

Giver and Protector

By Joseph Goodrich

“You are not good enough, you are asthmatic, and you will never be intimidating enough!” I said to myself every time I thought of my future in law enforcement. My dream as a child was to protect people and give them a feeling of safety. I wanted to be a police officer. I believe that dream stemmed from my fascination for superheroes and fueled my passion for defending the innocent and giving back to society. I did not dream of praise for heroism but merely to see people smiling and enjoying a safe life. Being a police officer entails all of the following: Being kind, alert, wise, and a servant. I have thought of ways to practice at these to better prepare myself to fulfill my dream and want to share them with the reader.

Being kind is the most likely the easiest to practice, yet a difficult one to perfect. Currently I work for “Sweet Tomatoes” as a bus boy and interact with a wide range of customers. Some are the cheeriest, easy-to-talk-to customers and others are those people that woke up on the wrong side of the bed. The experiences I have with this job helps me to look at a problem from both my side and the customer’s on how I should conclude the matter. Kindness is the key to making those customers happy and improving a problem. Practicing kindness with strangers every workday better prepares me to practice kindness when helping an issue as a police officer someday.

Alertness is absolutely required for being in law enforcement as you are faced with situations that can go from peacefully normal to a life or death decision. My alertness can be increased and disciplined by keeping my body and mind healthy and fit. Working out my body with lifting weights and running as well as doing coordination exercises will be extremely beneficial. Reading high-class novels and indulging the mind in math brainteasers will “work out” the brain muscle. I do my best to work my body out at least an

hour or two a day and read a book that challenges my brain to improve my alertness and quick decision making skills.

Anyone and everyone interested in law enforcement must question their decisions they have made over the years and decide if they were thought out or simply ill conceived. A police officer must choose to not just do the right thing but the best thing for the safety for the community and his or her fellow officers. Throughout my life I have learned many lessons on decision making, especially a recent one of just listening instead of stating my opinion so quickly. My teacher said that I should listen to the whole matter and I might learn and solve the problem without even speaking. This can apply to a decision maybe with a speeding ticket, as I must listen to the reason as to why they were driving so fast. Some reasons may be legitimate and some may not but I must be wise enough to decipher between the two. I have started listening to situations instead of bull-heading my way into them and see a change in my wisdom for little and big choices I make.

Lastly I believe a police officer should be a servant or at least have a servant's heart. When I say a servant's heart, I mean that a police officer should treat serving his community as way to give back instead of just a paycheck or a babysitting day. I myself want to be a police officer that not only protects but gives my time and heart into making that city the best it can be. "How do you prepare for this one?" you might ask, well, I give my heart and soul into a bus route I work on every Sunday for North Valley Baptist Church. We pick up kids all around the bay area and bring them to church. I started doing the bus route about two years ago and have never been paid or praised for serving time to these wonderful kids, but I get to see the joy and glee from their faces as they are in a safe and fun environment. Many of these kids come from homes with no safety from mom or dad. So seeing their smiles amongst broken hearts is how I have prepared my heart to be that of a servant's. This is how I will achieve my dreams!!!!