

# Kian Agheli's Experience

I spent much of my childhood worrying about what others thought of me. I very rarely considered what I thought of my self important. Every day, I would wake up worrying about appeasing others, rather than enjoying my life as I wish.

I found passion in even this, loving to please others. That passion all alone is quite unhealthy. With no love for my self, I was left depending on every one else in my life to define who I am.

This was especially true regarding my schoolwork. The main way I would receive positive attention from my mother and her mother was through complements on how "smart" I was. With this came immense external pressure, pressure that I held on to dearly, for I otherwise knew nothing of how to live.

Given this set of factors, I came to live an unhappy life. Every day, I would live in fear of other people, not because they scared me, but because I knew no better than to do what they told me. Each day of school, I would stress my self out extremely, treating my self and others some what poorly. I regularly was annoyed with my self, and seemed to annoy every one else around me. Even when I wanted to do differently, I had no self control. I gave all of my self control away to all those around me, leaving me a person with no intentional identity.

This pattern of behavior lasted throughout my elementary school years as well as through middle school, where the combination of these behavioral patterns and the insecurity of being a preteen made for a terrible experience.

A little before my graduation from eighth grade, I decided that I had to change. For me. I could not live as I had for any longer. I may be technically could, however I finally decided to give my self control over who I was. I did not want to be the person every body else wanted me to be, I wanted to be who I chose. I deeply feared growing to be a person with no personal identity who did not know why they were unhappy. Just as well, I had been told by a peer and to my horror realized that the grades earned in elementary and middle school mattered little, and that

high school grades are most of what any college will care about. This left me feeling like much of my self inflicted pain had been valueless.

I needed change, and, to my despair, I gave in to what I needed. Because I knew no thing other than what I had done before, I had to do no thing. So I did. I went to school each day and mostly sat around. I did not do my home work. I spent my free time feeling lost and empty.

I was in a mentally very terrible state during these years. Rather, during these years it was much more readily apparent, it showed how lost and unhappy I was. This lack of personal direction and happiness had been there for years, yet only when I let my self address them was it so apparent that I needed help, most of all from my self.

Leaving out much personal detail, I think an appropriate summarization is that I was both very deeply delusional and did not understand my own feelings at all, let alone the feelings of any one else. I spent every day in my own mind, searching for answers to my own problems. Over the course of years, I came to understand what existed of my self, that which I had not ever explored before.

I was given the perfect opportunity once all schools were closed in early 2020. With many months mostly alone, I came to spend time adhering to what I wanted rather than what any one else imposed upon me. There were suddenly so few opportunities to lose my self to what others wanted of me. I learned what I wanted of my self, I learned what I enjoyed, I found my own reasons to live.

I wish for the world to know that every one has choices, always. It is always an option to do no thing at all, which is often what the world needs. Every person should live for them self, right now, being happy for their own sake. I have found that each individual must find their own internal happiness in their own ways, as every one lives their own life. I found this happiness through understanding and passion. Do what you feel like, let go of your thoughts and have your feelings guide you. For you.

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