“Ebony and Ivory live together in perfect harmony. Side by side on my piano keyboard; Oh Lord, why don’t we?”—John McCartney

Examining an example of art from the exhibit “Coexistence”, which urges tolerance between people of different ethnicities, cultural and religious backgrounds, reminds me of the Paul McCartney song, featuring the talented Stevie Wonder, *Ebony and Ivory*. This was a hit song of the 80’s. As a young teenager, I quickly ran out to the music store to buy the sheet music in hopes that I could perform it somewhere, someday, as a plea for peace in my world.

I recognize we are not living in a perfect world. There are individuals with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds that will not try to get along with anyone. These individuals are jealous, and talk negatively about others. They refuse to live amongst certain people. They are violent—fighting with their words and fist. Though, on the flip side, there are people who want to make the world a better place through coexisting. I currently attend a place of worship that except all people, regardless of their cultural background, their level of education, physical abilities, and socioeconomic status. We gather together to fellowship, pray, and commune. We come together to celebrate our differences and our likeness. Upon leaving the spiritual gathering, we realize that we are not perfect people, but are encouraged to go out and spread peace, joy, and love for the good of others.

I suppose these two musicians, one being American and the other British; one black and one white, came together for this musical project in hopes of demonstrating to the world, how two talented individuals with different backgrounds, with an admiration for music, along with the desire for peace, love, and happiness in the world, collaborated together to create a beautiful music piece. Through the combined efforts in composition and performance of McCartney and Wonder, the coexisting efforts were successful—people loved the song, the words, and the music. It stretched across international lines and touched all who heard it. The song, *Ebony and Ivory*, was a big hit! What grew out of the coexistence of these two individuals was a song, which shared the idea of peace in the world.

*Ebony and Ivory* was a song composed of powerful words and beautiful melodies, played on an instrument made with two different colored keys—black and white. Note, that a musician can create a song using
just black keys or white keys. However, one cannot create complex and melodious harmonies without the black and white piano keys working together. You definitely create your best music with the use of both keys played together. For that matter, you get an even better sound of music when the piano is combined with other instruments. What a wonderful example the piano gives us.

Coexistence has been around since the beginning of time. We are not going to get rid of it. Therefore, we must embrace it and learn creative ways to incorporate it in our lives for the good of all. Through the elimination of our selfish attitudes and thoughts, we can coexist. By offering peace in the midst of cultural differences, we can coexist. We can coexist by being silent in the midst of differences of opinions; offering peace in the midst of sorrow; hope in the midst of financial difficulties; optimism in the midst of social injustices, trust in the midst of inequality. We can even provide peaceful solutions and strategies to others who can’t coexist in a world filled with greed, hate, and war.

The answer does not come through selfishness and solving just our own personal issues with peace, but by providing and offering peace to others. Peace is providing for the poor, feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, caring for our children, loving our neighbor as ourselves, not returning evil for evil, and giving a helping hand whenever and however you can. Think about these questions. Can you live with yourself knowing that you did not take the opportunity of providing peace to someone who does not look like you or have the same thoughts as you? Desiring peace for you, desires peace for others. Without taking care and looking out for each other, we cannot COEXIST.