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I Think I want to Code

My son Jaxson and I

About a year and a half ago I was looking at coding schools for my 20-year-old son. He had recently been released from the US Army for medical reasons and I thought that he would really enjoy this field as he is brilliant. Unfortunately, he wasn't interested but as I was researching coding schools, the thought came to me that I might like it.

At the time we were living in Idaho and I loved my job so I put coding school on the back burner. Fast forward seven months and I was no longer working in Idaho and we had recently moved back to Utah for an employment opportunity for my husband. After searching for jobs and not finding just the right fit for myself I decided to look at coding again. I was in Utah where the coding schools were that I had been researching a few months earlier for my son Jaxson (pictured above).

A friend of mine from High School (Michelle Carter – pictured to the right) had gone to a coding boot camp in New York and was now working for Adobe in Lehi, Utah. We had dinner in October and she gave our group of friends a tour of Adobe. I knew this is what I wanted. I wanted to work for Adobe.

After my Adobe tour, I started doing some free online courses over the next two days and spent time asking Michelle questions about this potential career change that I am looking into. This was a big decision and I wasn't sure I was smart enough after being out of school for 25 years. She was in the same boat and was confident that I could do this. I spent 20 hours over the next two days (Saturday and Sunday) learning the beginnings of coding. I Loved It!!! Michelle received an email Monday morning from a meet-up connection about the scholarship with Adobe Digital Academy. She had never heard of it before but thought I might be interested. SHE WAS RIGHT!

Michelle Carter and I
Friends for Decades

My Life as a Student

I found out on November 18th that I was awarded the Adobe Scholarship to begin V School on November 28th. Ten days to prepare for this school experience. I loved that it happened fast but it was hard as I didn't have a lot of time to prepare for what I was embarking upon. As I am beginning week nine of my 12-week web development boot camp experience. Wow! I have four weeks left and it has gone by so fast.

I would love to say that I feel absolutely confident and completely prepared to begin my career in web development but I don't. Does anyone right after graduation? I am grateful for the people that I have met in this industry because everyone has been so great and encouraging. I do feel confident that what I don't know, I will learn. I look forward to the opportunity that I might have…someday…to be that resource to someone else who is nervous just like me.

I knew that going back to school was going to be hard. I knew that I would have a lot of studying and homework. I was prepared for hard. I was prepared to do a lot of hard "mental" work. What I wasn't prepared for was the emotional journey that this experience would take me on.

As I am 2/3 of the way through school and working on my website and wanting to share my story, I decided that I should share a couple pivotal moments in my journey thus far.

My Pivotal Moments…thus far

#1 - In this industry, learning doesn't stop at graduation

It's okay that I don't know everything. I thought that my ability to memorize would make this easier for me. Nope. I will never be able to memorize everything and by the time I might memorize something, it will be outdated and something new will be in front of me. I will never know everything in this new career path. Technology is always changing. There is always something new to learn and to figure out. In this industry, the learning doesn't stop at graduation.

I have never been someone who just throws my hands up in the air and gives up. I have had to learn to fight through the times where I want to give up. I have had to fight a lot over the last 8 weeks. The experiences that I have had in my life which have taught me to fight are now returning to my mind and becoming a huge asset to me at this time in my life. I fight through the unknown, I ask questions and I do everything I can to figure it out.   I have learned that it is okay to admit that "I am not sure of the answer…" (note…there is no period after that sentence). That sentence continues with "…and let me work on it and see what I can figure out." Period.   There is always going to be a learning curve in the tech industry and I am so excited that I get to be in a field of constant learning and growth.

#2 - Code is going to break and I can be "okay" with that.

Another pivotal moment that I wanted to share is "technical". Problem Solving! I thought that I was detail oriented before I started school but compared to what I have learned thus far, I was nowhere near as detailed as I needed to be. I am grateful for the resources that I have been taught by my instructors as they are crucial and invaluable in this world of coding and technology.

Errors in coding are inevitable. There will always be something that breaks at one time or another and I would love to say that "I look forward to the day that code no longer breaks on me". Through my conversations with seasoned developers, I've learned that their code still breaks too and they're ok with that, and I can be okay with that too.

This goes back to the end of my first pivotal moment. *There is always going to be a learning curve in the tech industry and I am so excited that I get to be in a field of constant learning and growth.*

There is a poem entitled Good Timber by Douglas Malloch that I have loved for a long time. The words have been in my head a lot over the last 8 weeks and I wanted to share:

"The tree that never had to fight
For sun and sky and air and light,
But stood out in the open plain
And always got its share of rain,
Never became a forest king
But lived and died a scrubby thing.

The man who never had to toil
To gain and farm his patch of soil,
Who never had to win his share
Of sun and sky and light and air,
Never became a manly man
But lived and died as he began.

Good timber does not grow with ease:
The stronger wind, the stronger trees;
The further sky, the greater length;
The more the storm, the more the strength.
By sun and cold, by rain and snow,
In tree and men good timbers grow.

Where thickest lies the forest growth,
We find the patriarchs of both.
And they hold counsel with the stars
Whose broken branches show the scars
Of many winds and much of strife.
This is the common law of life.

My Family