

The Right Mental Attitude

By Sasha Clayton

"Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude."

- Thomas Jefferson

Whether the road is bumpy or smooth, a man can walk along with a smile on his face or with a scowl in his heart. It is his choice.

Transitions are always difficult. Beginning the school year, we find that we need to recalibrate our internal clocks, our self-discipline, and even our attitude. It's not easy to get up for school when your internal clock says, "Sleep for 10 more minutes!" It's not comfortable to create a schedule for doing homework every night when your mind suggests playing would be more fun! It's not the most natural thing to laugh and have faith when faced with a challenging situation or project. And yet, it is when we face adversity with the right mental attitude that we find we can indeed rise to the challenge.

I have asked students what their goals were for September during Monday assemblies. Student goals ranged from getting to school on time, to getting good grades on their report cards, to eating healthy foods. We talked about what kind of mental attitude one needs to achieve these goals. Time and again we continued to return to the concepts of discipline and believing in oneself.

It is not only the students who have set goals. Parents, too, are setting goals for themselves and their children. I look forward to receiving your "About My Child" forms so that we can better know your goals for your child.

I find it remarkable that the right mental attitude can help us overcome any obstacle. I try to remember that it is crucial to look to the solutions when problems present themselves. I have ascertained that it is imperative that we walk forward with kindness and an open mind. For when we do so, we find that the difficult situation can and will change. When I look at my homework and decide that all I have to do is sit down and start it, I am successful. For now I just have to do one problem. In a moment, I can do just one more. When I look at my book report or Science Fair project and decide to take it one step at a time, I actually enjoy the process. When I feel that I will never be able to get an A in this class, I decide that, for today, I just need to do my homework. Tomorrow I will study for the test, and as the days and weeks pass, I may just earn my A! If not, I will have earned respect for doing the best I could.

We pass along our mental attitudes to our children and students. Our positivity creates positivity. Our belief that learning and reading are to be enjoyed makes room for moments of delight in learning. I hope we can all stand together to model the right mental attitude for our young Hilldale minds as they begin to understand how to tackle any goal, any challenge.