

## The Scope of One Person

As Mahatma Gandhi once said, “Your beliefs become your thoughts, your thoughts become your words, your words become your actions, your actions become your habits, your habits become your values, and your values become your destiny” (BrainyQuote).

Values define who we are as humans and each individual’s values are different, leading every person down a separate path. When defining myself as an individual, I hold certain values that have led me to this point: honesty, integrity, compassion, perseverance, and creativity. Through these values, I have gained many other people's trust and learned to embrace my true self.

One of the first times I was taught about honesty was when I was a kindergartener in Girl Scouts. At the beginning of every meeting, we would recite the Girl Scout Promise and the Girl Scout Law. The first two lines of the Girl Scout Law are “I will do my best to be honest and fair,” (Girl Scouts). When we talked about honesty as a group, we defined how, when being honest, we should not lie to others and should always tell the truth. My mother also heavily educated me on honesty, telling me that if I didn’t tell the truth the first time she asked, I’d be in a lot more trouble when she asked a second time. With these two things engraved in my brain, I learned to always tell the truth when others ask me questions, shaping me as a sincere individual. For example, when my dad asks me what I’ve gotten done, I’ll tell him, even if I haven’t gotten anything done that day. When my friends ask for fashion advice, I give it to them straight rather than beating around the bush. When my mom asked me if I wanted to go to a birthday party for someone, I told her I didn’t want to go, and I didn’t even sugarcoat it. Through my honesty, I’ve gained the trust of many individuals in the community, including teachers, peers, and neighbors. I’ve done this largely through small acts, such as keeping secrets people have asked me not to

share or holding my promises to help my neighbors with tasks like cutting trees or moving rocks. People also trust that I'm truthful in what I do, even when I'm the only one around.

Integrity, a skill that took me a while to learn, is defined as doing the right thing even when no one's watching. When I was younger, like most kids, I thought I could get away with things like stealing an Oreo from the shelf when no one was watching. However, I quickly learned that it felt better to do the right thing, even if I wasn't praised or rewarded for it. Mom had taught me this and practically drilled it into my head. Learning this early on developed my sense of wanting to do good for the world and make it a better place than I found it. If everyone were to do small things that made the world better when no one was watching, it may just make someone's day in the community around them, which is what I tried to do for my community. When I was on the bus last year, I found forty dollars on the floor. I picked it up, confused as to who might have dropped it, so I decided to give it to the bus driver before I got off the bus, for it was not mine to keep. I figured if someone was looking for their money, they'd probably ask the driver. With finding this money, I felt a sense of worry for whoever may have lost it. My caring for others and what they went through is something that stuck with me.

A quote that I've heard time and time again is "You can't understand a person's experience until you've walked a mile in their shoes" (Abeles). From the first time I heard this quote, it stuck to me. It made me think about how others feel and led to me feeling compassion, or a showing of empathy, for what they're going through. As I got older, I experienced more things that made me realize that I would never know exactly how each individual felt with tough experiences, but each experience of mine made me empathize more with others around me. With the money on the ground, I had felt that strong sense of worry when thinking about what it was like to lose money like that or someone close to you. Before 2020, losing a family member or

someone close to me to suicide had never really impacted my life, but I understood that it made people feel a variety of emotions. After I lost my grandpa to suicide, I could understand a lot more how others might feel. Being able to empathize with how others feel and take a moment to try and walk in their shoes showed me how everyone has their struggles in life. It also taught me how to comfort others with what they were going through, be it a long day or the loss of someone they knew. I will never know exactly what someone is feeling, but I can try and help them to carry on.

Even when life is tough, being able to look past those troubles and persevere, or keep going no matter what is incredibly important. Throughout my life, I've gone through many tough times of my own, as have many others. I moved to a new school when I was in elementary, leaving behind all my friends. I've lost my great-great aunt, two of my grandfathers, and my mother, all of whom I hold deep in my heart. However, each of these events has made me stronger as a person. My troubles have broken me down and some have even caused me breakdowns on my bedroom floor in the wee hours of the morning, but they've also built me back up to a place where I'm more able to handle events like these in the future. With my perseverance, I've not only been able to push others in my community to keep going even when it seems like the world is on fire, but myself as well. I've pushed past every pebble and boulder life has thrown at me. I've also pushed others to continue to do what they love, showing their creative side.

Every day, I have the wonderful opportunity to show my creativity or my imaginative side. I'm able to express who I am in the band room when I play the mallets or in the choir room when I sing a song. It feels freeing to be able to make such beautiful sounds of music with my voice and my moving hands with the mallets in hand. I even write stories about made-up worlds

and what happens in the stories. Being able to express my creativity has shaped how I view the world and has helped me through troubling times. It's also allowed me to encourage others to be creative as well. With this encouragement, I've led others to pursue bigger, greater things in life. Creativity allows me to help myself and others with acting choices in the musical, and it keeps me motivated as I go about my day to be my best self. Through my creativity, I keep those around me motivated as well and work to make the world a better place.

Everywhere I turn, my values such as honesty, integrity, compassion, perseverance, and creativity have had some influence on something or someone around me. They've led me down many different paths in my life that have led to defining me as a person. Without these values that have made my scope of the world, I wouldn't be who I am today.

## Works Cited

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