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ENGL-1180

The Adversities of Autism

In the year of 2020, one in every thirty-four boys are diagnosed with autism. On the other hand, only one in 144 girls are diagnosed with autism. It seems that autism can affect the whole body. Attention Deficient Hyperactivity Disorder or (ADHD) affects an estimated 30 to 61 percent of children with autism. Nearly two-thirds of children with autism between the ages of six to fifteen have been bullied.

Now for my autism story, at two years old, I was not talking. Before I could start speech therapy, I had to have my hearing tested to ensure I did not have impaired hearing. To test a non-verbal child, a soundbox hearing test is required. During the test, I was placed in a highchair so I could not move and be observed by an audiologist technician. In the soundbox room, speakers are placed in each of the four corners. Different sound frequencies were played and if I turned my head to the correct speaker, they would know there was nothing wrong with my hearing. After finding out my hearing was not an issue, I could move on to speech therapy. I went to speech therapy for three days a week for one hour a day for four years. My VERY first words ever were "Go car" because I liked cars. People with autism like to spin objects, so my speech therapist chose those words because I was fixated on the car wheels.

I had seen two neurologists to determine if I had unknown seizures. I had to do a sleep deprived Electroencephalogram (E.E.G). This was a test to detect any anomalies in my brain waves. Since this was a sleep deprived test, I was allowed only half of my usual amount of sleep. My parents had to find a way to keep me awake. To do that, they thought that Dave and Buster's arcade would provide the necessary

stimuli to hopefully keep me awake before the test. Boy, did my parents get some dirty looks regarding their parenting skills that night! Keeping a three-year-old out at a bar until last call was not the best parenting strategy, but it worked. Fortunately, my E.E.G came back within normal parameters.

My pediatrician recommended I go see Doctor Solomon. Doctor Solomon is a pediatric autism and behavioral specialist, located in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Doctor Solomon has twenty-five years of experience in the field of autism awareness and helped me understand and come to terms with my autism. He diagnosed me with Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified at three and a half years old. Doctor Solomon created a program called Play Project. Play Project is an autism-based therapy that helps parents or guardians engage and interact with their autistic child or children. This play based therapy has the parents or guardians follow the child's lead. If the therapy is done correctly, your child would want to engage more with you and others. He is known as "The fun doctor" by his patients. Doctor Solomon is a good guy who I feel I can tell my troubles to, and he will listen and give me good advice.

I was in the Children Organizing Resources Effectively (CORE) Special Education program all throughout my Kindergarten through twelfth grade career at Utica Community Schools. CORE is for children on the autism spectrum who can manage the mainstream curriculum with limited support. The CORE room was a place where I could be myself without being judged for being different and gave me the opportunity to converse with the special education program staff. I could also go to the CORE room and take a break if needed. Throughout the years, I learned about non-verbal communication, organization, and social skills. There was a limit of six to seven CORE students per grade that were hand selected for the program by the special education staff.

My mom has kept in contact with many of my former teachers as well as medical staff. My mom has been sharing my accomplishments with them over the years. They are enormously proud of the

things I have accomplished and are not at all surprised by the things I achieved. This semester, I received a letter from the Dean of Student Success based on your recommendation. This letter made me proud to be recognized for my achievements. My parents were so ecstatic about this achievement they sent a copy to everyone who they thought would enjoy reading this letter.

My autism has also given me some amazing gifts, such as my ability to absorb and retain facts. My best gift I received is my photographic memory, I just need to read something three times and it goes into my long-term memory. I have integrity, which means I am honest, loyal, and committed. I think and learn best in visual ways. When I was younger, I felt insecure about my autism because it made me different, and I might be excluded from certain activities. But now that I am older, I do not have this insecurity anymore and I hope all who have autism know that they are special and unique.

As an adult, I still have trouble with organization, but I am working on that to better myself. Due to my lack of organizational skills, college is a little more challenging than high school. Because I no longer have some of the supports that I had in high school.

Having autism has not stopped me from having a full life. With all the support I have received over the years, I can safely say I have lost some of my autistic traits. In other cases, I at least learned how to minimize or hide them.

Citations

[Autism Statistics and Facts | Autism Speaks](#)

[The Positives of Autism - Autism Awareness \(autismawarenesscentre.com\)](#)

[Strengths and abilities in autism - Altogether Autism](#)

[The PLAY Project | Autism Treatment | Autism Intervention Program](#)

[Electroencephalogram \(EEG\) | Johns Hopkins Medicine](#)

I dedicate this narrative essay to Doctor Solomon, to say thank you for supporting me and helping me understand and come to terms with my autism over the years.