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Education

Do you ever realize how much your experiences with school in general played a big part in how you turned out as a person? Well it does...and whether you notice it or not we've all picked up on certain habits and characteristics that directly came from what we were taught and/or the different types of people we've encountered as we were growing up. For me personally, my experiences with school have given me thick skin and resilience, whether it was from being called stupid by my teacher in first grade or having an all around horrible high school experience that took a huge toll on my mental health, from a particularly young age i've learned alot about the way people act and why they do it. Despite all the hurt and inconveniences I've faced there was really no other choice and I had to pick myself up and keep going even when I felt like giving up as a whole.

Let me start off with my mishap in the first grade when the teacher called me stupid. Most of what the teacher said to me after saying I was stupid is a blur in my head now, but I do remember the moments leading up to it and the exact moment she lashed out on me. She was teaching us math and we were all sitting at our desks. A few minutes into the lesson some things fell out of my desk so I went to go pick them up and stopped paying attention to what she was teaching because I was distracted with all of the things that fell on the floor. I got everything up and went to sit back down and put everything back inside the desk as quietly as possible so I wouldn't disrupt the class, as I was putting the stuff in she calls on me to answer a question, me not even knowing what she asked I say I don't know and that I was fixing my desk. She pauses for a few seconds and you can see the anger brewing in her eyes, shortly after she screams "JAYLA THIS IS EXACTLY WHY YOU'RE GOING TO GET LEFT BACK IN THE FIRST GRADE YOU'RE STUPID AND GET DISTRACTED BY EVERY LITTLE THING"... I froze after she said that to me and only being 6 years old at the time I didn't know how to react, I remember all my classmates turning their heads to look at me but that's really about it. All I remember after that is being too ashamed to say anything to my parents or principal about it because I was too embarrassed and didn't think they'd believe me, and for a while it made me not want to go back to school and I felt like what she said to me was true and that everybody around me believed it as well and it got to a point where I would perform poorly in all my classes because I lost all my motivation to even try because of her comment living rent free in my head. Looking back at this experience now, it just shows me that the American school system has moments of being unprofessional and that just because somebody is a teacher doesn't necessarily mean they are fit to be one, just because they got the degree for it maybe the schools that hire these people need to dig deeper and evaluate them as a person as well before giving them a job to work with kids, let alone younger ones that are still developing and pick up on every little thing

they see and hear. Nonetheless, this experience has taught me the importance of having patience as well as not making people feel stupid for not knowing something right away. Now to this day, whenever I ask somebody anything I give them a chance to come up with an answer or take the time to explain to them what I'm talking about if they don't know or understand what I asked. It's the least I can do honestly.

Now moving on to my high school experience from hell. I honestly don't even know where to start with this one because it's just bad all around. For starters, the teachers and principal didn't really care about anything that went on, the students at that school were some of the rudest and most hateful people i've met in my life, and on top of that the things that not just me but my friends went through too while there has ruined our mental health tremendously and we literally all became close because of the rational feeling of having a target on our backs the entire time we were there. Let me break down how all these feelings of resentment I have towards this school started. It was freshman year, at the time I was struggling with severe depression and was at my lowest point and even felt like ending it all, I thought I had friends I could confide in but oh god was I wrong. My "best friend" at the time who I thought I could trust ran around behind my back to tell people how I used to self harm, I had no knowledge of this until sophomore year when I met my friend Kegan and he told me about it by the way. Anyways, back to freshman year, I felt alone and was almost always left out of everything for the pettiest reasons like not having a snapchat or associating with certain people. Pretty corny I know but this is only the beginning. Let's fast forward to sophomore year, when I finally met Kegan who's still my best friend to this day. Me and Kegan started to get along really well and not only did my old "friends" not like it...his ex boyfriend didn't either and took it upon himself to start drama that caused so much damage to both of us. He told my old "best friend" that I was gossiping about her personal life behind her back and of course she believed him because he was really manipulative and painted himself as this innocent person that had her best interest at heart. She blew up on me about it and even after trying to explain what was really going on she still believed him over me and shortly after the other "friends" I had stopped talking to me over it too then they all decided to tell the entire grade that I was a snake and all these other horrible things, little did I know that this would become the running punchline about me that would last for the rest of high school and it got to a point where people I didn't even know had one sided problems with me. Not even a week after this all happens, a problematic instagram account gets made and everybody automatically points their fingers at Kegan and I saying that we were the ones who created it and some people even went out of the way to say they had "proof" it was us and it was a hot mess to say the least. Shortly after that happened, another rumor popped up that Kegan and I were dating, there were many more things that happened too that are pretty personal to get into but it got to a point where it was pushing me over the edge that I even considered transferring or dropping out. I remember having a panic attack in the staircase and being told by a teacher that saw me to go to the social worker and talk to her about it, when I told her what was going on while I was in an obvious state of distress and could barely talk because I was shaking and crying

