

Journey to Self Discovery – The Event That Changed My Life:

Essay No. 3

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Moving to Florida from New York was a traumatic experience for me. I had a lot of resentment towards my parents and the whole state of Florida, because I was forced to leave the only place that I had ever lived in, the place where I spent the first thirteen years of my life. I felt that the whole world was against me. The idea of moving to Florida gave me a sickening thought because I had to leave my home, my friends, and my neighborhood school behind and start my life's journey all over again. I was leaving the security of the place I knew for the misery that I felt was lying ahead. I had gotten it into my head that New York was the greatest place in the world, and I wasn't going to accept anything less.

For years my parents had wanted to move down to Florida because they were tired of the freezing temperatures that New York brought during the winter months and all the snow that came with it. Around March 1995, my dad saw an advertisement for a trailer in the paper. At this point my parents were frustrated after two foiled attempts to sell our house and move to Florida, so they took the ad seriously. My dad then called up the owner, and then they arranged a meeting, and later the following month, during Spring Break my parents took a trip with me to this Davie, Florida residence to check the place out. Neither my parents nor I were crazy about it, but they went along with it because it was a sure-fire way to get tot eh Sunshine State. We wound up selling our hose at a sacrifice, and by the end of June of 1995, after finishing my seventh grade year, we left New York. I never actually thought that we would move to Florida because of the few failed attempts, so when we did so in only three months time, it threw me for a loop.

Living in Florida made me depressed. As a result, my weight increased by about forty-give pounds, and on top of that I had problems with some kids in school who were

bothering me because I was the new kid on the block. I could never get a break. I just couldn't get used to my new environment because I still thought of New York as heaven. It wasn't until a trip in 1996 back to my "homeland" that I realized that it wasn't the same place that I had left the year before. Everything seemed different; even my former house didn't feel like mine anymore.

Then in 1997, I took another trip to my hometown in Long Island, New York. It was during that time that I initially started to feel better about myself. At that time, my brother was trying to eat healthier, and so it rubbed off on me a little bit and made me start to lose some of the weight that I had gained as a result of my depression. That made me happy. But then in 1998, against my wishes, we moved out of the trailer. However, it would wind up being the best thing that ever happened to me.

One reason that made the move great was the fact that we were moving back to a house, which helped to raise my self-esteem and to make me a more confident person. I had overcome the big challenge of moving from the north to the south, so anything else would be a lot easier to face. However, it still felt weird being in my new school because the environment felt different. Although, early on, I met a couple of good friends who helped to make my transition a lot easier, especially one girl friend who gave me a lot of confidence in myself by making me feel important. That confidence started to develop little bit little over the years.

Then in eleventh grade, I spent most of the year concentrating on my schoolwork, until one event changed my life. It was the school bell that hit me like an arrow in the back, waking me up. It was the bell that sent the seniors home on their last day of school, a week before our classes ended, moving our junior status up to seniors. I took this as a

way to start a new leaf and change my ways and become more sociable. I felt that I had become book smart, but that I couldn't enjoy my accomplishments with anyone because of a lack of friends. From that moment on, I began talking a lot more. Then, after much anticipation, the beginning of my senior year started. I still had a little bit of self-doubt, but that was to be expected in the growing process. By this time, I had lost thirty-five pounds and I started to dress better, which gave me the confidence that I needed to make myself happier. It was that confidence that people started seeing in me that made more people start to like me, and that was the reason I made a lot of friends during my senior year.

I learned an important lesson during my senior year that will stay with me for the rest of my life. It wasn't the fact that I was dressing better that made me friends. It was my interacting with people. I learned that people were going to like me for who I was and that there were people who weren't going to like me no matter what I did or said. Consequently, I started thinking, Why should I live my life by some one else's expectations? Now that I had both social and book skills I had more confidence in myself that ever before. I had gone from being a nothing to being a complete individual, waiting to meet and overcome whatever challenge life pitches next.