

Taylor Windle

One Response Never Given

There once was a young girl, and she was going for her Sunday walk in a park. She was absolutely beautiful inside and out, and she had such a strong, positive energy about her that was infectious to all those she came in contact with. She saw the world for all of its beauty and goodness and strove to only release good back into the seemingly harmless environment in which she lived. People would sometimes take advantage of this girl's kindness, but she didn't mind. She saw herself as someone strong enough to handle the cruelty because she thought that these people had a right to relieve these feelings, using her for as the dumping ground in the process. She was truly a people's person.

On this particular day, the young girl was walking somewhere and she was stopped. She was stopped by an older woman, kind in appearance, who inquired if she could share a moment or two with the young girl to ask her a question. Naturally, the young girl responded, "Of course!" and went to sit down on a nearby park bench with the elder woman. They sat and chatted for a bit, doing the usual introductions strangers do when first meeting, and then the older woman said:

"I'm going to ask you a question now and I want you to answer as truthfully as you possibly can. Take as long as you need to answer and list as many things as you need to. Can you name all the things that you love most in this world?"

No one had ever asked the girl this question so she took a moment to sit in silence and reflect.

The girl thought about the physical world surrounding her first. She thought about how much she adores the smell of rain, how much she loves falling asleep while basking in the sunlight, taking long drives to view points or look outs and just being able to take in all the beauty our planet has to offer. Then she thought about simpler, more personal things like her love for ice cream and getting to curl up

in her warm bed after a cold day. She also thought about how much she enjoys giving people gifts and seeing the smile that spreads across their faces when they open it. She remembered that she absolutely loves writing and receiving letters, she thought about the warm feeling she gets when she gets to catch up with family and friends, and how much she absolutely loves helping others. The girl told all of this to the older woman and, to the girl's surprise, the woman's smile faded.

Every time I ask this question, one response is NEVER given. Now, although all of your answers are very touching, honest, and true, you are leaving out the one thing you should love most of all." She lifted her hand and placing it on my shoulder said, "you. You must love yourself. Your love for all of the wonderful things you listed off to me will never reach its full potential until you learn to love yourself. Love yourself darling, learn to love yourself first" and with that, the old woman stood up and walked away leaving the young girl sitting on that park bench somewhere in a park.