

The Important Things Are Not Ribbons

There once was a boy, won ribbons, mostly blue
Came home from the fair, with a big trophy too.
With a voice glad and proud, he said to his dad,
" 'Tis the very best year that I've ever had."
Said his very wise Dad, "Son, I'd like to hear,
Why you think this was such a fine year."

"Why, Dad you know, all the prizes I've won;
How I've come out on top, in most things I've done.
Just look at the ribbons that hang on my wall
And think of the money, I've made since last fall.
From premium checks, and a big auction price
You can't help but think cash and ribbons are nice."

But the man said, "My son, you're not thinking right,
Blue ribbons, 'tis true are better than white;
But ribbons will fade and trophies grow old,
Money's soon spent, and fame soon grows cold.
The important things, son, are not ribbons or pins,
And sometimes it's really the loser who wins;
Now here are the things, most important, it's true
Your 4-H experience has accomplished for you."

"You've seen how a business meeting is run
This knowledge will help you in years to come.
You've conquered the fear of addressing a crowd,
You've learned how to stand up and talk nice and loud."

"Patience you've learned, in your projects, too,
As well as your skills, that will always help you.
You've learned to cooperate with majority rule,
To give in with grace and not be a fool,
Who must always have his very own way.
Be it in club work, in school or at play.
You've learned how to lose, without making a 'beef'
You know the judge judges to her best belief.
You've learned how to win, without boasting too loud,
A kid can lose friends, if he's overly proud."

"These are the things, most important to you.
You'll remember and use them all your life through.
They'll help you become a mighty fine man,
They'll do more for you, than any prize can."

—Anonymous