1 With all this extra stressin’  
The question I wonder is after death, after my last breath  
When will I finally get to rest? Through this supression  
they punish the people that's askin questions

5 And those that possess, steal from the ones without possessions  
The message I stress: to make it stop study your lessons  
Don't settle for less - even the genius asks-es questions  
Be grateful for blessings  
Don't ever change, keep your essence

10 The power is in the people and politics we address  
Always do your best, don't let the pressure make you panic  
And when you get stranded  
And things don't go the way you planned it  
Dreamin’ of riches, in a position of makin’ a difference

15 Politicians and hypocrites, they don't wanna listen  
If I'm insane, it's the fame made a brother change  
It wasn't nothing like the game  
It's just me against the world

**Me Against the World**

**By Tupac Shakur**

**Unearthing Meaning**

**Interpretation Guide**

1. What is the essential overall “meaning” in Tupac’s lyrics?

In a very straightforward manner, the poet’s meaning is explained in the title. On a wider basis, the poet is speaking metaphorically to people who share the same plight in life that the poet does (disfranchised minorities in the US). As a result it is “them” against the world as well.

1. Explain the forces that create a “Me Against the world” situation in the poem?

Injustice has created a “me against the world” mentality in the poem. The poet addresses sources of injusticedd in our society by pointing out that it is often the people who are “askin’ questions” that are punished. The poet also addresses the issues of the “haves and the have-nots” in the classical reference of the rich taking from the poor (line 5).

1. How does Tupac suggest we overcome oppression?

In lines 6 & 7, Shakur stresses the importance of understanding history and asking questions. Basically, the poet shows how knowledge is the tool by which oppression is overcome. In line 10, Tupac further highlights ways of addressing power and politics through getting people to recognize that power lies in their hands.

1. If the poet’s circumstances are so dire and life has so much injustice, explain why the poet would tell the reader to “be grateful for our blessings” (line 8)?

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1. Explain the meaning of why the poet insists the listener should not “ever change/live keep your essence” (line 9)

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