

# Importance of Gratitude

- Meredith Piela

For the longest time, I have never really taken the time to appreciate how lucky I am to have amenities like a computer, bed, or a stable home. Over April vacation, I went on a mission trip to the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota with my youth group. It was definitely a wake-up call when we drove by very small houses in poor condition, and found out that the students do not have a great education, and only about 75% of them graduate from high school. After discovering this, I began to feel guilty about complaining several times about things such as my computer being slow, my bed not being comfortable enough, or my room being too small. I realized that all the times I complain about not having things be good enough, there are people in the country who don't even have a bed or a good education. I decided to stop feeling guilty about my petty complaints and be more appreciative of what I have.

I have never paid much attention to the distance between houses and buildings in Marblehead, but when we were driving through the wide open plains of South Dakota, it became a rare occurrence to see several houses close together. Also, I never realized how big and elegant the houses and their landscaping are here. I'm happy to say that I have been home for a week now, and I haven't complained about my bed or anything significant since. The trip was an eye-opening experience, as it allowed me to escape my wealthy small town and view things from a different perspective. It would be great if everyone was able to experience this revelation, but I'm glad that I had the opportunity to, because it has definitely taught me the importance of gratitude.

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