

pushing to get to the counter first, the lady waits patiently for her turn. Even though the person in front of her is taking about three years to get through all his inquiries.

With the first scenario, yes, you get to the counter first and you can go home and watch *Bold and the Beautiful* without missing anything. With the second scenario, even though you have avoided a possible confrontation with someone who is not as accepting of your grandmother's style of getting things done, you do miss out on your show. Instead you get home on time for *Tom and Jerry*. You realise though that with internet, you can watch all your shows online anyway and there is no need to rush things. After putting all these pieces together, you may decide that your Greek grandmother is a little too hasty and may cause trouble while the other patient lady is much more polite and a lot more quiet. You decide to adopt the ways of the polite lady who awaits her turn patiently.

Since I am surrounded by such diversity, it is only natural that I acquire cultural influences from other people around me too. Sometimes for instance, even though I am quite loud myself with my friends, I do find that Greeks can be a little too loud. Even when they are in a library. Instead, I choose to behave like my quiet Vietnamese friend who respects that we are in a quiet space. As I make my own decisions between right and wrong, I decide whether I keep certain elements of my background and culture or adapt them.

In addition, I too affect those around me. In my eighteen years of living, I have not only learnt things from my mum. She has learnt things from me as well. Regarding cuisine for example, if I had not come across OLE from my neighbours - even though they are not Portuguese but Filipino, she would have probably never tried a Portuguese burger (Was that not a good decision?). If I had not

come across sushi - which was introduced to me by my friend and school some years ago - she probably would not have heard of it from anyone else (Thank goodness I introduced her!) In fact, we now eat OLE and sushi quite often... (Hehe).

From a more general perspective, my morals and my mother's morals are also affected with our exchange of experiences and interactions that surface from such cultural developments. This exchange is important as not only are we widening our horizons but we are also becoming more understanding of everyone around us - whether they are of Greek background or not. Some things that apply in Greece do not apply here in Australia. We are in fact also becoming curious of the way in which others choose to live their lives. Others are even becoming interested in learning about Greek history and the language. The multiculturalism of this nation is the biggest contributor to this exchange of knowledge. Stereotypes are also eliminated about different cultures and those around us feel the same way.

Culture can be maintained but the people themselves must adapt sometimes in order to be understood and to understand. The knowledge of our culture can be preserved by passing on what we know to others and by accepting what other tell us. Our culture is something omnipresent. It never leaves our side and we are pretty much stuck with it. It is important to us. It defines us. It helps connect us with others. As Marcus Garvey states, "a people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots." Culture is therefore basically preserved through memory. Whether it is passed down orally or through practice, it takes memory to maintain it successfully. The extent of this effect is analysed by Elie Wiesel. "Without memory, there is no culture. Without memory, there would be no civilisation, no society, no future."

