

What Being Tall Means to Me

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Being tall has given me many advantages in life. Some of them have been physical, such as being able to reach high places, see over crowds of people, or find success in sports. Others, however, have come in a more intangible form. I feel it is those advantages that truly reflect what my height has done for me.

As far back as I can remember, I have always had at least some extra height over my friends and peers. As a result, I was often assumed to be older than I truly was, and adults would sometimes talk to me or treat me as such. In those moments, I felt an obligation to rise to the occasion, and I would do my best to act in a manner consistent with my physical stature. Whenever someone was shocked to discover my true age, I would be proud of myself for being able to uphold higher standards than they might have thought someone my age could handle. As I grew taller and taller, I felt higher and higher expectations being placed on me. While I was still in my early teens, my mother joked that I could pass for a full-grown adult. As funny as it was, that statement was not just true in the sense of my physical appearance. Over time, I had grown accustomed to making myself behave as though I was much older than I truly was. Now, it may seem that I am describing this frequent confusion as detrimental, but, as I reflect on it, it truly benefited me in many ways. I think back to all the times when teachers would ask more of me than others, and I cannot help but also recall the instances where I was trusted, rewarded, and admired more than others my age. Being treated as though I was older caused me to actually become older, in a mental sense, which in turn led to adults, who often greatly appreciated my maturity, looking favorably upon me.

Additionally, I trace my leadership skills back to the fact that I have always been much taller than my peers. I feel I have always had a desire to lead those around me, but walking the fine line between bossing others around and respectfully organizing a team to accomplish a goal is not an easy task. I feel that what has largely contributed to my success as a leader is the fact that I, in my enhanced verticality, physically stand out in a group. Come to think of it, the confusion that many adults had about my true age may have also been shared by other children and led to their viewing of me in a somewhat authoritative light. My enthusiasm, partnered with my appearance, allowed me to quickly grab the attention of those around me and lead them in one unified effort toward success. Regardless of how exactly, my height has certainly played a role in making me the highly effective Team Captain, National Honor Society Officer, and Peer Minister that I am today.

Living as a tall person has not come without its challenges, but I most definitely believe that it has had a tremendous positive impact on my life. Even ignoring all of the physical benefits, my height has allowed me to become an accomplished and respectable young man, something for which I will be forever grateful for.