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What Drives Me

From 4th-9th grade, I endured many tribulations, including bullying, social isolation, insomnia, and learning difficulties, resulting in almost six years of self-harm, binge eating, and suicidal ideation. This reached a crux freshman year, when a friend reported me to Safe2Tell, which led to the police being called, followed by a partial hospitalization for three weeks, forcing me to leave school. Despite how devastating it was, it resulted in finally getting diagnosed with ADHD after years of suffering and wondering what was wrong with me. This changed everything.

Though healing is not a linear path, things got better; I got better. I spent years healing, reshaping my belief systems—and how I see myself, others, and the world—completely rebuilding myself from the bottom up. After being diagnosed and put on medication, I was able to function, to see the fruits of my efforts, to work and get something out of it. I had to grieve for the life I could've had, for all the pain that could've been avoided had someone listened to me when I said something was wrong. That grief never went away, but I grew around it. Instead of trying to hold onto the life I could've had, I found myself wanting to help others.

In my search for help for my mental struggles and other health problems, I learned how many doctors look at patients and only see a list of symptoms, a puzzle to solve, as opposed to an actual person. I found myself wanting to be that change. So, I started taking classes relating to

the medical field. In these, I found that cancer, something that has run rampant in my family, is far more similar to ADHD than I once believed. It starts with something going wrong. In cancer, that's the G2 checkpoint failing, which causes mutations and allows genetic errors to slip through, whereas in ADHD, a decrease in dopamine and norepinephrine leads to misfiring, causing faulty communication across the synapse. That one fault spirals, wrecking havoc on the entire system. When a cell undergoes mitosis with said errors, the cell is able to bypass apoptosis and hijack other healthy cells, spreading cancer throughout the body, causing other cells, tissues, and eventually whole organs to not function properly. In ADHD, faulty communication causes countless operations in the brain to not work correctly, including emotional regulation, impulse control, difficulty focusing, and sleep problems. Furthermore, those with ADHD are exponentially more likely to have other disorders pertaining to mood, learning, eating, and addiction.

This discovery led me to the field of nuclear medicine technology. It will allow me to prepare and administer radioactive treatments for imaging and treatment. This career fulfills my desire to help others, which provides an intrinsic motivation to the job. My pursuit of nuclear medicine will not only save lives, but will also fortify my happiness and quality of life. I plan to attend Bellevue College in Washington to further my passion to help others.