

The yellow ribbon essay



As my parents drove along the road along Changi, we spotted a line of people walking outside the Changi prison. They were each holding a yellow ribbon. Wondering what they were doing, I enquired from my parents. My father explained that it was the Yellow Ribbon project, helping ex convicts who have just been released. Very often, these ex convicts are unable to adapt to civilian life after spending time in jail, and it becomes a second prison for which they are unable to break out of. This gives them a second chance to live life again.

I then realized how we have taken our lives for granted. Opportunities have passed us by without us realising. It made me thought about how I could seize that moment if it does come by me again. One week later, I was back in school, eager to get back my year end report. As we happily discussed about what our class positions might be, I did not anticipate the rude awakening I was in for. " I can't believe this... There's got to be a mistake! " I wailed. I stood there in shock. It could not be true. There, stated on my paper, I was to be retained for another year!

I checked, double checked and triple checked! But there it was, as though it was staring back at me with a nasty smirk on its face, the big, bold word: retain. My friends started asking how I faired, but words seemed to be stuck in my throat. I felt ashamed. My friends were promoted to Secondary four, but there I was. My time was marked, whereas my friends were moving on. That night, after receiving what I considered ten year's worth of scolding from my parents, who were extremely disappointed in me, I went down to the nearby playground and sat down on the swing.

I started to reflect. Why did that happen to me? But the answer was clear-cut and straight forward. I did not pay attention in class. I did not study. I spent most of my time chatting on the phone, using the computer, going shopping, watching television... I have failed miserably. All of a sudden, I spotted something on the floor. I walked towards it and picked it up. It was a yellow ribbon. I thought about the previous week when I first learnt about the Yellow Ribbon Project, about second chances and opportunities passing us by.

Could that be the opportunity I was waiting for? Could this be the moment that I could seize to help me change? I was enlightened. From that day on, I studied and worked really hard. I gave up on my computer, my mobile phone and all the other things that could distract me from achieving my goal. I ignored the taunting and hurtful things people told me, reminding me that I am a retaine. But I just ignored them. They were merely passing clouds, darkening my day. Very soon, a year passed by.

It was that day again, the day we had to get out report card. As I waited for my name to be called up, I thought about what I have been doing the whole year. I have changed, and I was proud to say it. I have completely metamorphosised from a lazy, ignorant teenager to a hardworking student who was ready to take up any challenge given to her. Whether or not I aced that examination, I knew that I have done my best. " Paula Yip! " I stood up and took my report card. I looked at it, in sheer amazement.

I slowly walked to my seat, grinning from ear to ear. I said nothing. Not only did I top the class, I actually topped the entire level! I was elated. Words were beyond me and tears wells up at the corners of my eyes. I did it. I

seized the day. Having to repeat another was the motivator from which I was rooted and soared. We should not let such opportunities that allow us to change to pass us by, as we continue living our mundane and uneventful lives, with little or no achievements. I was given a second chance, and I made the best out of it.