

Proustian Personality Profile: Christie L. Gilson, Ph.D.

Which historical figure do you most identify with?

Eleanor Roosevelt.

Which living person do you most admire?

Sabriye Tenberken, author of My Path Leads to Tibet: The Inspiring Story of How One Young Blind Woman Brought Hope to the Blind Children of Tibet.

What is your greatest fear?

Rejection from those I respect.

What is your favorite journey?

The journey towards humility and serving others effectively.

What do you consider the most overrated virtue?

Hard work that results in an imbalanced spiritual life.

Which words or phrases do you most overuse?

"As recognized by ..."

What is your greatest regret?

Worrying about making a good impression on those whom I do not respect.

What or who is the greatest love of your life?

My husband: Robert Graves.

When and where were you happiest?

In the early 1990s while I was an undergraduate social work major at Illinois State University.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

My anxious nature.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?

Being an advocate for and with people with disabilities.

If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, who or what do you think it would be?

I'd like to be a horse, running free in a meadow.

What is your most treasured possession?

My appointment papers to the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board signed by President Obama.

What is your favorite occupation?

Social justice work.

What is your most marked characteristic?

Most people would say it is my blindness.

Who are your heroes?

Sabriye Tenberken (for her courage and the tangible results she has achieved in helping blind Tibetan children become self-sufficient); Whitney Houston (for her gorgeous voice); my husband (for his perseverance through difficult times); women like my mother, sister, and grandmothers (for their empathy for others and willingness to give of themselves).

What is it that you most dislike?

Snakes.

What is your motto?

"Be the change you wish to see in others." from Gandhi.

What do you value most about your Fulbright experience?

The ability it offered me to be more conversant than most Americans in cultures other than my native one.

What do you value most about having served on the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board?

Encouraging other Fulbrighters to pass on to others the kind of encouragement they received to apply for grants.
