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My experiences in my education path

In my life, there have been various times when I had an “enlightenment” on education and instances where my view on education changed. Whether it be me coming to the U.S. and starting my studies, or me being a soccer fan helping me be a better version of myself, there have been multiple instances where I gained a new perspective on education. To start it off, it would have to be me and my family coming here to the United States. On July 16th, 2017, I left Mali, the only place I had known for those 11 years of my life and came to the United States while having no idea what it would be like. I had never felt such uncertainty as a baby who just came out of his mother’s womb. If you would have told me that one day I would be here, I would have certainly called you crazy because I just thought I would live here one day. Sometimes I would feel lonely because my moms and friends were all in Mali and I felt a bit lonely. I remember during the summers, my friends and I used to ride bikes all day and always came home after dark. Even though I was some sort of an introvert, I would enjoy spending some time with my friends. Our parents always told us to come home before it was too dark, but we would always have so much fun that we would lose track of time. Taking a step forward and leaving everything behind was tough for an eleven-year-old boy, but I knew it was a better opportunity for me to learn and be someone my family would be proud of.

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After coming here to the United States, the only bit of English I spoke was “good morning” and “how are you.” These were not enough to help me during middle school which I started only three months after coming here. I would say middle school was the biggest stage in my learning capabilities. Getting to fit in with the kids was hard, especially since they knew I could not speak English well which led me to get bullied a lot. Not only was it not an advantage to socialize, but it was also hard to get good grades. I remember the first day of school when I had a science class in the first period and the teacher gave each student a piece of paper, and a tube to look inside, and said: “write down what you see in there.” At that moment, I could not understand what he was saying, and I just thought that he was saying to write down what you hear since that was like it in French. That I got a bad grade on my first-ever quiz. After I failed the quiz, I started teaching myself in my little corner. The first method I used was google translate, every time the teacher said something I did not understand, I would write it down and when it was lunchtime, I would just take out my phone and translate it into French. Another method I used to learn English was watching YouTube. I started watching English YouTube videos, whether it was movies, vlogs, or gaming videos. I would just put on French subtitles and look at the subtitles while watching the videos. A few months after watching YouTube, and movies and using google translate, I was able to speak some proper English. English that was a little bit more understandable, an English where I could express myself without mixing my words, an English in which I was my first achievement on an unknown path. It was English and felt somehow comfortable there and, for once, I believed the saying "you can do anything if you put your mind to it" was a little bit true.

Another instance where I had a change of view on education was a time when I went to a soccer tryout. At the age of 13 years old, I was not interested in doing anything else than just studying, until the coach

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of my previous soccer program reached out to me. He had told me about an opportunity that included trying out for a soccer team. At that time, I had completely shut soccer out of my life because I thought it was a waste of time and a hobby that I was not interested in anymore. Even though I did not think much of it, I still went to the tryouts. Those tryouts made me think about what I really wanted. I did not think that being able to touch the ball and play again would have such an influence on my current decision-making, but it did. The passion for playing soccer that I had forgotten came back again. I did not know why but I just felt like a completely different person who would prioritize what he wanted over anything else. After the tryouts, I did not make it, but it changed the way I thought about problems, and what I wanted to do with my future, taking more chances and taking more opportunities. My decision to go to college, my decision on which major I wanted to choose, and my decision on what kind of job I would want to do when I grow up, that single tryout changed my way of thinking. That tryout was what made me think, about what I want to do with my life and how I should move forward.

Another point in my life that affected my view toward my education path was when I helped my brother with his college project. Before 2020, I did not know what kind of job or career field I was going to go for. I was undecided since I had so many options to choose from. I Went with the Marketing and Advertising field because of my brother's school project. He had a research project to do in college and wanted me to help with it. I had nothing to do at the time, so I decided to help him with it. The project was to produce an idea for an ad, film the ad, and present it to a board of investors. At first, I was hesitant because I had not done something like that in the past and was not confident at all, but I still decided to go with it just for fun. After starting, I did some research and produced some ideas. We shared our ideas and produced the best one which was our pitch. During that time, I had much fun and realized that I had a talent for that sort of thing. In my free time, I would produce some ideas and just

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have fun with those ideas, which one would grab the public's eye, and which one was best suited for this type of weather or occasion.