

ME & HELEN KELLER

Anyone who has read my articles for any length of time knows that I love to write about the underdog. You know, people who have certain “handicaps” and who are told they can’t do something, only to prove everyone wrong and end up doing it anyway. We hear about people who overcome great odds all the time. But how often do we hear about the person behind the person; the ones who took the time and had the compassion to work with individuals who needed a helping hand. While watching TV the other day, I came across one such person.



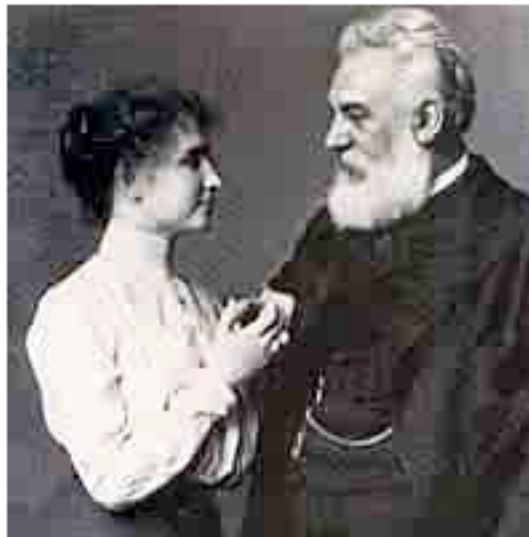
If anyone needed help, it would certainly be Helen. She was looked upon as a creature who would be nothing more than just a “domestic house pet” for the rest of her life. No one gave her a second look.

“I was less than an animal” she would later say. Her parents called her “hopeless.” She couldn’t speak. She couldn’t hear. She couldn’t see. At the time, it seemed as though people’s view of her were justified. After all, how would you learn to speak if you never heard the spoken word? How would you

learn to read and write if you could not see? How do you get along with others if you never knew love and compassion.

No question about it. She was doomed to merely exist and that was as far as she would go in life. That is until one day a lady by the name of Ann Sullivan came into her life. Not willing to settle for just mere existence, Ann was determine to teach this little girl the skills needed to lead a productive life. A nearly impossible task. One Ann wasn't about to give up on until this young girl had a chance in life.

Through much hard work, patience and struggle, Ann taught this little girl to not only master the english language, but speak several foreign languages as well.



**Helen Keller and
Alexander
Graham Bell**

Eventually this one time hopeless little girl eventually traveled all around the world as an ambassador for the deaf and blind; dinned with kings and 10 US presidents, wrote for a national magazine, played a role in a movie, was serenaded by the top performers of her time, and with the help of a copilot, even

flew a plane. The person I speak about is Helen Keller. The person behind the person was Ann Sullivan. Without Ms. Sullievan, Helen Keller would have surely fulfilled the prophecy foretold by those around her that she'd be nothing more than an animal.

There is a little Ann Sullivan in all of us. The ability to change lives. The ability to make a difference. The ability to leave just a small piece of yourself in the person you touch. This should be the destiny of every human being. Even more so for you teenagers who are depressed or for you who have personal problems or are struggling with a drug or alcohol abuse. Spending time tutoring a young person in your school or visiting a lonely senior citizen or helping the handicapped has a way of giving back to not only the person you serve, but to YOURSELF as well.

When Ann Sullivan died, Helen Keller tearfully said, ***“at least half of me went with her. It is futile to describe what she meant to me. Without her, I cannot perceive that I would be anything but an isolated creature.”***

To have Helen Keller say this about Ann Sullivan was the ultimate complement any human can give another. Make it your duty to have someone say something like this about you when it's your time to go.