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Writing 220

22 September 2014

Balance

I would love to say that I have always been good at writing, but that isn't exactly the case. There is a specific poem I wrote back in elementary school that I still remember to this day, partly because of how terrible it was and partly because my sisters still love making fun of me for writing it. It read as follows:

Roses are red
Violets are blue
I like pizza
And so do I

The message I was trying to convey was obviously the fact that I liked pizza, but beyond that, the poem is about as dull as dirt. Looking back, I don't remember exactly when I started to become a better writer (probably because I never even considered myself a writer). It just never occurred to me that writing was something I would one day come to love.

Thinking back, my academic self has always been a primarily left brain-driven student. I was in no way artsy or creative. I was logical, analytical, organized and precise. Entering my freshmen year of college at the University of Michigan, I was on the pre-med track, no doubt about it. My daily schedule was filled with hours of studying for my introductory science courses, but I was fine with it because I thought that's what the life of a pre-med student should be like.

Eventually, the end of the term was nearing and it came time to register for my second-semester classes. Similarly to first semester, my schedule was shaping up to look a little bit like this:

Science, Science, Science Lab

Except this semester, something was different. And that difference was **English 124**. It was my first year writing requirement. I didn't dread it by any means, but I wasn't exactly radiating with excitement either. I had signed up for a class that discussed the roles that animals (dead and alive) played in different works. It sounded interesting and I hoped that would make the a bit class easier. Somewhere between my enrollment date and the first day of class, however, the professor decided to go a different direction with the class, changing the topic to "All Things Wild." Although I was a little upset with the objective change, I decided to stay in the class for sake of laziness. I didn't want to take the time to find another English course to enroll in. After the first few readings, I found myself having no problem with the class. And by "having no problem," I mean that I was actually enjoying it.

By the time the first paper rolled around, I was totally immersed in the topic of being wild. It opened my mind to so many possibilities and ideas that no science or math class ever could. Weekdays were no longer drenched in the monotonous rain of similarity like my previous semester. I had found my umbrella, and it was writing. My English homework began to seem like a break from the rest of my curriculum, beckoning me, as I grew sick of infinite biology trivia questions. Writing could always be done while on the comfort of my dorm futon, or a cozy chair in a coffee shop. It was relaxing, refreshing and exactly what I needed.

Mid-semester rolled around, which meant calculating my current grades in each class to satisfy my left-brain personality (I needed to stay organized and on top of things). After analyzing my results, I came to the conclusion that English was my only solid A at that point in the semester. Even with that being said, I still didn't really consider myself a writer. How I was holding that A was a mystery to me. It was that confusion that prompted me to do a little self-reflection. I looked back on my past writing experiences, realizing how easily things came to be when I wrote. I had always thought that writing was a passion for those people who were right-brained, imaginative and liked to express their "feelings." What I never realized was that writing is also organized, analytical and logical, just like me. Every word, phrase and sentence is carefully constructed with a purpose, and every piece of grammar sensibly calculated to make everything fit together perfectly. A page of written word, in total, is organized and linear.

With this new insight on writing, I began enjoying it more and more. Losing myself in the beauty of organizing words and phrases, calculating the best possible arrangement and order to equal the best possible result. But it wasn't until later in the semester, that I really made a move to act on my potential as a writer. I was preparing to enroll in my Fall 2014 courses, simply browsing major and minor requirements on the LSA website, when I stumbled across Sweetland's Minor in Writing program.

Something just **clicked.**

I knew there was no way I could continue my undergraduate studies without a few English courses mixed into my science-saturated schedule. I needed that solace of taking a break from my left-brain courses to stimulate my right brain.

I needed balance.