

“It isn’t what you do, but how you do it.” In this quote, John Wooden expresses a simple message; it’s your true character that matters and not your reputation, which is just a symbol of what you have done in your life. When the pain has chipped off and your rust shows through to reveal your true character, who are you as a person?

An ego of a twenty-year-old young man, I was surrounded by five of them for the whole summer, not to mention that I had two brothers. At my age, most girls would love to trade me spots, one girl with a lot of guys, and many would probably consider me the luckiest girl in the world, but I on the other hand, have a very different perspective. Being the only girl on the harvest crew made me different; it made me the odd one. When I was younger, I felt out of place and unconfident, all of these guys could drive combine and truck, but all I ever did was make sure they had enough to eat at supper time. Then I realized that somebody with great character isn’t worried about the things that they have accomplished. Shaping your character meant to work hard and have dedication in every job, whether it was big or small. I saw how growing up on the harvest trail could develop me into an independent, confident young lady with a distinguished character.

Last summer, I finally grasped the concept of what it meant to have a strong confidence level. Due to employee circumstances, I was given the opportunity to work in the field as the operator of the tractor and grain cart. At first I was nervous, I had always been a cook, and I knew I had no idea how to operate a tractor, much less keep it only a couple of feet away from a combine while unloading on the go. My confidence grew fast; it had to in order for me to keep up with the constant pace of the wheat harvest. Suddenly it no longer mattered to me that I was the only girl. I started to experience the thrill that you can only get from being a part of harvest, the beautiful sunsets, and the rustle of the wheat in the wind. Soon I began to love my job, but eventually the time came when I needed to leave the harvest run for the summer to start my college education. A young man was hired to take my spot, so before I left I was expected to train him for my position. The first comment this young man made to me was that he had never been taught to drive tractor by a girl before. I was appalled! He thought that it was not normal for a girl to be driving tractor or even teaching him to drive! It was then that I realized my confidence had grown through this opportunity, but my character was the item that had taken a bigger impact; it was strengthened by this harvest experience.

The moment my paint is all gone, I want my rust to be one of good character. When people first meet me they must see that by growing up on the harvest, my character is one of great strength, it has dependable leadership; it has the qualities of a hard-worker, dedication, independence and confidence. Furthermore, it should show that it takes a humble pride in the work I do. People should be able to tell that by me growing up on the harvest, it has made me someone of great character; it has been a life changing experience.

My future plans are to achieve a college degree in Accounting and Business Administration. A goal of mine is to use this degree in an agriculture area. The impact of harvest on my life is rooted deep within me and I want to use my harvest experiences to make a lasting impression on others.

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