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Assignment in response to the Biscayne Bay Nature Center Student Immersion

On October 24th at the Biscayne Nature Center Student Immersion I fully understood what 'wild' meant. Before this field trip I had always associated 'wild' with negative connotations such as letting go of responsibilities. In most cases nowadays when someone refers to being 'wild' the person means doing something that would contradict what is expected, breaking boundaries, and promoting disorder. In this immersion I understood that humans have altered the definition of such term.

I believe that if a teenager is asked what they understand by the term 'wild', most of them will make reference to some 'wild' party or living their life with no worries, letting things happen and not worrying about anything around them. Moreover, many people would define 'wild' as doing something without measuring the consequences of such act; even though this would not always lead to negative result, in many cases it might.

On the other hand, one can look at 'wild' as it connects to nature; something I had never considered before this immersion. During this visit to the Biscayne Bay Nature Center, I understood that 'wild' means going back to your roots and letting nature flow. Tides, birds, and swimming creatures all lead 'wild' lives, but, contrary to what humans might think, all these still live lives dictated by order. Tides rise at night and fall during the day, birds migrate during certain seasons, and sea creatures know to remain where the sea grass grows since that is the most secure place along the shore. For example, birds such as the White Ibis and the Eurasian

Collared-Dove inhabit Key Biscayne but migrate during the fall season every year. Mangrove snapper, parrotfish, crabs, shrimp, sea stars and puffer fish –among others- seek refuge at the sea grass beds in their ‘wild’ state.

When thinking about ‘domesticated’ creatures versus ‘wild’ creatures we usually think of animals but leave out of the question how these terms might relate to us humans. Society nowadays forces us to give up the aspect of ‘wild’ I have discovered in this immersion; we are forced to lose our connection with nature and we are told what to do, say, and believe in order to fit in. By doing this, society ‘domesticates’ us; we give up our individuality and we abide by the standards set by others instead of connecting with our roots and following the path of nature. Any creature can be ‘domesticated’; if one refers to sea creatures, when trapped in a tank fishes, for instance, have to give up their connection to nature; they do not have to protect themselves from predators, so their location which was so characteristic in the ocean, as it protected them from danger, disappears. Birds trapped in cages cannot follow their migratory patterns and have to adapt and ‘fit in’ with the life their masters have chosen for them. Based on this I would say ‘domesticated’ could be associated with living life as dictated by others, while ‘wild’ could be living life as dictated by nature itself.

As of now, I believe humans are fully ‘domesticated’, and even though it would be unbearable to live completely ‘wild’ lives, living completely ‘domesticated’ lives-as most humans do currently- is also unbearable. An equilibrium must be found, and the only way to do so is by understanding that ‘wild’ does not involve disorder or disregard of the consequences, but rather involves going back to one’s roots and letting things flow the way nature meant them to flow.