

#Mista

V-Jay Remolacio

Anonymity sometimes serves as a shield, but most of the time, a weapon. The web is such a wide space intended for various activities, may it be for communication, interaction, entertainment, employment, and many more. Social media in particular gains tons of attention from sharing posts, voicing out sentiments, tackling issues, or as simple as entertaining. With our freedom behind the screens, it could be an advantage, but it is also a great responsibility.

We humans perhaps become too cautious offline when we gain too much confidence in hiding our identities online. Having to react without shackles may seem quite utopic, but it also encourages misdeeds. The "cancel culture," in one part, is an agreement of many users to cancel a person, a brand, a concept, or whatever. If you fall victim to this, there is no escaping from bashful words, fallacious claims, and being the center of one's unwanted attention. It is scary. This is why many would remain silent-to be a mere viewer, to be a spectator with an eye icon, symbolizing how you are an enabler.

Desmond Tutu said, "If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. Silence encourages an act, it may not be direct affirmation, but we are all part of the decision and the action. It is ironic, how our nation is free not because Filipinos were spectators, they risked their lives to fight the oppressors. An embodiment of honor and bravery. Their collective actions led us to establish our identities as Filipinos. You may feel unheard but one can be the "mitsa" of change. As Filipinos we can honor their sacrifices by being like them even in simple circumstances- standing up, voicing out concerns. But we also have to educate ourselves thoroughly to be of real help.

Knowledge is power. In the 21st century, where all information is accessible, indeed, ignorance is a choice but something is scarier than ignorance and that is false knowledge. We need to be keen and critical. Know the law, take information from trusted resources, and never believe something without credible facts. Be the one that encourages discussions without having to bring hatred towards the other party because it discourages cyber-bullying. Once you are involved in a discussion, make sure to end it with a resolution. It may be a misunderstanding or an argument.

Accounts, anonymous or not, still have beating hearts. People like you and me could be victims of false information, and when one establishes that his or her false knowledge is right, one becomes a fool. It is not just our responsibility to promote correctness, but also justice and fairness. Treat the online sympathetically like a real community. It is much better to disregard these wrong online cultures and promote the peace and positive progress that the creator intended. This is not just for the youth, but for every human being because all we need is to reignite empathy, nationalism, bayanihan, our hearts. Be the mitsa.