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Scholarship Essay

The best piece of advice I was given is, “Everything happens for a reason, so you must have faith that things will work themselves out, even if there is a chance you may never learn why it happened.”

I explicitly identified with this phrase because I was, at the time, questioning my faith in religions, and the passing of my family members brought on a lot of mental stress for me throughout most of grade school. I was bullied through all three years of middle school for being plus size, and not being “black enough.” I could never understand why “bad” things kept happening to my family and to myself. It felt as if the world was perpetually against me and there was nothing I could do to alter it. When I had my breakdowns in front of my aunt, she would always remind me that everything happens for a reason, that we have to go through these struggles now, so that when we're older, we will be better equipped to handle more difficult situations. And that sometimes, the loss of a person can expose our eyes and hearts to things we otherwise would have never seen or felt. And now as a freshman in college, I feel like I am starting to appreciate some of the reasons why the past was so difficult. For example, My mother passed away when I was in the second grade; we lived paycheck to paycheck, and I was always in before and after school programs because she would work twelve-hour days, and my father was out of the picture. I realized the best way to give me a chance to survive in this world was for me to be with my aunt and uncle. I will never forget my mother and all the things she has done for me, but I have come to terms with her passing after ten years. And the years of merciless bullying I went through taught me to accept myself for who I am, because at the end of the day, I am the only one who lives in my body, therefore no one else's opinion is relevant on what is or isn't the right shape to be. And all of these circumstances have instilled confidence in my own abilities and have given me faith in my intuition; my personality and my figure are not something I hide from people, something I am ashamed of. It has become my defining attribute, a point of pride, and a big one at that. In closing, my aunt has taught many things that have helped me become the young woman that I am, but this one saying will always lay close to my heart. It reminds me that there is always a choice to make, a decision, no matter how dire it may seem.