FORGETTING THE ESSENTIALS

by:

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Our curriculum is jampacked, with loads of subjects to teach the students each day. Teachers are obliged to teach the content of the curriculum, must meet the budget of works intended for every quarter. With the so many things to teach and to accomplish, educators somehow fail to emphasize some simple and basic knowledge yet important things to remember for the learners.

As a citizen of this country, do learners still able to answer this simple question? What makes a true Filipino? A query that should be given an attention especially to today’s youths who are greatly influenced by the emerging technology and whose values are now patterned to Western and K-pop culture. Students when being asked, seemed to have difficulty in drawing out good and possible explanations.

There are many notable Filipinos that gave pride and honor to our country. The names of Manny Paquiao, Charisse Pempengco, Brillante Mendoza, CNN Awardee, Leah Salonga, and other artists paved the way for the Filipinos to be recognized and respected abroad. Indeed, it is great to be a Filipino when Filipinos excel in different fields.

Filipinos are known for being hospitable. Foreigners around the world have fell in love with their generosity and hospitality starting from the sweet smiles they give even to strangers, to the special foods that they prepare when visitors come and a good bed for an overnight or couple of days stay of visitors. They are also respectful person known for their “po” or “opo”, calling their fathers and mothers mom or dad, relatives tito or tita, and strangers “Mang” or “Aling”. A bow to a superior and putting the elder’s hands in the forehead are also manifestations of being respectful. Filipinos are also famous
abroad for being one of the most hardworking individuals, a reason why most foreign employers hire Filipinos. Strong family ties and relationships is also common in every Filipino family. Praying together and being together in special occasions are always seen among them. Furthermore, Filipinos are loving and caring people who would always find time to take care of his family.

In the lighter side, Filipinos are known for expressing their creativity in their colorful jeepneys, for the ever-delicious adobo, for eating chick fetus or what is popularly known as “balut”, for calling the bathroom as CR, for saying “take out” instead of “to go”, for eating using their hands, for the variety of dippings or “sawsawan”, for eating all the body parts of chickens and for the unexplainable saving of the last morsel of food. These are just a few of the strange yet lovable traits of being a Filipino.

But what makes a true Filipino? Filipinos have qualities which make them unique from the rest of the world. We have different ethnic backgrounds and different languages. We have different countries that conquered us for more than three centuries. We are a nation that is composed of seven thousand islands that lies in the Pacific Ocean. We are a nation that has history of struggle and fight for freedom. We have a rich culture and heritage that brings out the best in our people.

We have a notion that a true Filipino is someone who has flat nose, brown complexion and short stature. It is definitely more than the color of our skin and the appearance of our nose. Being a true Filipino goes beyond our birthplace. You can be born here in our country and yet live as foreigners by not knowing and being foreign to our culture. Sadly, many Filipinos are not proud of their culture and continue to despise our country especially when they live in other countries.

Being a true Filipino is a matter of being proud of our country no matter what happen. We must be proud of our uniqueness and traits as Filipinos. We may have a
different culture as compared to more industrialized countries but it does not mean that we are inferior to others.

A true Filipino loves being a Filipino by having conscious desire to uplift the living of other Filipinos. A true Filipino is self-reliant and independent when it comes to his work. A true Filipino will not feel less for being a Filipino but will make every effort to be the best wherever he is.

Indeed, being a true Filipino is an attitude of the heart and the will of the mind. We must realize that it lies in our determination to love our country and make them a place where Filipinos can be proud and other nation can respect and admire our country. These are the important things our students should be reminded of. These are essentials that should not be forgotten and should be emphasized in the process of learning.

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