

Timothy G.  
Lower Dauphin High School  
Second Place  
9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades

## **The Value of a Positive Attitude**

A positive attitude is the strongest weapon that humanity possesses. All the way back to our roots as human beings, we have survived and thrived, armed with this firm constructive outlook on life. A positive attitude is a weapon because it has the frightening ability to develop and strengthen society, or to tear it apart from its very base. Keith Parsons is living proof of this fact. From his story, I have developed the belief that a positive attitude is intrinsic in all humans, and we have the capability to raise it to its full potential and apply it to all facets of life-whether that is overcoming an obstacle or keeping a firm outlook on people with disabilities.

The value of a positive attitude is immeasurable when facing any obstacle life presents. There have been countless instances in my life where an obstacle or task has seemed daunting or impossible. Whenever I feel like giving up under these circumstances, I draw inspiration and resolve from stories, like Keith's, to give me the courage to persevere and tough it out. In illustration, I was recently offered to try drugs. I know-it is a high school cliché'; but in all honesty, I thought of Keith's LSD experience gone bad and solidly refused. Drugs are the most obvious example in my mind because, like a negative attitude, they eventually lead to the destruction of your confidence, honor, and life. Also, much like a negative attitude, drugs are becoming more accepted in our society, and their worst effects usually surface much later in life. Drugs be thought of as a chemical bad attitude that can bury positivity and an optimistic conscience. A positive attitude is the most important trait for understanding and accepting people with disabilities as well.

Unfortunately, we tend to think of people with disabilities as a separate group of people that are different from those of us without disabilities. This mental barrier that we are still working to overcome is the biggest obstacle in the way of understanding, acceptance, and equality for all human beings. A positive attitude is the most vital tool in overcoming this collective ignorance. Physical appearance or mental capability sometimes masks the innate human qualities that we share with people with disabilities. However, these differences are not the problem. The problem lies in our willingness to maintain a positive attitude towards people with disabilities. There is no justification for treating people with disabilities differently simply because that are not the same as us. After all, diversity is what makes us human, and a positive attitude is the key to understanding diversity.

Humanity has succeeded in the past because of our ability to remain optimistic. Now, our society must continue to use the power of positivity to prevail against modern challenges and misunderstandings. Conclusively, we all possess the aptitude to maintain a positive attitude and to apply it to overcome obstacles and understand people with disabilities.