

“The Perks Of Being A Wallflower” by Steven Chbosky is a book that I cherish so deeply, that I in fact will share it with anyone whom I feel will value it. A book that can help a person both dwell upon bad memories as well as relive the good ones, is a book that should be cherished. It’s a book that should be shared. That is my main focus in writing this essay, not to win money or for personal gain, but I feel that if you have not read the most life changing book I have ever beheld, perhaps it is time you do.

I find myself using quotes and phrases from the book often in my daily life. It is a book that I could never express enough gratitude to the author for publishing it, nor could I ever explain the deep emotions I feel while reading it, no matter how many times I have tried. With quotes like, “So, this is my life. And I want you to know that I am both happy and sad and still trying to figure out how that could be (2),”the book is hard not to intrigue you, and call you in for more. Perhaps it is because no matter where you come from, or who you are, you can relate to this book in almost every way. It is a book that lets you know you are not alone, no matter how many times you were told that before.

The first page instantly had me involved. Charlie felt that he had no one to talk to, and he wanted to keep his identity secret to this person who he wrote to, and that shows the reader his innocence and pure heartedness. His letters were so personal that you forgot for a moment that his character was fictional, that the whole book was fictional, and I felt closer to Charlie than any other “real” person in my life. I related to the sadness Charlie felt, and the reasons he felt it. I related to the way he felt about family, at reunions, how, “..everyone loves each other, but no one really likes each other.”

Even though I love my father, I do not understand him, or the reason he drinks. I wonder why it is my heart continues to feel such compassion for this man. I have always

felt a weight on my shoulders for it, and as much as I could not understand him, my biggest problem was that I could not understand the fact that I cannot change him, I can only change myself. Again, Charlie helped me realize something, he said, "I guess we are who we are for a lot of reasons. And maybe we'll never know all of them. But even if we don't have the power to choose where we come from, we can still choose where to go from there." My mother saw my struggle to understand my father, and she tried to show me that it is his alcoholism that held him back, and he is still my father and I should always love him for that. She once told me that my dad gave me a sense of worry, a sense of anger, and a sense to not make sense when I am both. The memories are still very painful, I cannot understand yet why my father is so angry all the time, and I cannot forgive him for his alcoholism. Yet, I can forgive myself for blaming my father for my mistakes. I let myself be held back, too. This book helped me see that, it helped me see, "Maybe it's good to put things in perspective, but sometimes, I think that the only perspective is to really be there. Like Sam said. Because it's okay to feel things. And be who you are because of them."

I believe Charlie and I also share a sadness, one I cannot explain any better than he could. It's physically painful, exhausting, and unbearable. Charlie never mentioned in the book what illness he had associated to that sadness, but I was diagnosed Manic Depressive, or Bipolar, three years ago. I can honestly say in this book each break down Charlie had, I would cry and say aloud, "Yes! I know! I know, Charlie!", and it felt relieving. My family nor friends have a mental illness, so Charlie was my sweetest friend, one that I really and truly bonded to. Perhaps that is because Charlie helped me with growing up. He helped me understand that bad things happen, but life goes on.

Besides my personal experience, I have found myself reciting quotes from the book to relate to other people. Growing up, especially in high school, friends get boyfriends, and those boys break hearts. The most important quote I can remember from the book, that I used then, and in marriage and so on in life I will use again, is, “We accept the love we think we deserve.” To me, that quote is beautiful, and can be used in relationships, friendships, family, and more. It is a quote that is more like a lesson to learn, something human beings can relive again and again through generations. It leaves an imprint on my heart, as I am sure it has to infinite others. The whole book is full of wisdom. I silently recite to myself quotes and experiences from the book, and it amazes me how many times daily that is. It amazes me that this one book is much more than pages and ink, much more than the setting, plot, etc. I will never forget the characters in the book. I will never forget Charlie’s experiences, or the endless lessons I have learned from him. And as I close this essay, I hope you read this book, for it is truly incredible, and, “Please believe that things are good with me, and even when they’re not, they will be soon enough.”