

Diligence
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Saratoga County 4-H

Diligence. Of the many loose stones in today's path of society, this is among the largest.

Issues of the present day such as unemployment, struggling businesses, and troubled youth, so common to our ears, are caused by a number of reasons, one of which is the lack of diligence in the people. There are many who have found this principle to be their foundation for a lifelong journey of achievements, but there are increasingly more that lack this essential attribute. The concept of working hard at every task is something that is cherished by those who were taught it while growing up and even those who had to learn it on their own feel the triumph of self discipline. Yet, there are those who have never experienced the contentment of a diligent character or tasted the victory of a hard day's work, nor do they care to.

When one has dedication to their work, whether it is arduous, fun, or simply educational; they begin to master the necessary skills of the task. Eventually, through their determination to fulfill their commitments, one will experience the joy of success. The tasks themselves may not become easier, but with the discipline of hard work the diligent character will look past the small struggles to the greater victories ahead. Not only does this effect personal morale but others notice positive character and will fall in stride, placing the individual in a position of leadership. The entrepreneurial spirit is born of this character having the mind to imagine an idea and the determination to make it a success. By practicing demanding and thorough behaviors, the diligent person has the ability to persevere through the mountains, valleys, and pitfalls in their life, their job, and their relationships.

However, those without productive discipline will find themselves in continual discontentment. Without the drive of a hard-working and dedicated individual, the efficiency of jobs deteriorate and work fails to be completed in a timely and appropriate manner. The result is a slothful and inattentive person with no sense of significant goals and a very limited view of the horizon in their life. Friendships are few, their successes are short-lived, and their interests are shallow as they seek 'another new excitement after every last one's spark begins to fade.

The difference between the diligent and slothful individuals is that the former can take that same fading spark and, slowly but surely, reignite it until it shines brighter than before. They see opportunity and their industrious nature grants them a chance to grab hold. Whether it be by the sweat of the brow or the exertion of the mind, the diligent person will accomplish their task without any unnecessary delay. As the source of vast wisdom, the Bible affirms: "He becometh poor that dealeth *with* a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich." (Proverbs 10:04 KJV) Diligence is more than studying for an examination or mastering a specific skill; it is the key to unlocking continual success. Work hard, stay attentive, set your dreams as goals and through this, one can achieve contentment and purpose in their life and, perhaps, show others how to do the same.

An aspiring writer and avid member of Saratoga County 4-H, Molly Alger is a 2014 Home School graduate of Middle Grove, New York. At sixteen she has many occupations and is involved in a variety of hobbies such as digital and traditional art, horsemanship, rabbit breeding, roping, and hunting to name a few. She has been a member of 4-H for seven years and enjoyed many of the opportunities it provides through various programs including: Teen Ambassadors, where 4-Hers develop projects to promote the organization; Shooting Sports, a program that teaches youth how to properly and safely enjoy the different types of shooting, in which she is also a certified Junior Archery Instructor; and Public Speaking, a program that for the year of 2014 she won both County and Regional levels in Horse Communications, proceeding to win the New York State Horse Communications Championship and will go on to compete in the Eastern Nationals Horse Roundup in Kentucky in November. She is thankful to 4-H and all the Saratoga County staff for their help and guidance in achieving these goals as she makes plans for even more.