Personal Essay

It had already been one week into the school year in a new school. While all around me were the bustling sounds of people talking with their friends while eating, I just sat there alone while feeling awkward about my situation. As I walked out of the cafeteria I also did not know where to go, as I didn’t really have any friends in this new school to hang out with.

time nI thought back to the past week when the school set up activities to help us settle into the school, but I didn’t even make the effort to talk with anyone. I worried about the future, and how I didn’t want the rest of the school year to be like this. I wanted to change.

It was then that I realized that I had become too comfortable with the relationships that I have already established that I have forgot how to establish new ones. With that, I found the drive to put work into trying to better my social ability.

Like I said previously, I don’t really have much social skills and most relationships I had were very old. The pandemic also severely worsened my social skills as I didn’t really have to interact with anyone and especially not initiate any conversation with anyone during it. Due to my low social ability and social anxiety I have hindered myself from doing or made it difficult for myself to do so much things that are important. I even had difficulty in asking teachers for help in school work.

I started by trying to be more active in class, and not try to just hide away in the corner of the classroom. I continuously forced myself to sit in the front of the classroom, which would force me to be more active in class. I also forced myself to not try to escape from conversations and try to keep them going. Even though they weren’t really large changes, I slowly was able to decrease the social anxiety I continuously felt and was able to make a few new friends in the new school.

As time progressed, even though the initial problem of me not having any friends in the new school had been resolved, I felt that I still had room for improvement in my socializing. I was just hanging out with the same group of friends who had other friends, and when they are with their other friends I felt awkward.

Due to that, I went further beyond my previous efforts. I volunteered to do things as that would force me to have to talk with other people and also learn how to initiate small-talk. I also forced myself to try to talk to new people when given the opportunity to do so, such as when I am grouped up with them or paired with them for a class work.

With that, I was able to continue improving my social ability, and became more comfortable with talking with people I don’t usually talk to. I was also able to feel less of a burden from asking people for help or advice.

Communication is a really important skill in the world as there is so much things in this world that is only possible or easier to do with other people. Me being able to come out of my shell and be able to communicate more comfortably with others is good. Though I still don’t completely enjoy talking to others and still constantly second guess what I am going to say because of my fear of what others think of me. So, I aim to continue to grow my social skills and integrate myself more in the communities that I am in.

Dear Jared,

This is a very good start to your essay. You have a clear show of personal growth, and your story of learning how to communicate better is something that people can relate to easily. Below are a few notes on how you can improve your essay further.

First, try your best to be descriptive in your writing. **Show**, don’t **tell**. To do this, use descriptions (much like you did in your first paragraph, where you described the atmosphere of the cafeteria). Instead of **telling** us that your social anxiety made things difficult for you to do important things, **show** us how, through describing these events. Help the reader better experience things from your point of view.

Second, at the end of your essay, I suggest elaborating more on how you’re practicing what you’ve learned throughout your journey. How has your growth changed *you* personally? How will you anticipate using what you’ve learned in your future plans?

Otherwise, you’re headed in a good direction. Keep it up.

All the best,

Arianne

ALL-in Essay Editor