

The Day for Change

Eighth grade year and I am anxious in my seat, tapping my fingers and constantly shifting positions. I am trying to seem as small as possible so that I am not noticed, I know I won't be called. It is awards day, the one my school has at the end of every year where they recognize students for their participation in after school sports, activities and academic achievement.

Time passes slowly and I begin to worry immensely about the possibility of embarrassment as I wait impatiently for this torture to end. They reach my class.

The teacher stands by the podium shuffling his certificates, preparing to announce the students he has chosen to recognize for how well they are doing. I watch and wait, in hopes my name will be called so I am not singled out.

One by one I hear the names called and soon it is over, and I am left empty handed. I sit and look around to see if anyone has noticed as my face flushes red and I feel the heat rising from my neck. I am utterly embarrassed.

Just when I think all was well and I can leave before anything else happens, my friend turns in his seat and looks at my empty hands.

"What did you get?" he says in an almost concerned tone.

I stutter to answer but no words come out as I fiddle with my thumbs.

"I am not sure," I say "Well, I gotta catch up with my family."

After I excuse myself, I catch up to my parents and sister. I notice she had been awarded for various subjects over at the elementary school and my parents reassure me that my classes are harder than hers, but I can't help but feel I should have done better.

That night I have a lot of things going through my mind, but the biggest question I have is, "where did I go wrong." Soon after a long night of thinking. I realize I currently have the wrong priorities. This is the moment I decide to take action.

At that time in my life I was very focused on trying to fit in and it was one of the biggest concerns I had. I often did not fit in with any kids cause many of their interests were different from mine; as a result I tried to conform in order to build relationships with other students. Now that I'm older, I realize that was not the right choice because my priorities, and education shouldn't suffer in order to keep my peers interested.

As I entered my freshman year I began working hard to raise my grades and improve my priorities. I started putting my grades and family first and I no longer had any distractions keeping me from that. At the end of that year I achieved a 3.7 grade point average. Achieving this, it is safe to say that although I improving my grades is not enough to satisfy my goals.

Throughout high school I began to sign up for many activities provided by the school (and even nationally) and started building a huge list of them that I have participated in, this included the National Honor Society, school yearbook, school newspaper, and volunteering at our local library. As a result of everything I worked and improved on, I received various academic awards and had many more opportunities available to me. I am satisfied with how far I've come but that doesn't mean I will stop trying to achieve after I graduate, I plan on continuing this in my college education.

After experiencing what its like to achieve a new status, I don't believe I will ever go back to what I was like before. I want to continue to do well and build a positive future, helping others, and overall I just want to make a lasting impact in other peoples

lives just as many have done for me, and to an extent, I know hard work and determination is a huge factor to success. At this point of my life I have big hopes and dreams, and I plan on working hard to achieve them.