

“Send down... from the clouds of Thy mercy the rains of Thy healing...”

—Bahá'u'lláh



## Are Brains Biased?

**N**ew neighbors moved into our canopy today—a family of scarlet macaws. When my parents wanted to go say hello, I was nervous. I met a scarlet macaw once, and they were *not* friendly. Would this family act the same way?



I told my parents how I felt, and they said I have **unconscious bias**. I had no idea what that is! But it's when you have a prejudice and aren't aware of it. I was shocked when I heard this.

For example, if a cat scratches you, your brain might tell you *all* cats are dangerous. But that's not true! Our brains do this in order to sort information and learn quickly. But if your brain creates a bias against someone from another race or culture, you might treat them unfairly.

Could *I* be prejudiced against scarlet macaws? I felt guilty. But my parents said *everyone* has unconscious biases—and we don't even realize it! It makes changing biases really challenging.

If we have an opinion about people from a certain group, we have to dig deep and ask ourselves *why* we feel that way. I realized it's unfair to assume that *all* scarlet macaws are unkind. Everyone is unique, no matter what their background.

So I decided to go welcome our new neighbors with a basket of fruit. And guess what? They were super fun and friendly! They invited us to a housewarming party next week. I can't wait!

Ending biases can be tough. Try my ideas to avoid stereotypes and keep an open mind.

## Explore & Soar: Push Past Stereotypes

**T**ry these tips to eliminate biases and welcome diversity.

- ☐ If you have an opinion about a race or culture, question it. Is it based on your personal experience? Is it fair? Or is it a **stereotype**—an unfair assumption?
- ☐ Make friends from different races and cultures. Explore what you have in common.



- ☐ Learn about heroes and leaders from diverse cultures.
- ☐ Watch how different races and cultures are portrayed in the media. Are the examples realistic and positive?
- ☐ Speak up or tell an adult if you hear a racist joke or comment.
- ☐ Talk with your family and friends about racism and racial justice.
- ☐ Create a collage of images that break racial, gender, and cultural stereotypes.

## Curiosity Canopy



**D**id you know? Friendship with people in different racial groups can reduce prejudice. The effects can be contagious—when people see positive friendships across races, they're more willing to reach out and make similar connections themselves!