

My disability has shaped who I am in many different ways. It has changed how I see the world; made me very accepting of everyone and has allowed me to see the best in people. It has even inspired my future career. In order to explain to you what that is, I need to tell you a little about myself.

On June 9, 1998 my mother, my little sister, and I were driving to a barbeque. Sheets of rain were falling and pooling around the speeding cars. About half-way there, my mother lost control of the car and hydroplaned into a ditch. The force of the crash was too much for my 5 year old body and from that day on I have been confined to a wheelchair due to a spinal cord injury. I almost died that day; I had a partially collapsed lung, a cracked skull, and a severed spine. I was given a chance to live my life, and I intend to do just that. I want to make a difference. With all that I have gone through it made me realize that life as I know it could change in the blink of an eye, and whether it be good or bad, I intend to see it through and grow stronger because of it. I hope to use that strength to help others in need.

Each year, thousands of people experience spinal cord injuries. My goal is to help as many of those people as possible. I would like to work in a hospital with those individuals who have been left with life-changing, traumatic injuries. I want to help them to cope mentally, accept what has happened, and learn to see life from a different angle; help them realize that their life is not over, it is just different. I want to go to school, pursue a psychology degree, and eventually go to graduate school to become a therapist. I feel that my experiences in life help me keep an open mind and understand what people are dealing with. Not only have I gone through exactly what they are going through, but I have done it with a big smile on my face. I believe that I would be the perfect person to help them through this life changing event.

What I went through is not the only reason why I want to pursue a psychology degree. I find people fascinating. I enjoy getting to know them and trying to understand how they came to be who they are. I am accepting and non-judgmental.

I will admit that paying for college has been a bit of an issue. I am a student in a wheelchair living off of a very small amount of money. The only way I am able to go to school is if I can find enough scholarships to make it through. I am very capable and determined to work hard and become the best person for the job. No matter what life throws at me, whatever loops and turns I am forced to endure, and no matter how long it takes, I will accomplish my goal. Bring it on. I know I can make a difference. I just hope other people can believe in me too.