

Kelly S.

Open reflection on Michael Long's presentation

Michael Long helped me look at inclusion in a different light. I wasn't quite ready to change my opinion on the subject, but I surely wasn't dismissing the idea. He was a wonderful, energetic speaker, and it was a great privilege to hear his stories.

I guess I have come to the conclusion that inclusion – the decision of inclusion – needs to be based on each child's separate needs. Michael fought to be included in the 'normal' classroom because he didn't want to be told he couldn't do it. He was very determined and worked hard, and in his case, I think that is great! But I still don't feel that every child with disabilities is capable of being included in the classroom with their typical peers.

I also enjoyed Michael's exercise that he had us participate in. It was very hard to ignore my partner. Even though I was going along with the exercise, I couldn't help listening to what she had to say. I just don't understand how people could treat another person with such disrespect.

On the other half of the exercise, it was very hard to deal with someone not listening to you, and telling you that your dreams are stupid. Having someone tell you that you will never reach your goals and that they are impossible is hard. It makes you want to give up, and try harder at the same time.

I enjoyed Michael Long's presentation very much. He was a great speaker and I learned a lot!