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Timanous Chapel
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Good morning and welcome all new comers. I am so honored and grateful to be here today. As I stand here I think back onto chapels that I heard as a hawk and it is wild how fast the time has gone. I want to thank all of you for taking the time to listen today.

Talk Part One: Robert Walser, a Swiss author I read in college once wrote, "I tell lies somewhere else, but not here, not in front of myself". What he is talking about is being honest with yourself about who you are and what you believe in. When I first read this I started to think about self-honesty and how well I knew myself. Because only I know what I believe in. Only I know my values and if I am living up to them. Unfortunately the reality is that I am not always living up to my core beliefs or characteristics that make me a better person. One time I was approached by some of my peers at school and asked if I wanted to join a poetry reading club they were in. I became nervous and quickly denied their request. Why did I say no? To be honest I enjoy poetry. I have a deep and profound love for poetry. I read and write poetry all the time. I still became fearful of revealing my true self to my peers.

Why in that instant was I nervous about being myself? Perhaps it was the fear of judgment. In other instances it may be the fear of some how letting my loved ones down or failing in a major way. I was nervous about being ostracized for this perhaps unique love of mine. I was scared that my love for poetry would somehow change how my friends viewed me.

Except now I am at camp. Camp is a gift. Once you are here you get to shed all judgment from the world and be your true, authentic self. At camp there is continual support and opportunities for success for everyone. You may have never shot a gun, but you can still win awards. You know I never played soccer growing up yet I still competed for Timanous on the 6 aside team. These memories of being true to myself have lasted a lifetime. Embrace this aspect of camp, let it fill you and allow yourself to grow. Welcome your faults and lend your strengths to others for assistance. Camp is a great place for this. Now please rise and sing with the choir and myself "The Weight" by The Band.

Song: "The Weight" by The Band

Talk Part Two: Thank you. I have already talked about how at camp you can be true to yourself. When you are true to yourself, you can be true to others. At camp we see this all the time. When we are in our cabin we are constantly making ourselves vulnerable by telling our peers that perhaps we do not like something or ask them if they would like to play some game. At those moments we open ourselves up to criticism yet we feel comfortable because at camp we welcome differences and thrive on the fact that everyone has something unique to offer. Never forget that in life every single person has something to offer no matter who they are.

Forming relationships with others can be hard. It takes time and effort. John Lennon once said, "We've got this gift of love, but love is like a precious plant. You cannot just accept it and leave it. You've got to keep watering it. You've got to really look after it and nurture it". Being true to yourself is crucial to the watering of relationships and relationships can be the most valuable part of ones life. I have found some of my best friends here at camp. On my very first day of camp when I was nervous, I told one of my cabin mates. He responded by

taking me over to beginners beach and playing a game of wiffle ball with me. I will never forget the feeling of comfort and acceptance I felt. That fellow cabin mate of mine was Michael Beam. Beamer and I have been friends ever since. Do not underestimate the power a simple act of kindness may have on someone even if you do not think it is a big deal. Your network of friends and loved ones can lift you from your darkest hour or help celebrate in successes you have. While in the midst of transferring schools and dealing with the loss of loved ones, I called my camp friends first for advice. I always know that my Timanous family will be there because they honor and live by many of the principles we value at camp, the ones by which I try to navigate my life. Like loyalty, dedication, or the joy of stepping outside your comfort zone and not being afraid to fail. I knew they would be there for me.

By being honest with yourself and living true to your ideals you are able to love and form much stronger bonds with others. You can discover what you may love and this can help you to create your social web of people who want you to have success and triumphs.

One day as a Hawk I wanted to go sailing so I asked a Cardinal who

had been kind to me if he would take me. That Cardinal was Jimmy and we have been friends ever since. Small moments like these allowed me to find passions of mine like playing sports, thirst for knowledge, or just enjoying being outside. This can be hard but over the next few weeks enjoy being at camp. As I've said before camp is a gift and here we are able to be ourselves. We can embrace our identities and nurture lasting friendships that in times of trouble will help us to see the light in any situation. Please rise to sing our last song "Wooded Path". Sing proud because I love this place as many before myself have and others will continue to do.

Song: Wooded Path

Thank you again for listening. Please take a moment today and reflect on anything that maybe on your mind but enjoy the time that we have to get know ourselves.

Look to this Day:

Look to this day!

For it is life, the very life of life.

In its brief course lie all the verities and realities of existence:

The bliss of growth; the glory of action; the splendor of beauty.

For yesterday is already a dream, and tomorrow is only a vision.

But, today well lived, makes every yesterday

A dream of happiness, and every tomorrow a vision of hope.

Look well, therefore, to this day!

Such is the salutation of the dawn.