



learning for life

embracing core values

your details

name/names: **Kate Keohane**

year: **52**

school: **George Heriot's School**

teacher: **Mrs Campbell**

favourite quotations

Anne Frank: In spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart. I simply can't build up my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery and death.

Alan K Chalmers: The grand essentials of happiness are: something to do, something to love and something to hope for.

Thich Nhat Hanh: Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy.

favourite stories

What's the Next Village Like?
 One of my favourite stories is a fable about an old woman sitting by the road; a traveller walks past and asks what the next village is like. The old lady asks, 'well, what was the place you were just at like?' The man moans, 'oh, it was awful; the people were cold and unfriendly.' 'Ah...'. The old woman replied, 'you'll find the next village much the same.' Then another traveller comes past and asks what the next village is like; and again the old woman asks what the last village they had visited was like, but this time the traveller replied 'it was a great, the people were friendly and welcoming.' The woman said, 'you'll find the next village much the same.' This story tells us that you make your own luck and people will treat you in the same way you treat them; if you're warm and smiley to people, they'll be warm back.

01 personal development

- positive outlook
- gratitude
- love
- enthusiasm
- happiness/joy
- perseverance
- generosity
- honesty/integrity
- humility/modesty
- wisdom

your choice:

Without a positive outlook on life, you're never going to be truly happy. You are your own self-fulfilling prophecy.

02 successful living

- creative thinking
- learning
- focus
- work
- ideals
- purpose
- courage
- friendship
- confidence
- self-discipline

your choice:

We all need courage to get through difficult situations in life - it is linked with self-belief and hope.

03 turning things around

- problem → solutions
- potential → actual
- loss → gain
- pessimism → optimism
- worry → moving on
- mistakes → learning
- anger → calm
- put it off → do it now
- fear → fearlessness
- stress → stillness

your choice:

After having such a tragic childhood, Prossy could easily have become pessimistic about life, but she still tried to see the good in everything and be optimistic.

04 personal relationships

- co-operation
- responsibility
- empathy
- trust
- kindness
- forgiveness
- respect
- volunteering/service
- listening
- openness

your choice:

Something that I admired about Prossy was her ability to forgive. Others in her situation would find it difficult to believe in God, but despite everything she managed to forgive and remain Christian.

inspirational figures

Proscovia Nakiyemba (Prossy)
 During the summer holidays we agreed to have two girls from the African Children's Choir to stay; little did we know what an amazing learning experience it would be. The two girls were called Proscovia and Annette. Prossy was born in Uganda to a Ugandan father and a Rwandan mother; she grew up in a background where food and water was a problem. Her dad divorced her mother when she was only four years old; he remarried and later found that his new wife had HIV/AIDS, which he died from in 1994. In 1995, Prossy was chosen to go on tour with the African Children's Choir.

This opened new doors as it meant getting food and clean water plus good shelter. In 1997 she returned home to Uganda only to find her mother diagnosed with skin cancer. They had no money to look after her or get the proper cancer treatment; her mother died on 8th September 2001. Prossy and her brothers and sisters could not make a new home with their Mum's family, as all the Rwandan relatives had been murdered in the genocide. In 2002 she was selected to travel again with the African Children's Choir and has been studying and travelling ever since. She has just completed a journalism and creative writing course certificate and dreams of becoming a performing artist. What makes Prossy such an inspiration is the fact that after having such a horrific life, she could still laugh, smile and be positive about the future. She is one of the most optimistic and cheerful people that I have ever met and my family will never forget her or the lessons we learned through her.

personal reflection

Meeting Prossy has made me realise how lucky I am to live safely with my family without having to worry about clean water or food. We take things hugely for granted. It has also made me consider my attitude towards life and to reflect on the way my friends and I think. Some people seem to think it is 'cool' to be cynical and think that everything is 'rubbish, dull and boring', when what we need to realise is that we are extremely fortunate to live in a way that we do. We are blessed.

Another thing I have learned is that being happy and optimistic is a great skill in life and the pessimism is the easy way out. My story about the old woman sitting beside the road highlights that you are your own self-fulfilling prophecy and that if you think everyone is horrible among friendly they will be. Being positive makes it seem a more attractive and approachable person to other people. Something else which I admire about Prossy is that she still believes in God despite having such a difficult life. I think her religion is something that would always be there when she was on her own. I believe that's an important part of religion, having something to rely on.

If everyone had the same attitude to life as Prossy, the world will be a much happier and more peaceful place. Anne Frank said in her diary, just a week before she was found by the Nazis: 'in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart. I simply can't build up my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery and death.'

If Anne Frank and Prossy can be positive and see the best in people despite their difficult lives, then I know that I can work on being positive and hopeful myself. When I am older I would definitely consider going and working for the African Children's Choir as I feel that it would be an unforgettable experience and a fantastic opportunity to learn from these awe-inspiring children. The fact that they could sing with such joy and pride despite having had such a terrible start in their lives should be an example to us all.

Our goal is to help individuals build a firm foundation of lifelong practical wisdom



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