

We all take things for granted



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Helen Keller is a very recognized author throughout the world. Not only did she have to deal with the competition of other authors, but she also had to deal with a great handicap. At the age of nineteen months, she developed an illness that claimed her ability to hear, see, and speak. With her self-determination and help from a great teacher, Anne Sullivan, Helen developed the ability to read Braille, lips, and even speak. After educating herself Helen began writing everything from poetry to a book about her life struggle. In the short story "Three Days to See" Helen tells us how she became frustrated by the people that visited her.

She tells about them coming in and saying how they "saw nothing in particular," after being in the woods for hours. She was very distraught by the fact that someone could see things of beauty, and not benefit from the experience. She began to think what she would do if she were given the gift of sight for just three short days. With this thought she came up with this agenda: On the first day she would pursue life's simple pleasures, like looking into the eyes of her worthy dog, or visiting the many friends that took the time to visit her.

She would stay up late and see the beauty of the sunset falling over the horizon. The second day would consist of man-made beauties, such as going to art galleries to see the masterpieces that she could only read about. Finally, she would stop at the theatre so she could see the works of art she read about put into motion. On the third and final day she would go to the busy streets and witness how the average person spends their life. She wanted to see the busy ways of the businessmen on 5th Avenue and the

factory workers of the suburbs. When sight is put into terms of time you can see that there is no time to waste.

Everyday of our lives we awake to the annoying sound of an alarm clock, roll over, open our eyes, and find the snooze button. Never thinking twice about what a gift that is in itself. There are things in our lives that we do with ease that are the everyday struggle of others. Things that we hate doing could be the greatest joy of others, if they were only given the chance. We tend to take many simple gifts in life for granted. Could you imagine what it must be like to depend on people to help you go to the bathroom, or wash your hair? We get out of bed and brush our teeth without thinking about it.

Handicapped people have to deal with simple tasks, one step at a time, everyday of their lives. Some use wheel chairs and have to use elevators or ramps wherever they go. Others have to be spoon fed, or driven around in a bus. Those people will never know what its like to catch a winning touchdown pass, or run through a field with the wind blowing through their hair. Take an average day in your life and compare it to that of a handicapped person.

Starting at breakfast, we talk to our friends about the things that happened yesterday or things we are looking forward to in the up coming day.

At the same time, we are eating our pancakes with a knife and fork, while drinking a hot cup of coffee. For someone with a disability this can be somewhat impossible. A person who is deaf has to sign everything they say or read lips. A blind person needs help to eat the food that they can not see on their plate. This is just the beginning of a long and complicated day. Then it s off to work or school. Most people just hop into a car and begin the daily

ritual of fighting traffic, and yelling at the person in front of them for going to slow.

Handicapped people have to be driven around in a bus and are dropped off with the assistance of others. The blind have to depend on the eyes of a trusty seeing-eye dog. When it comes to reading or doing homework we just open a book and begin. It's not that simple for others. The blind and deaf have to learn to read Braille and communicate with sign language. The handicapped have to take special classes that are structured for their learning level with the help of a special teacher, and long hours of practice. At the days end we make something warm to eat, take a shower and go to bed.

This is the start of many involved tasks for other people. The blind can't cook over a stove because they can't tell if they are burning what they are cooking. The handicapped have to have food prepared for them because they are not capable of doing it themselves. When the handicapped want to go to bed they have to be lifted out of their wheel chairs with the help of others. Think about going on vacation and the adventure and relaxation that goes along with the overall experience. When we want to go on vacation we just book a flight and leave. Take going to Niagara Falls for example, and the beautiful sights and sounds to behold there.

Sounds pretty simple, right? Now think of what it would like if you had a disability. The blind can not see the beauty of the rushing water flowing down that great mass of earth. Deaf people can not hear the water making the rushing noise as it comes over the apex, or the pulsing of the water

hitting the ground. When you think of a day in the life of someone faced with those types of challenges, life in its self does not seem so bad. Furthermore, in the United States we live in society that is always on the go. American s generally take their way of life and everyday easy comings for granted.

We are at the cutting edge of technology, industry, and medicine. This country is advancing so fast that the sky is the limit. On the other hand, many other countries are less fortunate. There are places all over the world where children starve to death everyday. People don t have the guarantee that every time they flip the light switch on, there will be electricity to make that light go on. All over the world families live in there own filth because they lack the technology of waste management. Our country is very advanced, but people here still live on the streets and have no food.

When you compare the way others in the world live to the way we live there is no comparison. The world is filled with many different people that live in many different places. Some are better off than others for whatever the reasons are. Whatever your reasons are be thankful for the things you have, not disappointed about the things you don t have. Ponder what it is like to be in a person like Helen Keller s shoes, or some one that lives in a third world country. Tomorrow is a new day and could change beyond your wildest dreams. So, in the future, try and pay attention to the little things, and don t take anything for granted.