

"The First Time I Ever Saw A Person With A Disability"

In life, there is a distribution of people who make up the world. While many people live in a normal routine every day, which would be going to work, school, and trying to make a living, there are others who go through every day with a struggling routine of life. As I grew up in a middle class home with two parents and two sisters, life did not seem so difficult in my perspective. This life of mine seemed simple because I had a healthy body, a house, food, a stable family, and I could go to school without any issues. As I got into the real world, I saw homeless people, people who cannot see or walk, people who have learning disabilities and people who do not have a stable family, and have to be taken care of everyday even if they are in their older years. This opened my perspective on how people are different in their own way and some should be admired by others because they go through life everyday with their struggle, but they are willing to look up in positive ways. So therefore, as I go into my career for Special Education, I take into perspective those admirations and remember back those times when I first saw different people with disabilities.

My first experience when I first saw a person with a disability was when I was going through Elementary. I would see different little kids in wheel chairs that were nonverbal and another kid would be on a walker who was also nonverbal. A shock of confusion went into my body because I was not used to seeing that every day. Also, the typical "feeling sorry" for them went into my mind as well because there I am being able to speak without any issue and being able to walk without any issue, watching these other little kids struggling through the halls with their walkers and wheelchairs. There are many other kids who would laugh and snicker about them because the disability children appeared different, but in my mind, I wanted to assist them and make their struggles disappear for them. As an Elementary child, I did not understand the different aspects of all different human beings, so therefore, as I was interested going into Junior High School, I finally got the best opportunity involving learning about Special Education children's lives.

While I transferred from Elementary to Junior High School, I still had that interesting mentality focusing on Special Education and learning more about them. When I got into eighth grade, I got to finally get the feel of being inside a Special Education classroom for over three weeks every Wednesday morning. Every Wednesday, we had to participate in an activity in the morning for forty-five minutes and we got to choose what we wanted to be involved in. One of the activities was if we wanted to be able to learn with the Special Education classroom and visualize what they do every day. As I signed up eagerly and excited, I went to the classroom very open-minded to what I was going to see and be able to do with the children. For the disability children, there were nonverbal children in wheelchairs and some verbal children. The first class time we colored with them as we communicated back and forth as much as we could. It was a fun learning experience because I got to perceive all different kinds of learning aspects Special Education children do and I had the chance to meet wonderful children as well. Through

this experience, I began understanding different teaching options and always knowing I wanted to become a teacher, I began being open-minded on what I wanted to teach.

Another perception I got to visualize outside the Special Education classroom was how my mother and my grandma were case managers for several people who could not live on their own. My mother always had this girl named Patty with her and would take her to her job, out to eat, and any other place she had to go. People could perceive how Patty lived an unstable lifestyle because she had different learning disabilities and had to have supervision at all times. Patty would always come over and be an entertainment to my family and she always seemed to live life on the bright sides. On the other hand, my grandma worked with two guys named Eddie and Donald, of which, they both had speaking disabilities and some walking disabilities. But, through these guys, they were responsible, hard-working, and enjoyed life daily! Through my learning experience being around these people, I had the opportunity to realize how after schooling for some disability children, they can still be able to work out in the real world and get to experience many different opportunities in their life. Also, this should show an inspiration to many other people who go through life in a normal routine every day and complain.

Through these different aspects, I had the chance to have several encounters with people who have disabilities whether it being an adult or a child. After I got into High School, I became best friends with a girl named Ellie, who has Special Needs. Unlike many others, I was able to communicate with Ellie with no issue and it mostly goes back into my past and what I had encountered on with Special Needs. Also, I had the chance to go into different classes with several Special Needs children my senior year because I could feel the sensation that Special Education was my calling from the beginning.