

Leslie Jimenez

Language Arts

Per. 7/8

Oct. 18th 2016

Everything Changes at One Point

You change throughout your life, but some people could recur back to their old selves. In the fictional short story, "Flowers for Algernon," by Daniel Keyes, Charlie Gordon is a 37-year-old man with a childlike innocence due to his mental illness. He wants to be smart since he thinks that he is not smart. He even volunteers to undergo surgery to make this goal happen. The theme of the story is that people change and it is important because over time, the way people change could help the way they view the world; Charlie Gordon changes throughout the story by not being smart in the beginning, becoming smart in the middle, and then reverting back to how he was before towards the end of the story.

To begin with, Charlie is not the brightest person in the beginning of the plot. He wants to undergo a risky operation so he can transform and become brilliant. Dr. Nemur told Charlie that he should write down what he feels in a journal, so Charlie wrote down in his first progress report "I hope they use me... I want to be smart"(285). Charlie wants to change become intelligent since thinks that he is not. He wants some doctors to use him for an operation so that overtime he could become "smarter" and he will be part of their experiment to see if they, the doctors, can make a person smarter through an operation. If Charlie wants to be part of the operation he has to take some tests. When Charlie took the test he decided to write down everything that happened, "I had a test today. I think I faled it. and I think that maybe now they

wont use me”(285). Charlie knows that he fails most tests in his life so he feels that he has failed this one as well. Since he presumes that he did not pass the test then he thinks that Dr. Nemur and Dr. Strauss will not accept him to be part of the operation. This relates to him because if he does not get accepted then he will not be part of the operation to make him “smarter”. Charlie is not smart when he is first introduced because he was not intellectually advanced and he views the world as if he is not good enough because he thinks the worst of himself, but he can change over time.

Later on, Charlie Gordon starts to become a genius after he has the operation. Before Charlie goes through with the operation he has to complete a tricky maze faster than a very intelligent mouse white mouse with the name Algernon. Algernon became very intelligent by undergoing the risky operation that Charlie might undergo to become smarter. Charlie was never able to finish the maze until after the operation. Right after he beat Algernon with the maze Charlie wrote, “I beat Algernon... But after that, I beat him 10 more times.”(290); This was an exciting moment for Charlie because he was able to do something that he could not do before. Algernon and Charlie have the same operation and since the operation also works on Charlie they both have change from how they were before. Mrs. Kinnian, who is Charlie's teacher, starts to teach Charlie how to spell and use punctuation correctly. Not long after she starts teaching, Charlie begins to understand things that Mrs. Kinnian taught him. Charlie wrote down, “Anyway, now I know I'm getting smarter every day. I know punctuation and I can spell good”(293). With Mrs. Kinnians help, Charlie started to understand things that he has not understood before and he's also learning quicker than he did before. Throughout time, Charlie starts to understand different concepts and he becomes smarter than anyone in a short matter of

time which proves that he is changing. He has changed over time and doesn't feel like he is not worthless to the world anymore.

Lastly, Charlie reverts back to his old self, back to when he was not intelligent . The process of Charlie reverting starts off with him forgetting concepts that he has learned recently. Before he reverts completely, he did some research and he finds out that him forgetting certain concepts is part of him reverting back. On June 5th Charlie writes in his progress report his findings, "I have already begun to notice signs of emotional instability and forget-fulness, the first symptom of the burnout"(302). Charlie's mind is regressing and he notices this as well. This means that Charlie is starting to lose his intelligence. When Charlie writes in his progress report he seems sad about the idea of him losing his intelligence. Since amnesia is part of the burnout, Charlie writes in his progress report something very significant that he forgot, "Last night I could not remember where I lived"(302). Charlie's intelligence is leaving as quickly as it came so since he learned many subjects quickly, he will forget everything faster which he is not happy with. You can see that Charlie is changing because he was a genius but then he started to become less intellectually advanced. Charlie change throughout the plot of the story a lot that he now views the world very differently than the way that he has viewed it previously.

To end things off, people can change over time and Charlie Gordon changes so much throughout the short story because he is not intelligent in the beginning, then he became a genius in the middle, but towards the end he reverts and he goes back to before and from then he views the world differently. Everyone and everything changes at one pointing their life. This is important because the world will not always be the same; nothing will stay the same so the way

that society view things may change over time. As time passes changes can be a good thing because you will be able to view the world differently than the way that you have seen it before.