

Celine Gunther

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Mrs. Martinez

Socratic 12

Get-To-Know-You-Poster

Eight years ago, my third grade teacher, Ms. Allen, gave each student a get-to-know-you assignment. I was sent home with a poster half my size; it was so big, it got its own seat in the car. My get-to-know-you poster was the perfect opportunity to answer questions people were dying to ask me. My favorite color was blue, my favorite animal was a giraffe, and my hero was my dad. The next question was, “What does your family look like?” I scribbled one dad, one mom, and one Jenny, but added, “I wanted a bigger family”. My ideal family meant our house would be full, with at least one friend over at all times, grandparents stopping by, so we could tell them about our week, but most of all, it meant stability. By the 6th grade, my parents had separated, but my hopes remained on my get-to-know-you poster.

I watched others take from my poster. I was jealous when my friends could talk about their mom and dad in the same sentence, and the way their walls would taunt me with family pictures. I wanted more than anything to feel the way they did about family.

I thought If I hyper-focused on certain experiences, I could outweigh the imperfections. I made it a point to observe familial love. I noticed the way my uncle kissed his wife three times after each prayer, and how my grandmother hung up the paintings I sent her through the mail. I saw the effort that my mom put into ironing my uniform, saying, “this is your armour.” I saw the love, but it was not enough to observe through the spectacle of experiences. My biggest mistake

was thinking about the love I was supposed to receive, rather than love I was supposed to give. It became clear that the relationships I wanted required me to be proactive.

I am no longer a helpless third-grader that could only receive; I have the ability to create and add more to my get-to-know you poster. So, I joined sports teams and other committees to find my niche, but it evolved into creating a larger family. Going to basketball at 5:00 in the morning wasn't just to please Coach Call; it was to understand how my teammates needed me. Reading my Harvard case studies was not for the grade, but to add opinions, and support my classmates. Dancing at stomps was not solely for Sweet Caroline; it was to help clean up the gym afterwards. I could not control my parent's divorce, nor the amount of siblings I would have, but I could utilize the family I had at Maeser. I learned I could count on my teachers and peers to create a bigger family. Today, I reminisce about Ms. Allen's classroom, and how she wanted to hear the answers to those questions.

So let's try this again. My name is Celine Gunther, my favorite color is blue, my favorite animal is now a lion, and my family consists of everyone I love and bring into my circle. My poster turned out different than I expected, but I could have never imagined the step siblings I would love, the Maeser family I could rely on, and the friends that will stay with me. When you make your get-to-know-you poster, leave open the many possibilities that you may have yet to consider.