Reflection on ‘The Last Lecture’

Randy Pausch gave an outstanding and eye-opening speech in his talk ‘The Last Lecture’. He pointed out some very important lessons there are to learn in life, including how to take feedback and what it means to really want something. His lecture centered around his own life, but every aspect of it could be relatable, in some form, to any person in the audience. I took a lot away from the hour I spent listening to and watching Pausch speak, including some realizations that really hit home.

Pausch spoke a lot about hitting brick walls, whether those be metal, physical, or flesh as he put it, and what separates the people who stop at the wall and those who learn to go around it. It made me realize that, for a lot of my life I have been in the group of people stuck at the wall just waiting for something to happen, or someone to help me over. I don’t want to be that person. Now, if I’m being realistic, Pausch’s talk isn’t going to change my life. I’m not going to go out and start jumping wall after wall, that’s just not my personality and that’s okay. But what it has done for me, is helped me acknowledge the fact that I don’t want to keep getting stuck and turning away from every wall I hit to pursue something with less walls.

Another point Pausch makes during his lecture is that you need to rely on feedback from any source you can get it from. I really related to this point. I used to have such a hard time taking criticisms and I always wanted to prove that I was right. In the past couple years of my life I realized that hearing what other people have to say and taking their opinion and critiques into consideration can help me grow and improve. An example of this in my life comes from my Etsy business. I make book themed jewelry and I sell it through the Etsy platform. For the most part I get really positive reviews, but when I get a bad review I take a second to, instead of being upset about a bad review, figure out how I can improve my art, my craft, to get a better review next time a sell that item. I think Pausch’s point on feedback is valuable and should be heard by a lot of people.

Additionally, Pausch touched on the topic of selflessness, and the effects of Karma. These are both things that I try to achieve in my life. However, I think as a young person in my 20s I have tendencies to focus so much on achieving my goals and making the ‘perfect’ future for myself that I forget about the people around me who have helped me so far in my progress. I do my best to be kind, mindful, and caring to people around me, but it can be HARD sometimes. Pausch’s talk really reinforced for me the importance of those qualities.

Overall, I think Randy Pausch’s lecture was something a lot of people of all ages need to hear. He didn’t present anything revolutionary, but he did a fantastic job of opening my eyes, and I’m sure many others, and reminding us that we aren’t alone, the world doesn’t revolve around one individual, you must put in the work to achieve your goals, and it’s okay to say no as he did when turning down his offer to work with the Imagineers. This was a great speech, and I will certainly be sharing it with others.