

"Life's challenges are not supposed to paralyze you, they're supposed to help you discover who you are." We all go through challenges in life, some more difficult than others. These challenges we face are what help us learn more about ourselves. They define us and help mold us into the people we want to be. Like the above quote said challenges are not supposed to paralyze us. They are supposed to help us grow as an individual.

I believe that you will never make it through life without facing a challenge. I believe it is important to be challenged in life whether it be mentally, physically, or emotionally challenges are an important part of learning about who we are and who we may or may not want to be in the near future.

I have faced many challenges in my life, some more difficult than others. Some I made it through, some I still face to this very day. I believe these challenges are the reason I am who I am today, and the reason I will be who I strive to be when I grow old. One of my most recent challenges still isn't complete but I have learned so much about myself and even the people around me.

Going through a mental or emotional challenge is probably the toughest thing to get through for me. Recently I had applied to Culver Military Academy and I was accepted. I had also applied for a full-ride scholarship there. Out of 200 people who applied for the scholarship I was in the top 35. My hopes were high. Then I discovered I had made it into the top 17, from there we had to go through an interview, meetings, dinners, and activities. I was the happiest and most positive teenager in the world, I knew I would get that scholarship. Then, about a week later I got the call, Out of the 7 they chose, I was 8. I didn't get it. I was on a downward spiral and there was no going up until I crashed at the bottom. Mentally, I thought I wasn't good enough. I became depressed and didn't care about much. I could lay around all day and just do nothing. Emotionally was destroyed. My heart was shattered, I cried weekly and couldn't control my emotions at all. I was a wreck. I discovered so much about me in those low points. I found my artistic side and I wanted to be a better person and to change what I thought held me back from my dreams. I still am not completely over this challenge yet, but I am confident that when the day comes to try again, I will seize the day.

A physical challenge is very much like a mental challenge to me. Yesterday, I had ran a 5K. Mentally I was prepared to do decent, around 25:30 hopefully, 15 seconds better than a few days earlier. Physically, I was tired. I was not in the mood to run and I just wanted to sleep. I had told myself, "I am not going to settle for worse than my best and I will push myself." While I ran the race I would sort out the thoughts from the day and flash back to reality constantly. I had been passed up by 3 people, and I was not to happy. I knew I had to pass them up even though I felt as if I could curl up and take a nap right there in the dirt. I slowly but surely caught up to them and passed them up easily, but there was a kid on my tail and another close in front I wanted to shake off on the last leg of the race. I barely passed the kid in front of me before I had to start sprinting and the other was still close behind. I let my body take over, there was noting going on in my head but, "I must finish." I felt like my time was around 26:45, a minute slower than the weekend before. I sped up, as I got closer to the finish line my legs wanted to die. My ankles hurt and I wanted to collapse, so I pushed myself even more. I started to think I would vomit, so I pushed even harder to finish strong. As I crossed the finish line I hear my time, 24:18, almost a minute faster than what I did the weekend before. I had gained some confidence. I also learned that the only limits I have are the ones I make for myself mentally.

Now to link this to my bucket list, these stories could seem rather lengthy and pointless but I got something out of them. I want to be able to push my mental, physical, and emotional limits.

I want to be able to say that I lived my high school career to its full potential and that I grew not only physically, but mentally and emotionally. Being shy and setting limits for myself was something I did frequently as a child. I am ready to change that. I am ready to be confident, outgoing, positive, and strong. This bucket list will help me slowly peel away the old me, like a butterfly breaking out of its cocoon. I am ready to soar and be who I was destined to be. These challenges and goals I set for myself will help me not only be who I want to be now, but help me learn about myself and realize all of my hidden strengths.