## Description

## The Woman Behind the Quote #embraceequity

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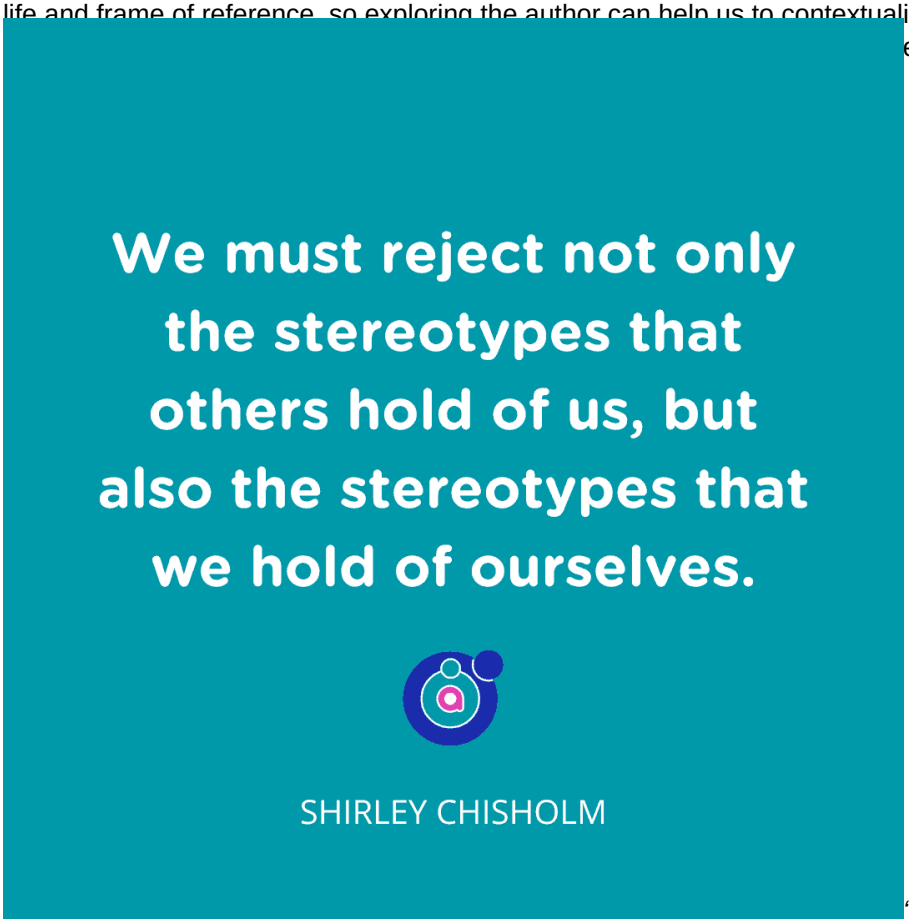
As we celebrate International Woman's Day 2023, many people will take to social media to #embraceequity, pushing forward with a desire to create a gender equal world that tolerates diversity and where difference is valued and respected. Of course, in the social media world, quotes are powerful tools to inspire, motivate, and provide insight into life and the wonder of human will. They are often used as a source of guidance, comfort, and wisdom in times of need. However, it is important to recognise that behind every quote is a person with their own unique experiences, perspectives, and context.

Knowing the person behind the quote adds depth and nuance to their words. It allows us to understand the motivations, beliefs, and values that underpin the quote, and how these may have been shaped by their life experiences. It also

enables us to appreciate the cultural and historical context in which the quote was made and how it reflects the social and political issues of that time. Often these issues persist, and we feel resonance with the quotes we choose.

It's also worth considering that when we read quotes, we may interpret the meaning in a different way depending on our life and frame of reference, so exploring the author can help us to contextualise their words and avoid misinterpretation e quotes are often shared without proper




*"We must reject not only the stereotypes that others hold of us, but also the stereotypes that we hold of ourselves."*

This quote emphasizes the importance of breaking free from limiting beliefs and societal expectations to achieve our full potential. By rejecting both the stereotypes that others hold of us and the ones that we hold of ourselves, we can create new possibilities and forge our own paths. For me, this quote is a reminder that we are not defined by others' perceptions of us and that we have the power to create our own narratives.

Looking beyond the quote, Shirley was a trailblazer, breaking multiple barriers in her political career. She was the first Black woman elected to the United States Congress and the first woman to seek the Democratic Party's nomination for President of the United States. She was a champion for education and social justice. She worked as a teacher and consultant for childcare before entering politics, and during her time in office she advocated for issues related to education, healthcare, and civil rights. Shirley was a fearless and independent thinker who was not afraid to speak her mind, doing so she became a role model and inspiration to many, particularly black and brown women historically marginalised in politics.

**Malala Yousafzai (1997-present)**

"I raise up my voice – not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard. We cannot all succeed when half of us are held back."

This quote speaks to the importance of using one's privilege and voice to uplift those who are marginalised and oppressed. Malala recognises that if we want to build a more just and equitable world, we must work to uplift and empower those who are held back by structural inequalities. For me, her quote also emphasises that it is not enough to simply speak out against injustice; we must take action to create change. This quote is a call to action, a reminder that we must use our privilege and our voices to speak up for those who are marginalised and work towards a more just and equitable world for all.

