

Dear Jonathan Vos Post,

The poem "I Am More Than One" changed my perspective of who I am.

Sometimes I'm not sure who I really am. My friends saw me a different way than my teachers saw me. This was different from how my parents, siblings, coaches, classmates, strangers, and teammates saw me too. I tried to figure out which person was correct about who I was or who I was supposed to be.

I felt lost when I didn't live up to people's expectations. It was like climbing a mountain. Every time you thought you reached the top you'd slide down to the bottom again. They only thought of me as an athlete or a student or a little sister. I couldn't distinguish who I was. The poem made me understand that although I am only one person, I am made up of more than identity.

After I read your poem I realized I didn't have to pick my opinion of myself or another person's opinion of me to create who I am and want to be. It showed me every action I make, thought I think, or word I say is part of me. Every person I know is part of my image. It showed me that what I can control about myself is only part of who I am. That who I am now is only the foundation of who I am to become.

My favorite line in the poem is, "I am part of every group, and more than all those groups I choose to join." This portion of the poem made me realize I am everything I choose to do, but I'm also what I choose not to do. For example, when I choose not to sit with certain people at lunch, that is part of who I am. Every thing, person, or idea I choose to reject is part of me. I know now that who I am will never be decided by others or complete. I gain more parts of me every day. I will always be changing as I succeed and fail. I am more than one thought. I am more than one emotion. I am more than one memory. I am more than one action.

I am more than one.

Sincerely,

*Madeleine Winslow*