

**OPENING READING:**

**Be Proud Of Yourself, always**

By Curly Mer

Be Proud of yourself, always  
Don't let anything or anyone put you down  
Something terrible might have happened to you  
but always remember:  
Everyone makes mistakes and nobody's perfect

Im speaking the truth  
Whether you believe me or not  
You might get a bad grade on your report card  
and your parents get mad  
Don't get mad, just believe in yourself  
And promise yourself you'll do better next time

Don't ever hate yourself  
You're not perfect,  
and you'll never be  
You'll always make mistakes and  
everything will somehow go wrong in your life,  
But isn't that what life's all about?  
Everybody making mistakes, and then learning from them?

Promise me, whoever is reading this piece of poem,  
That you'll always believe in yourself and don't give up  
and that you'll always believe that your the best,  
and not hate yourself  
Don't let anyone or anything put you down  
For no one's perfect  
Just be proud of yourself, always  
no matter what the circumstances are

Be proud of yourself, always  
And don't be afraid to show it

**SPEECH:**

Here we are, halftime, faster than you could believe. Seems like yesterday we were moving in, meeting our cabin mates, counselors, and new friends all around camp. Already, we have seen some of those friends come and go. They packed up their things

and began the next part of their summer journey. Hopefully, we were friends with them, hopefully, they had the best 3 1/2 weeks of their lives, and hopefully we will see those friends again on the wooded path in the summers to come.

Tomorrow, a new Timanous chapter will unfold. The beds that were once occupied by our old buddies will now have a new look to them. Old friendships will be re-affirmed, and new friendships will be born in a heartbeat. Isn't it fun to think that someone arriving tomorrow might end up being one of your best friends? It is very tough to come to camp at halftime. Many of you guys already have a daily routine, a strong core group of friends, and a sense of belonging that comes with being part of the Timanous family. Tomorrow, our family will grow, and I challenge each and every one of you to take our new family members under your wing, show them the ropes, and make them feel like they've been here forever. Show them how proud you are to be a Timanous camper, and show them how proud you are to welcome them to their new home. Being proud is one of the best feelings anyone can have. What else are you proud of? Pride isn't just being happy with something, and it certainly isn't just being content with something. Pride is one of the strongest feelings you can have. It is a feeling of love, it is a feeling of joy, and its a feeling that cannot be faked.

So, I ask you again, what are you proud of? Are you proud of your awards? Because you should be. Are you proud of your cabin? Because you should be proud of that too. Those are great things to be proud of. But are you just proud of winning awards so you can get a patch, a pocket knife, or a towel? Winning awards takes skill, patience, perseverance, and hard work, and those are the things you should really be proud of.

Most of the things we are most proud of cannot be touched, heard, or even seen very easily. Being proud of something doesn't mean you have to win, get a trophy, or even be able to show it off at all.

There are certain things I wanted to talk about today that everyone should be proud of, and nobody can take that pride from you.

I'll tell you what I'm proud of. I'm proud of my family, because without them I wouldn't be who I am. I'm proud of my friends, because without them I wouldn't be who I am. I'm proud of where I'm from, because without home I wouldn't be who I am. But above all of these things, I'm proud of who I am, and the person I want to become.

All of you should be proud of who you are. All of you should be proud of where you come from, and the families that made you who you are today. You come from a long line of proud people in each and every one of your families, because without their pride, you wouldn't have made it this far.

Being proud of who you are is the biggest favor you can do for yourself. So what if someone is better at riflery than you are, can get up on one water-ski, or is a woodsman or voyager. That doesn't mean you should want to switch places with them. It means you should strive to put yourself in their place, and make yourself the best person you can be. Sometimes, the most confident and secure person isn't the most talented, the most athletic, the best looking, or the most outgoing. In fact, they are the ones who need not praise themselves, as they know who they are and do not need to let the world know how great they are.

Pride isn't always about loving yourself either. Pride is hoping that the people around you achieve their goals, and doing whatever you can to help them. Pride is making a persons bed for them if they aren't at cabin cleanup, because you want your whole cabin to benefit from a good inspection score. Pride is saying hello to everyone you pass on the path, just in case they need a pick-me-up on a bad day. Pride isn't doing nice things just because a counselor is around, or just to get commended. Pride is doing nice things because it makes you feel good, and it is being just as happy for someone else getting commended as you would be for yourself. Pride isn't bullying, teasing, or putting other people down for their flaws. Pride is praising others for the things they are good at and putting a smile on their face. Pride is knowing that every night when you go to sleep you did the best you could that previous day, and you know that the next day can be even better.

As I said before, nobody, I repeat nobody, can take your pride from you. We all come from so many different backgrounds. Different states, different time zones, different hemispheres, and different continents. With these geographical differences comes different families, different cultures, different traditions, different values, and even different goals. Thats a whole lot of differences huh? So what makes one of you better than another? The answer is nothing. Everyone here is better at something than someone else sitting here today. Yep, you mallards are each better at something than every counselor here, and you crows each have talents that nobody else has. So is anyone here better than anyone else? Nope. Sure, there are things we can all improve on, and we should strive to improve in everything we do. The tough thing is staying true

to yourself while making these changes and improvements, and not losing track of who you are. Do not try and be someone you're not, just because you think it's cool. You should think it's cool to be you. Sure, I would love to be as creative as Tomm Polos, as athletic as Alec Waugh, as kind-hearted as Ash Wall, as wise and loyal as Sandy, or be a human swiss army knife, like Brooks and Ben Motley. But that does not make me want to be them. It makes me want to improve myself and become the best I can be. If each and everyone of you can do this, your sense of pride will skyrocket. Sure, awards are great goals, running a certain number of miles, even doing well on your next test or quiz in school, those are all great goals. But if you can be proud of the people around you and allow them to drive you towards self improvement, every other goal will seem easy. It's tough to look at other people and instead of being jealous of their talents, praise them for it and hope you can work towards the same success in the future. If you can do this, not only will you be proud of yourself, but everyone else will be proud of you too.