

This iBelieve Essays

Perception

by Esmerlin De La Cruz

When I was younger, I had a weight problem. That was a bad thing in middle school. I was bullied a lot for being bigger. I was always criticized on my man boobs. The ridicule was justified because they bounced around a lot, like basketballs. However, I believe that self-perception is important to my happiness.

During the three years I spent in middle school, I realized that there was no class I hated more than physical education. The days before gym were in preparation for the ensuing onslaught of heinous name-calling and irreparable mental scarring. My classmates said things like, “Wassup tidy boy, did you get a bra yet?” or, “Get away from me fat ass. I don’t want you to eat me.” My classmates were sour with me every day. I hated going to school because I couldn’t handle the disrespect. During middle school I had a classmate named Carlos. He always targeted me because I wasn’t able to do physical activities without sweating like a hippo, getting wheezy, or running sluggishly. Why did he decide to pursue me? Why was I the only one? I would find out that all I needed was have self-appreciation.

I felt restricted and I was never myself. I was like a puppet and my classmates owned me. I tried to be something I wasn’t. I would always find myself believing that the words my classmates were saying were true. I believed that I was ugly for a long time, and that because I was overweight I would never find love. For a long time I was uncomfortable with my body and blamed myself for being the way I was. It affected all my relationships. I was always angry, or depressed. Even my ideas were a joke. I was the little fat boy that couldn’t even walk up stairs without getting light headed.

When I reached high school, I realized that what was important wasn’t what people thought of me, it was what I thought of myself. All of my friends took no offense to the words of others. Instead of sobbing, my friends transformed the insults into motivation. My friends were strong, and unlike me, my friends valued themselves. My friends empowered me to hold myself above slander. I learned that it’s better to hold myself above others, and I recognized that sometimes it’s better to focus on myself. Once I realized that, I started to become happier.

Years passed before I could grasp happiness. I had to mature first. However, as I grew I began to appreciate myself more and more. I disregarded what people thought of me. I became a confident young man. I had conviction in my work, in my appearance, and in my overall life. That newfound self-assurance made me a happier person. I was immune to bullies and nasty jokes. I became outgoing and adventurous. I also became introspective. I developed characteristics like courtesy, respect, and kindness. My revelations made me a happier and more confident person.

As I look back I appreciate all the experiences I had. It made me stronger as a person and served to make me see the reality of the world. Growing up made me recognize that everyone needs to have faith in oneself to be happy. I believe that self-perception is a big piece of my happiness.