

Good Morning,

I'd like to share today what aha moments mean to me, and this is something that I have put a lot of thought into personally. This is also something that was quite difficult for me to assess as there is not enough experience in my life to this point for me to share, there's simply my beliefs that I can give you. It is from my understanding that aha moments are times in our lives when we learn to think differently, a moment that changes the way we interpret different aspects of our lives and alters our opinions in a substantial way, however, I believe aha moments are more than just that basic definition.

I believe these moments are small gifts of God and the reason being is because these moments rare instances in our lives in which we can individually create change within ourselves. Change is progress. Whether that be change in a drastic or simplistic way, I believe that change is a very difficult thing to attain, and something that is greatly sought after in this world. We all hear change being preached by politicians and used as a form of inspiration because it is idealized by man.

Though, there's another, more important reason, that I believe these moments are gifts of God and that is that aha moments in our lives are pieces to our internal puzzles, the matches to our candles and the keys to our engines. These brief times, in which we build greater ideas of meaning and worth, are all parts to discovering ourselves. I believe we come across these moments as we do everything else, by chance, but for a reason, and that reason being for us to dig deeper and find within ourselves our true meaning here on Earth.

Recently, at GHS, we lost a student, a wonderful person and friend to our community and I am saddened that I never had the opportunity to meet him, but one thing that I have realized is that today, there is a lack of that mentality of knowing and understanding who we are as people. Part of that can be attributed to our generation, which is greatly redefining gender

roles and society, but truly, in this world we have built, there is a lack of light being spread and acceptance of this change.

Things that we have such high regard for, things like hope and pride and strength are greatly tolled by the acts of fear, hate and vengeance we see everyday. It makes it very difficult for us to define ourselves and where we stand when the rest of the world is in constant opposition and always challenging us. The amazing things about aha moments, though, is that they do not have anything holding them back, and with optimism and hope, our minds could be that way, too. They are all different and all lead down separate paths and the true meaning of what comes from these moments must be ignited and absorbed within us, without cemented resistance. We today have been restricted to the idea that we can only hold one identity and what's so amazing about us is that we are free and independently minded beings of God. One of his gifts is this gift to guide us to find ourselves and we mustn't waste it, we must not put out the lights that he gives because the darkness is overwhelming. Light can illuminate, light can spread, and light can shine, but we need to all start our own so that we can do God's will and spread that light; so that we can spread that love that we need, spread the unique gifts we all are granted with, and share the life that is too short to be wasted on fear.

Roosevelt, but not the one you are thinking of, once said, "You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face.". Eleanor preached strength, courage and confidence to do great things, and for our purposes, God's will, as long as we are not controlled by fear.

So, when God gives us the opportunity to make change, to maybe have a second chance, to be lights of our own and face our internal fears, the opportunity to break the boundaries and define ourselves in a way which has been very much forgotten, we must let that light in. We must not forget the people we are. That way, we can sculpt the people we become

with progress, with truth, and with hope. The next time you run into a moment like this, and you have the chance to make change, I challenge you to not be afraid, and to let that light shine, because that's what God is giving you. Whether your path is teaching, sports, music, science, art, dance, take that opportunity, absorb inspiring moments and follow those dreams without restriction. It is within the acceptance of our differences that we are truly one.

I'd like to end with something from the new testament I found, it says, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say everyone among you not to think but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."