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My entire life I was the skinny shy kid in school. Going through elementary and middle school, I was never really bullied but there were the few kids that make fun of my size and that would lead to us fighting and getting suspended. My brother would always tease me, calling me a little stick or a twig. My brother would always fight with me, sometimes leading into fist fights. My parents were always there to help me, telling me to eat more or go outside and get some exercise. Towards the end of middle school, I joined the volleyball team. I felt a little motivated as I found the sport to be fun. It made me want to get into shape and workout. I started seeing changes in my body and at 14 years old, I weighed in at about 140lbs. After middle school I stopped physical activities altogether and summer vacation was dedicated towards video games. I lost all that I had worked for in just a few weeks. Not leaving the house, not talking to friends…because I made some new ones online.

On the first day of high school, I was extremely worried about how I wouldn’t fit in and how strange this new atmosphere would feel like. And I was right to feel worried, because I didn’t try to converse with anyone in my new classes, I sat alone at the cafeteria, and then my first day of high school was over. Throughout freshman and sophomore year it continued to be like this. Nothing changed about me. I was a nobody, an empty shell just showing up to school everyday with no purpose. Eventually I had a small group of friends, good friends that I’m still in contact with today that I’m grateful for because they dragged me along with them to places I didn’t want to go. Without them I would’ve stayed the same kid that went home and played games for hours on end. I started wanting to go out with them, play sports with them, whatever it was, it was like a glimpse of light shined in my dark vision.

It was now junior year of high school. I was no longer that kid that locked himself in his room all day, but I still had no confidence in myself, in the way I looked. Then one day I found something or rather saw something that truly motivated me to be what I am today. On my way to my next class I saw this huge person walk by me. He had to be at least 6’5” and 250lbs of pure muscle. I took note of which classroom he walked into and waited for class to end to go find him. Class has ended and I immediately went to go find what caught my eye. His name was Michael and this man did not look like he was in high school. I started asking him every question that popped into my head at that moment. “How old are you?” “How tall are you?” “What gym do you go to?” “How do I get started?” The typical “How much do you bench?” After bombarding him with questions he asked me if I wanted to work out with him after school. Me, someone he didn’t know until just 5 minutes ago. I kind of awkwardly said sure but told him I didn’t know what I was doing.

So, after school we went to the gym. I had absolutely no idea what I was doing. I was just a small kid surrounded by all these big dudes. Michael started walking over to the bench, laid down and showed me how to bench. After he was done, he told me to try it. “It’s only 45lbs so it should be easy for you.” It was not easy. 45lbs back then felt like what 235lbs is to me now. To make it worse my form was terrible. It was like I was trying to kill myself by lowering the bar down to my neck rather than my chest. After I was done, we went on to other things like dumbbells and the sort. I went home hungry. Hungry for more knowledge in weightlifting. I googled “how to increase your bench?” Something came up that I had no idea about. Powerlifting. I researched powerlifting and found out people compete with strength on three different lifts, bench, squat, and deadlift (the big three). I had no idea such a thing existed, and I was ready to learn. I studied all the techniques regarding the big three. Everything from retracting my scapula on bench and using leg drive, to breaking at the hips when you squat and driving through your heels and sitting back on the deadlift. I started going to the gym everyday alone. At this point it wasn’t a hobby anymore, it was my passion. I’ve changed. I’m no longer the skinny kid that was afraid to do something because people would judge him. I became the person to go to when a noobie came into the gym looking to get stronger and bigger.

My bench went from 85lbs to 235lbs, squat from 135lbs to 365lbs, and deadlift from 135lbs to 440lbs while weighing in at 167lbs. I’ve changed my body completely for the better. I’m no longer insecure about how skinny or fat I am. I’m eating roughly about 3,200 calories daily now. As for conversing with others, I haven’t really fixed that issue. Not because I’m scared to talk to them but I would rather to not talk to them.