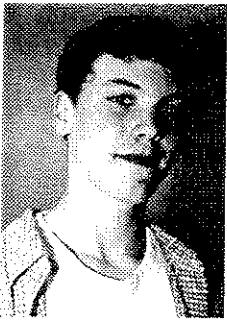


*Caleb Kearey-Moreland*  
*Second Place*  
*Junior Division*



I'm going to cut straight to the chase. In my opinion the most important law of life is: To Be Yourself. Some people may disagree with me but in my own personal views and facts, you can't go wrong when you're just being yourself. You have no need to show off or prove yourself to anyone. If someone doesn't accept you for who you are, they're probably not someone you want to associate with. Trust me, there is always someone willing to accept you just the way you are. There is no better place where this applies than in the little story I'm about to tell you.

A few years ago, there was a new student at my public school. For confidentiality reasons, I'm going to call him 'Joe Jones'. Well Joe had just moved from Wagga Wagga, Australia. He was a massive refrigerator shaped person. He was six foot one inch and three feet thick. Broad shoulders and pure muscle. He had a cleft in his chin and his skin looked like sheets of sandpaper had a rodeo on his face. His hair was dirty blonde and reached to the tip of his ears. Joe had the thickest Australian accent possible. Most of the class couldn't understand what he was talking about half of the time. This titan was only thirteen years old.

Under all of this rugged exterior appearance he was still a thirteen year old boy. A thirteen year old boy that loved singing, dancing and drama. He didn't really care too much for sports. In his spare time he liked to watch Liza Minelli films. He liked listening to Bing Crosby and practicing his waltz. His favourite film is "Lucky Lady". His mother encourages Joe on his odd extra curricular activities. His dad says to him "stop acting like such a fairy and come watch football with your old man here!" Joe just tells him "why would I like to turn out like you?" Then just walks away.

A month of school has already passed and Joe was struggling in the friend department, so one day he realized what kind of school this is and unfortunately for Joe it was a sports school. So during recess he asked the cool group if he could play football with them. Since he was so huge he was a shoo-in. He became one of the best players in the school. Of course he hated every minute of it, but at least he was popular. He kept up this act for a few grueling months.

In March, the school play came into the picture. It was 'Grease' and he wanted the role of Danny so bad. But if he tried the guys would know who he really was. No guys had signed up yet and he didn't want to see some girl in drag playing Danny.

So right in front of everybody he put his name up on the audition slip. Then one of the guys said with a harsh tone, "what are you doing?" "You're not a girl!" Joe looked right back at him and said "You're right, I'm an actor!" I couldn't believe it - right in front of us all he told us off. Just like that. Then he said "I won't be able to play football, instead I'll be hanging around with all of these good looking girls!" He started to act himself and he became instant friends with all of the ladies.

So that's my story of being yourself. I think it worked out just fine for my friend Joe Jones. If it worked for him why can't it work for any one of us? I know I'll always be myself and no one is ever going to change that!!!