



Sarah Johnstone - Sports Prefect

You're working a 9 to 5 job, in an office, after studying at university for several years in the hopes of changing the world, settling down, having kids, alongside your main motive of making enough money. Are you happy?

My question to you, is how do you define a successful person? Is it being the best player on the pitch? Or maybe it's the person who has the biggest bank account? These examples seem to be a common routine in which you may define someone who is 'successful.' In today's age we have the pressures of parents and peers who can compare and direct us to these generic lifestyles.

While being away for year 13 pe camp in Murchison, (which I suggest you go if given the opportunity) I learnt a lot about how I view life and how I would like to. I met some amazing people who have inspired me and have challenged my thought processes. I was very fortunate to meet someone called Jono Smith who was one of our kayaking guides. He shared his story with us and to give you a brief overview, he went from the lowest of lows, to living the most incredible life now. While growing up, Jono didn't come from a privileged background like we do all here. He was surrounded by people that negativity influenced his life. Jono lost many friends during highschool due to suicide and bad decisions that caused fatal accidents. But kayaking was something he felt like he always had, so this is where he started investing in his energy into. He left his hometown and studied outdoor education where he made true friendships. He is now working his dream job at the kayaking school in Murchison. Jono is one of the most successful people I have met. He didn't follow the crowd. He made his own path in life which led him to living a happy and fulfilled lifestyle with a thrilling career. If Jono followed the same path as his friends, he said there would be a high possibility that he wouldn't be here today.

We have pressures on us to feel like we have to be a certain way for people to accept us. Standing out from the crowd and doing something different can cause you to compare your decisions to others. For example, you may have older sisters here at school, and feel like you have to follow in her footsteps and live up to her successes. We feel like we have to

follow the 'criteria' to be accomplished. Even now, I find myself comparing this speech to the girls who spoke before me. But in the long run you have to ask yourself, are happy with living through someone else's ideal life for you?

Whatever you end up choosing for your subjects next year, please do something that you love. Don't base your decisions on anyone other than yourself. I have already made this mistake. It may not be what your friends are doing or what your older sister did but happiness is found in different ways, for different people.

My main goal in life is to be paid in happiness, not money. My biggest fear is that when I'm old I will have regrets and that I will carry the question of 'what if.' Jono said something at Murchison that has resonated with me. He said 'do something in life where you forget which day it is.' You know in the holidays, how you are so relaxed to the point where you forget which day of the week it is? That's how Jono feels everyday.

Life can be anything you want it to be. You don't need a high paying office job or a university diploma to be successful. I believe we need to make our own happiness in life and that starts by doing something we love everyday. Yes, this can be hard but it is important we recognize these small moments or actions that make us smile. Being successful in life is measured on your happiness. So, stand out from the crowd and go do something you love and success will follow.