How one day my innocent younger brother would wear it. Especially, how each person who thought that about them was wrong. Ever since that day, I have been resolute in not judging a book by its cover and determined to treat people fairly. From this experience, I began learning this special value: open-mindedness. This value has led me to be more open to others' ideas and have new experiences. It has allowed me to meet new people, and learn from them. The prejudice shown by that man was shocking at the time but it taught me a life-lesson. As I enter college, I know being open-minded will serve me well. That man showed me how I never want to be. Through hate, my heart grew. My hope for the future is that The United States will better embrace the melting pot reality of what it is today. An Indonesian father playing with his children will be seen as that and his culture won't morph the minds around him to see something evil.