Ashley Helfinstein

Ms. Harris

Humanities Period 5

31 August 2015

681 words

Staring at the options before me, I selected the pink shaded starburst wrappers as my nerdiest earrings. My outfit complete, I felt ready to attend the She’s Geeky conference with my mom. Upon our arrival at the Computer History Museum, I was reminded of when I had been there in 7th grade for Entrepreneurial Night, presenting my company to venture capitalists. Having just started high school, I felt removed from the girl I was when I attended The Girls’ Middle School. Returning to the museum was like returning to my roots and I felt grounded in familiarity.

Entering the room and seeing all the smart women socializing together, I was awestruck. There were all different types of people there, with so many different areas of interest, and yet they all mingled together and created meaningful connections and experiences.

I breezed through the beginning of the day with fun sessions like “Geek Chic”, describing geeky fashions, and balloon animals lead by a former fairy (entertainer for children’s birthday parties). I even mustered the confidence to lead my own session about books, which resulted in a great turnout and lots of fantastic book suggestions and discussions.

Later in the day, my mom and I arrived at the specialized coding session she wanted to go to. I had some programming experience and I thought the session could be interesting. However, I rapidly discovered that the material was far beyond my knowledge, and I was lost for most of the discussion. For a few minutes, I sat hopefully on the cushioned chair with my notebook and pen at the ready. Eventually, I gave up and reached down tentatively to my bag and pulled out my book. As I was about to open it, I caught a glimpse of the hand-written sign on the wall, and remembered one of the only rules of She’s Geeky. The Law of Two Feet states that if you are not learning or contributing, it is your responsibility to respectfully find someplace that you are. This rule simmered in my head, and I realized that I was breaking it. In a gesture of strength, I slipped my book into my bag. With a heart-skipping glimmer of doubt, I separated myself from my mother and familiarity and wandered over to the social media session. I sat down and was immediately immersed in the advice of a very savvy woman about how people portray themselves on social media, and how to use it to your advantage. I was enthralled by the stories she told of people sharing only the best or worst things about their lives, rather than the whole story. My pencil began to fly across my notebook page as I soaked in new, fascinating information.

Branching out had allowed me to discover a whole new field of information that I was unaware of, and bask in the joy of learning a riveting, fresh topic with other eager learners. I was struck by the truth of the Law of Two Feet for all situations. Any time I am learning, it is up to me to make the most of the situation and learn all I can from the opportunities available. It is not always appropriate to get up and leave if something is not informative for me, but there are other ways to change a situation to be optimal for myself. I can always delve deeper until I find something that is new and interesting to me. I choose the amount that I get out of an experience.

Going into She’s Geeky, I was proud of being nerdy, which is still true. However, now I comprehend fully what I meant. I am proud that I love to learn and that I am so truly interested in so many things. I realize that I can be a nerd about anything if I find the part that’s new and interesting to me. With this knowledge in mind, I continue my life taking advantage of the full scope of life’s opportunities so I can learn and be nerdy and excited wherever I go.