Looking beyond the quote, Malala is a Pakistani education activist who become a powerful voice for the rights of women and children in Pakistan and around the world. Malala was born on July 12, 1997, in Mingora, and grew up in a region that was controlled by the Taliban. At the age of 11, Malala began writing a blog for the BBC about life under Taliban rule and advocating for girls' education. In 2012, Malala was shot in the head by a Taliban gunman while on her way home from school. She survived the attack and continued to speak out for girls' education and human rights. She is the youngest-ever recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, awarded in 2014 for her advocacy for human rights, particularly the education of women and children in Swat, her native homeland, where the Pakistani Taliban had previously banned girls from attending school.

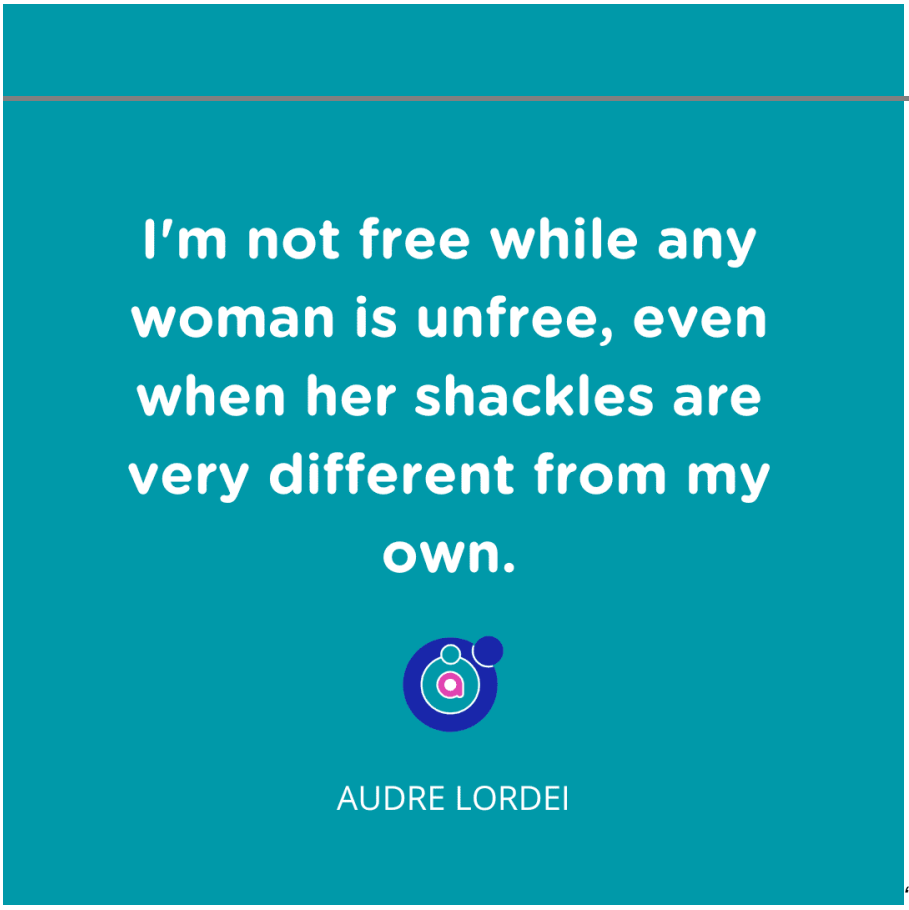
**Gloria Steinem (1934-present)**

*"Don't think about making woman fit the world – think about making the world fit woman."*

This quote highlights the importance of creating a world where women can thrive, rather than trying to force women to conform to a world that was not designed to meet their needs. By acknowledging and addressing the barriers that women face, we can create a more equitable and just society. This quote is a call to action for individuals and institutions to recognise the unique contributions and perspectives that women bring.

Looking beyond the quote, Gloria is an American journalist and social-political activist who rose to national prominence as a leader of second-wave feminism in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1969, she published an article titled "After Black Power, Women's Liberation." She co-founded Ms. magazine, which became a powerful platform for feminist voices and ideas. Gloria has been a vocal advocate for a wide range of social and political causes, including reproductive rights, racial justice, and LGBTQ+ rights. She has worked to empower women by encouraging them to speak out and to take leadership roles in their communities and in society. Her activism and writing have inspired generations of women and men to fight for gender equality and social justice.

**Audre Lorde (1934-1992)**




*“I’m not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own.”*

This quote highlights the interconnectedness of oppression and the importance of solidarity among all groups. Audre recognised that women’s experiences of oppression are diverse and complex, but she believed that all forms of oppression are interconnected and that no one can be truly free until everyone is free. For me, this quote is a reminder that we must work together to dismantle all systems of oppression, whether they are based on race, gender, sexuality, or any other form of difference. It’s not enough to simply focus on our own struggles or to prioritise one form of oppression over another. We must recognise the ways in which our struggles intersect and work towards liberation for all.

Looking beyond the quote, Audre was a self-described “black, lesbian, feminist, socialist, mother, warrior, poet” who devoted her life and creative talents to addressing injustices related to racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia. She was an American writer, poet, womanist, radical feminist, professor, and civil rights activist. Lorde’s books and essays, including “Sister Outsider” and “The Cancer Journals,” continue to be celebrated as important works of feminist and social justice literature.

My message is to remember that quotes are not disembodied entities but are rooted in the experiences, perspectives, and contexts of real people. By knowing the person behind the quote, we can gain a deeper appreciation for their words and use them in a more meaningful and nuanced way. We can also recognise the diversity of perspectives and experiences that shape our worldviews which inspire us to become more empathetic and understanding individuals. Next time you choose to share an inspiring quote, take a minute to explore the author and their incredible personal stories. This blog was written to celebrate International Women’s Day 2023 #embraceequity

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1. equality
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