

—Mindset—

My score on the mindset quiz was 39. This result meant: your results suggest a growth mindset but with some fixed ideas. This didn't really surprise me. I am pretty open-minded when it comes to accepting other people and opinions, but close-minded when it comes to myself. I have a very negative view of myself, and that is something that I have been learning the complexities of for a long time. If I could be more open to new things and challenges, I would, and I can, but it's not that simple. I struggle with mental illness, so as much as it would be nice to have a growth mindset, sometimes it is simply not possible for me at the moment. There are small things I have the power to change, but making a full flip at once just isn't feasible. Small changes over time can be just as important and effective though.

Although my thoughts on mindset haven't changed much, this discussion around mindset has reminded me of how important it is. I usually don't think about my mindset until I notice that it has negatively affected someone. That shouldn't have to be the case, and hopefully I can start paying more attention to my mindset, and how it affects me and others.

—The Last Lecture—

To me, the Last Lecture from Randy Pausch was very inspiring. It really puts things into perspective. When going through rough times, I can look to Randy Pausch. On the brink of death, he still smiles and jokes. He doesn't let his situation defeat him, but rather, empower him. Randy uses this time to look back positively on his life, spend time with his loved ones, and empower others, instead of sulking in misery and sorrow. Seeing him explain how he has achieved his childhood dreams is very inspiring to me, as somebody who has their whole life ahead of them and sees the future as very unpredictable. His mindset is certainly admirable and can teach us a lot about how to view life.

As Gandalf says to Frodo in *The Lord of the Rings*, "All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us." Randy Pausch is a great example of this quote. He made it a priority to achieve his dreams, and he did just that. Then, even in his last days, he lives life to the fullest. He is proof that a person's situation doesn't have to define them. Hardships can be overcome, and those that can't don't have to defeat you. This is a very powerful message, one that I will try to carry with me from here on out. I have struggled with a lot thus far, but the worst

is probably yet to come. In a similar vein to the Gandalf quote, Randy says in his lecture that everyone is dealt a hand of cards, and it is up to each person how to play them.