Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.

When it comes to opening coke bottles, I always assume the worst: an explosion leading to sticky hands, a floor in need of a mop, and a face of disappointment and regret. But the fear that comes with such a mundane task has actually taught me a lesson that proved to be valuable to me: there’s a fine line between being analytical and being a know-it-all. For me, it took a coke bottle and an ultrasound to learn this.

The cool gel slid against my skin as the nurse pressed the ultrasound stick deeper towards my left ovary. To me, the screen in front of me simply showed a grey blob, but the expression on the nurse’s face showed otherwise. A frown of what seemed to be confusion was smeared across her forehead, but oblivious, I layed on the slim bed, without an understanding of the situation. I watched as the arrow of her mouse circled a small section of my ovaries on the screen, as if to indicate that something was there.

“Ok, you’re done”

I wiped off the now warm gel off my stomach and stepped off the bed. Now, we wait.

For some people, stress-relief means breathing exercises or meditation. For me, it means getting a nice cold drink at the hospital vending machine. Unlike the usual fairly malleable plastic bottle, the coke bottle felt hard and bulky in my hands; I knew I needed to prepare myself to open this one. I extended my arms to give as much ‘safe space’ for my body in hopes of dodging any potential bursting liquid. While my left hand clenched the plastic bottle tightly, I twisted my wrist to reveal a violent hiss. The bubbles in the bottle accelerated, looking as if they had grown in size. The liquid started to move up to the neck of the bottle as I attempted to extend my arms further and arch my back into a tighter curve. However, as my eyes remained fixated on the neck of the bottle, I watched the coke-line lower, never surpassing the bottle’s rim. I realized my analysis was wrong; I thought I had known the signs of a so-called ‘dangerous’ bottle, but a hard bottle doesn’t always lead to an explosion. My fear was uncalled for.

\*30 mins later

As I tried to hide my sweaty palms and quivering fingers, I opened the brown envelope. “Upturned kidneys.. several follicles visible”. It mostly sounded like gibberish to me, but with my limited biological knowledge and the word NORMAL printed in capital letters, I assumed my results were satisfactory. My eyes continued to move down the page, and there in bold: **polycystic changes in the ovaries**.Poly= many; cystic= sacs of pus, I thought. I had many sacs of pus in my ovaries? Eager to confirm my analysis, I took out my phone and began my research process on the trusty Google.

‘What is polycystic changes in ovaries’

Like a portable doctor, the search engine quickly diagnosed me. Polycystic ovarian syndrome. Syndrome? “Irregular periods… excess androgen...polycystic ovaries. If you have at least 2 of these symptoms, you may be diagnosed with PCOS”.

My sonogram confirmed the symptoms; my monthly tracking app confirmed the symptoms; my phrase dissection confirmed the symptoms. Therefore, I confirmed my results— I have PCOS.

The last step was for my gynecologist to confirm my analysis. With sweaty palms and trembling hands, I knew I needed to prepare for what was to come. A sentence that reminds me of a coke bottle- leads to my epiphany. This time, I didn’t want to extend my arms or arch my back; I didn’t want to face uncalled fear. While analyzing a situation can be beneficial, over-analysis can lead to unnecessary negativity. As we say in Indonesia “jangan sok tau”— don’t be a know-it-all. While the sonogram gave me what I thought was evidence for PCOS, it takes an expert’s analysis to really see what’s going on. Therefore, I entered the gynecologist’s room with a humble mind and came out learning that my prior analysis was once again wrong, but now without a face of disappointment and regret.

While my crimson visitor still doesn’t stop by every month, I have tried to rely less on my Google-dependent independent research to determine my health. Nonetheless, I’m grateful for my not-so-polycystic ovaries, just like how I was grateful that I didn’t go home with sticky hands and a floor in need of a mop that day.

Hey! So that was a really unique response to this prompt, I hope you’re okay and all is well. I noted a couple of things we could improve your essay on, but I’d like to suggest more focus specifically on the punctuation marks for: thoughts, dialogues, in-real-life google searches, terms; also, on the concluding paragraphs for your reflection of your personal growth. I’m sure you’re capable of making sure that the significance of this event is correctly conveyed to readers, because right now it sounds just a bit underwhelming.

Keep in mind that the response exceeds the word limit, so any filler sentences could be cut down. To keep the tone serious or to emphasize certain thoughts, short sentences would be great! E.g. Instead of “I came out realizing that my prior thoughts were again, mistaken, and yet, I was more than glad to arrive at this epiphany,” possibly more towards, “I realized yet again that I was mistaken- and I’ve never been more glad.”

Good luck and keep going! I’m sure you can polish this further.