

Working Habits

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Grade 8

Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow

I have always strived for perfection. Whether it was grasping a new concept, taking a test, or meeting a friend, I wanted to be the perfect little girl. I used to get paranoid about changes to the point where I either cried or had a nervous meltdown. I can remember that before one particularly big exam, I suffered from violent stomach cramps because I was so nervous. I was taught that life needed structure and so I used to plan every minute of every day.

One day, I was listening to the radio, enjoying summer break. An up-beat tune came on with a girl singing about her views on life. They were completely opposite to how I thought people were supposed to approach it. I welcomed the lyrics with an interested ear. The fact that it was so opposite was... strange to me and yet compelling and comforting as well. I found out who sang it, I went online to find the song, and the lyrics:

*I am unwritten, can't read my mind, I'm undefined, I'm just beginning, the pen's in my hand,
ending unplanned*

*Staring at the blank page before you, Open up the dirty window, Let the sun illuminate the words
that you could not find*

*Reaching for something in the distance, So close you can almost taste it
Release your inhibitions, Feel the rain on your skin
No one else can feel it for you, Only you can let it in, No one else, no one else,
Can speak the words on your lips,, Drench yourself in words unspoken, Live your life with arms
wide open
Today is where your book begins, The rest is still unwritten, Oh, oh, oh*

*I break tradition, sometimes my tries, are outside the lines, We've been conditioned to not make
mistakes, but I can't live that way, Staring at the blank page before you, Open up the dirty
window, Let the sun illuminate the words that you could not find*

*Reaching for something in the distance, So close you can almost taste it, Release your
inhibitions, Feel the rain on your skin
No one else can feel it for you, Only you can let it in, No one else, no one else, Can speak the
words on your lips
Drench yourself in words unspoken, Live your life with arms wide open, Today is where your
book begins*

The rest is still unwritten...

I know the lyrics are that of a pop song, and that there are far better songs in the world, but this song struck me, and this song changed the way I view life. My laws of life used to be a)

strive for perfection, b) know what needs to be done, and c) never, under any circumstances, get behind. This song says, “Forget lists, forget perfect, forget work. Live your life.” When I heard the song, even before I read the lyrics, I began assessing my lifestyle.

What if life wasn’t as planned as everyone had it? What if there was more than “school, college, work, retirement, and death”? These questions plagued me, and finally I decided, “Time to change.” I threw my planner away, and ran outside with a soccer ball. I was astounded to find out how un-fit I was. I decided to spend the rest of the day outside, enjoying the air, and completely forgetting school and lists. That was the first day of the new me.

At first, I was having some trouble figuring everything out. I led a life of outdoor playing, instant messaging, and mind puzzles. For a few weeks I was addicted to an online novel website, and I had a really hard time getting off them. I found the idea of looking like I was doing schoolwork when I wasn’t, cool. My grades had dropped a bit, I had become very distant, and I spent every available minute stuck to my laptop. I couldn’t get enough of the “e-books”, and I constantly stayed home alone. To say I was obsessed barely covered it. Even the soccer and puzzles were pushed away. After I fell into a really bad cycle, I went back into “control freak” mode to catch up and worked on school work over ten hours a day.

For the past year I have been trying to find the balance between the realms of “control freak” and “slacker”, and here I am today, a slight mix of the two. I still take my schoolwork very seriously, and I still get really nervous before tests, but I’ve learned when it’s time to take a break. I stop working, and I have fun, inventing jokes and writing stories. I do still make some lists for the important stuff; but as the song goes, “the rest is still unwritten”.