



Inside Out: Real Stories about the Inner Choices that Shape our Lives

Short Synopsis

We are the sum total of our experiences – the stories and the choices that shape our lives. There's nothing earth-shattering. No secret revelations or formulas. Just stories, questions, poetry, quotes and food-for-thought journaling activities that can help teens take their choices a little more seriously and realize what we do today can change our lives tomorrow. Grades are important, going to a good college matters, material success is nice. But nothing means anything if we don't know who we are at our core. What I am learning is that success is feeling comfortable about who we are, having values that we can hold on to in both good times and bad, and enjoying the things in life that matter most.

-- Chandler DeWitt

On Caring and Compassion: One Last Gift

"All the kids in my school were never more together than when we united for Alex. No disagreements, no sarcasm or jokes or quick one-liners making fun of someone. No competition or fighting over some guy or girl. No jealousy or meanness. Not then. All of it seemed really stupid, out of place and unimportant. In that moment of hearing the news of her death and the days that followed, we started to reveal the best parts of our selves.... It was her last gift to us."

On Kindness: Gentle Giant

"On the retreat, Carlos took Kobe under his wing, including him in everything he did with his friends and spending a lot of one-on-one time with him too. ... By watching Carlo, I learned that reaching out to someone, even if that person is way out of your comfort zone, can be very rewarding. I discovered that even though Kobe and I were very different in language, personality, culture and religion, we shared similarities. We both had a desire to be accepted by the people around us."

On Civility: Web Wars

"Girls? The conventional wisdom is we talk behind each others' back, say mean and nasty things about someone... and then, instead of confronting each other in an open way, we cry and think about how to get revenge. That's what people say, but I don't think it's true. If you were to lump girls and boys together and study how all of them dealt with competition and rivalry and hurt feelings, you would probably find that guys and girls aren't all that different. ... They could be jerks with no consequences. On the Internet, there were no cops or teachers or parents or vice principles watching their every move."

On Courtesy: A Grandmother's Wisdom

"Grandmother was silent, but I could tell by the look in her eye that she wasn't happy. She didn't get mad... she didn't even say I couldn't spend the night... she just said, How would you feel if you were Kelsey. The decision was mine to make. My excitement about going to the movies with Meghan and everyone else suddenly disappeared. ... In fact, just thinking about lying and disappointing Kelsey didn't feel too good... I called Meghan and explained the situation. Surprising, she seemed to have a new respect for my decision-making skills. "