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Albert Einstein once said, “What is right is not always popular and what is popular is not always right”. This statement sounds good on paper and you would assume that people would abide by it, yet not everyone does. It is easy to make a definitive statement such as this and act like it is always upheld, but it is much more difficult to actually practice what Einstein said. It is easy to vote yes when the voice inside your head is saying no, it is easy to do what everyone else is doing, and it is easy to do what is popular rather than what is right. On the contrary, it is difficult to say no when everyone else is saying yes, even if you strongly oppose the topic at hand. It is difficult to go against the crowd mentality, even when the crowd goes against your beliefs. It is difficult to do what is right rather than what is popular.

This is where character comes into play. Character means doing what is right regardless of what anyone else is doing, it is holding yourself to a high standard no matter what. Having differing opinions is a natural thing; without them we would be stuck in the past and we would not advance towards goals and ideals that challenge us and push us to become the best versions of ourselves. Progress cannot be made in the face of passivity. So often people have unique opinions that they refuse to speak solely because the idea of conflict scares them. We view conflict as negative, when in fact it can be positive and help us grow. Is conflict bad sometimes? Of course. Some conflicts come about without any merit, fighting for one’s personal agenda rather than a belief. However, if we avoid genuine, justified conflict we will never learn to communicate effectively in order to come to the best possible solution.

Conflict can be the most positive thing in the world if done maturely and with good intentions. If acted upon with character, conflict is the act of fighting for what is right. A woman of character does not shy away from conflict, nor does she create it unnecessarily; she uses conflict as a tool to work towards the greater good. As a woman of character, I know that what is right is what matters and will defend this with everything I have. As Helen Keller once said, “Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved”. A woman of character is not born, she is built. I have been built by the times I have stood my ground, even whilst standing alone. I have been built by the times I have defended someone who was unable to defend themselves. I will not tolerate what is wrong just so I can stand with those who insist they are right. I will not put my reputation before my values, because my values are what define me at the end of the day. As a woman of character, I will not rest knowing that I did not do what I could to help make the world a better place, even if the issue at hand may seem insignificant. In my life, I make choices based upon my morals, my values, and my heart. I will not tolerate what I do not believe. Regardless of what others may say, my character is who I know I am.