so much...all she said to me was "ok" and basically told me to get out of her office because she had another student who had to come to her. At that point I knew nobody was on my side and that being in this school was a lose lose situation. The teachers simply didn't care and the students made it almost impossible to coexist with one another without there being any drama. I wanted to leave more than anything but something in me told me to stay, I knew I would've felt too guilty leaving my only genuine friend at the time behind because he was the only one that understood how bad it actually was since he was going through the same things and people would scrutinize him for being gay and expressing himself whether they liked it or not. Fast forward to junior year...little did I know that this would be my last year there (thankfully) but of course this school year started off on a bitter note too. I started dating one of the said "popular" kids and he treated me bad the entire time and even befriended every person he knew I had a problem with and would treat me like I didn't exist anytime he was around them and would even talk bad about me with just about anybody whenever I wasn't around. There were also a few incidents where people would make racist comments towards other students and two incidents involving guys laying their hands on girls but for some reason it never got held over their heads the way the rumors about me from sophomore year were held over mine so I found that really weird. I also ended up in this production class with Kegan where two particular people in our group would do the bare minimum then take the credit for all the stuff we did whenever the teacher came around and of course she believed them and thought me and Kegan were the ones being lazy. Even though this was pretty frustrating there was another girl in our group named Susie that we ended up becoming close with, we eventually told her about all the stuff that's happened and she understood us because she hated it there too and emphasized with us by talking about experiences of her own. We shortly all became best friends with each other and to this day we're still together and our calamities at that school are what brought us together in the first place so in a way I'm glad things played out the way it did. At the end of the year though, I discovered that I had more than enough credits to graduate early if I wanted to so I did it without hesitation. Even when things got bad I made sure to stay on top of my classes and maintain good grades regardless of how much I hated it there and wanted to leave because even though I didn't like the school itself my education was still one of my top priorities and I wasn't going to let anything get in the way of that. The entire summer after I finally left I got a journal and started to write about how it all made me feel which made me come to the realization that writing is a great outlet for expressing yourself as well as helping you realize a lot of things you wouldn't have ever noticed. After looking back at all these experiences, I've realized that most of these issues have stemmed from a place of insecurity, bias, and ignorance and that I shouldn't take any of it personally. This reflects on the world I inhabit today because now I know not to take things to the heart like I used to because most of the time it's not even about you being the problem people are just struggling with their inner demons and project that onto others when they don't know how to control them.

Everything you were taught and the people you've encountered throughout the years have played a big part in making you the person you are today, school especially plays a huge role in this. Afterall, it is one of the first places that you meet various people and are exposed to different kinds of influences, but what matters at the end of the day is what you do with it and how you let it affect you in the long run. You can either rise above it or let it bury you underground, just remember that it's your life and that at the end of the day you can come back from just about anything if you really put your mind to it. My mother once sent me a quote that said "You're not responsible for the programming you received as a child, but you are 100% responsible for fixing it as an adult" do what you will with that the world is your oyster afterall!