

TITLE: Sparky

BOOK: Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul

PAGE: 192

TIME TO READ: 3 minutes

TOPICS: **Overcoming Obstacles**  
Living and learning  
Following your dream

AGE LEVEL: Grades 3 and up

SYNOPSIS: As a self-proclaimed "loser," Sparky found everything about school to be difficult, except drawing. Focusing on his assets, he told his woes as the famous Charlie Brown in *Peanuts* cartoons.

NOTES TO TEACHER:

Elementary teachers may wish to preview the story in order to clarify or change vocabulary for younger students.

It is important to help students to recognize that *everyone* has winner moments and loser moments. However it is critical to focus on those winner moments and to draw energy to them.

With older students, you can discuss the ***Law of Attraction*** (*that which you think about the most, you will manifest in your life*). For more detailed information on this topic, go to book appendix pages 336-elem, 338-MS, 330-H or watch a DVD entitled, ***The Secret***.

Read related story on the power of our thoughts entitled, "Worried Himself to Death," found in book appendix page 315-elem, 317-MS, 309-HS, and used with permission from ***The Success Principles: How to Get from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be***.

*Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul*  
Sparky

ELEMENTARY:

PRE-QUESTIONS:

What does the word “loser” mean to you?

What do losers act like or what do they do?

Have you ever felt like a loser in some areas of your life, and like a winner in others?

- What are some examples? (*i.e. good in math, but not in reading, a great tennis player, but a horrible runner, or a phenomenal drummer, but can't draw a straight line, etc.*)

Discuss activities that a winner would participate in. (*music, sports, art, chess, school competitions, drama, volunteer work, etc.*)

Discuss activities that a loser would participate in. (*cheating, drugs, stealing, fighting, bullying, lying, etc.*)

**Read Story**

POST-QUESTIONS:

Does it matter what others think of you? Why, or why not?

Why was Sparky considered a loser?

How was Sparky a winner?

Student Activities:

Write a story about how you think Sparky felt when he was your age.

Rewrite the story with Sparky as a winner.

Bring your favorite “*Peanuts*” cartoons to class.

- Make a class bulletin board of Charlie Brown’s adventures.

List three times you felt like a loser and three times you felt like a winner.

- Focus on one of those “winner” moments, and write about the feelings you had at the time. *(It could be something as simple as when you learned to tie your shoes, or to tell time, or to ride a bike. Or, it could be winning a race, or receiving top honors in an essay contest, or getting all A’s on your report card.)*

Take the cut-out letter “W” provided by the teacher.

Using the newspapers and magazines provided, cut examples of winners, or people doing winning activities to glue onto the “W.”

Share your examples with others in *Circle Talk* groups (book appendix page 317), and then with the entire class.