Limitations and Restrictions

Overcoming Limitations and Cultural Restrictions

After giving it some serious thought, it became clear that writing this article is something I really want to do. I came to realize that I have always been one who questioned the usual and unusual occurrences of people's lives as well as my own.

Recently, I decided that I wanted to do something as bold as write a book. This is not all that odd, since I've always had this fascination for writing small articles about almost anything. The only problem is that my thoughts seemed so erratic that putting them in some legible order was very difficult. This is an attempt to record, in a readable fashion, my wandering thoughts.

How did I get to this point in life in spite of all the restrictions and limitations confronting people like myself in the early 70's? The social and cultural limitations were enough to cause most people to call it quits. Yet! Here I am with a family, two college degrees and a career in professional sports. Don't misunderstand me as having a sad childhood; I'm just noting that it was a struggle.

I was black, poor and grew up in a culture that rejected growth. Education was stressed only to maintain an already decaying community. New ideals were not welcomed which limited new opportunities. The powers were content with the way thing were. I suppose that in many cultures there is a fear of losing control among the more influential people.

There wasn't much diversity when it came to career choices. The two overwhelming choices were farming and the military. Both are honest and respectable jobs but did not rank high on my "when I grow up list". As a matter of fact, the talk was," when I graduate, I'm going into the army", which at the time was an easy choice over being a farmer's helper.

Small communities are great in terms of having a close relationship with family and neighbors. The down side is that everyone thinks alike. Whatever limited thinking and imagination is constantly reinforced.

As small communities are great for raising a family, you sometimes have to weigh this against what I consider as undermining the ideology that America is the land of opportunity. Opportunity is a byproduct of creative thinking, diversity and change.

Most small towns, at least the one I grew up in, adopted a status quo culture. Culture is important because it gives a set of social rules which everyone is expected to live by. However; "The sky is the limit", "Be all you can be", were only figures of speech, nothing more.

These communities give true meaning to the term; "One Horse Town", one school, one police, one traffic light, one culture, and one way of doing things regardless of race or religion. Communities, whether large or small that adopt a status quo culture are destined to fail. Cultures that fail to promote their youth and new ideals prohibit the people from rising above the social and cultural limitations. With education and determination, there is hope to succeed above the expectations of your environment.