

When asked what stems our motivation, or what displays our personality best, there are fewer things that can show through better than that of written words. Many people have books or novels that have touched them, and do so in such a way that displays the type of person they are or strive to be. One of the books that have touched me in such a way is none other than “You Will Dream New Dreams” by Dr. Stanley D. Klein and Kim Schive. Rather than being a novel or single threaded story, this book is actually a compilation of many short stories taken from many authors with the single purpose of showing how families go to insurmountable odds to care for members of their family born with mental disabilities. Personally, I find that there are few more moving ways to become motivated as a prospective special education teacher than to read about the striving of parents with children with disabilities, covering an assortment of things from sensory impairment to autism just to name a few. Since I was young, education has been the field I have wanted to pursue. Never sure what generalization I thought would fit me the best, I took different classes, and among them, one with a focus on teaching special needs. Once I delved into this book, I knew teaching special needs was the focus I wanted to pursue.

This read has taught me that despite “special disabilities” a person is a person, and every life is rich and is to be treated as such. Stories within this book show transformations of parents going from concern and hopelessness for their child to the most dedicated and happy parents there are. These wonderful people show that life is something to be cherished, and that all people deserve the best of what it has to offer. I believe this compilation, if taken in especially by those unfamiliar to the lives of families who possess children or siblings with those of special needs, can offer perspective that

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can slim the divide between those who have misconceptions of special needs children as being hopeless or any less of a person than those who do not have “impairments”. This book has not only brought me to those realizations, but made me more enthusiastic than I already was about future parenthood. In my opinion, these narratives from parents are so moving that they can not only give more perspective to ones unaware but deliver motivation for those facing raising a child with special needs themselves.

In a sense, I believe this book has not necessarily given me insight that I couldn't have received elsewhere, but has made it much easier to obtain than could have been. Without this compilation, one's best chance of receiving these types of moving stories would be much harder to come by. One would need a firsthand record from such inspirational families themselves, which is more difficult considering such insight is restricted to those you would have to know personally in most cases. This compilation has certainly changed me and my outlook on such situations in both a personal and more worldly sense. I used to fear that my future child would be born less than what is considered normal in today's society, that any less would be a reason to be emotionally drained and stressed out. These stories of parents who fought through that fear have shown me that no matter what, your child should be no less than your perfect creation. We are all special in some way and to think any less would hurt your child more than it could possibly hurt you. Love knows no boundaries, and this compilation could have not motivated or shown me this any clearer for both my profession goals and hopeful parenthood one day in the future.

I have always wanted to help people, regardless of my future career. I want to strive to be a teacher, and help children in any way I can. I have always believed there is

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nothing richer than giving your life for others, and this novel does nothing less than support that ideal. The most well rounded and caring people are made of those who overcome challenges that the parents in these stories have faced. If I can be half as motivated as the writers of the stories within this book, I will have considered my entire life's goal of being able to reach children in such a way complete. Perhaps my favorite quote from the entire book says it all, and it is from the short story within "Trust Your Instincts" on page 51, and is as follows:

*"Being able to talk to someone who has walked this road already has made a big difference in our lives...Don't give up the search, trust your instincts, and follow your child's lead. You will learn more from that child than he or she will learn from you."*