

## Examining Myself Again: Another Reflection

I have grown. As a reader I find that I enjoy findings the undertones of books, the message that is there and not spelled out, I like to hear what the author wanted to convey, it helps me piece together the story so I can give it my full attention. As a writer I still struggle with putting enough emphasis in the places that my pieces need. In the FRE writings I lack substance and I can feel it but I don't know how to change it. In the hospital while I was writing the Macbeth paper I was at a loss. Psychology is an endless pit of information and I didn't know where to put in in my essay, there was so much wrong with the characters and I ended up constructed an essay in a day. The next day I went back, read what I had written and was appalled. I sat down and edited that essay for 7 hours straight, I couldn't stop until I made sure it was analytical. I ended up getting 100% on it and I was very proud. I pushed myself and got the results I wanted, the quality of my writing has greatly improved in my opinion. If not the writing itself, my way of trying to make sure it's analytical has. Critical thinking has surrounded me for the last three months, my doctors rushing to my bed side, asking for symptoms to try and explain why I'm having pain. Constantly changing the doses on my meds to make sure they are not toxic, the nurses timing my pain medication doses down to a T so I never have too much in me. Critical Thinking is what I did when I was writing the Psychoanalysis. I was going over every line individually making sure it built off of the last one, that no sentence was left open ended. That is something I had never done before and hadn't learned until this class. So yes, I have grown.

My effort wavered this trimester. There were days when I would do nothing else but school work and then there were days when I felt breathing was far too hard of a task, and I laid, accepting the reality that has been my life. I often thought about how much easier this would have been if I could attend school. Like a cancer patient, they're able to go to school and go out wherever they want, eat fast food if they want. Post bone marrow transplant patients can't do that, their immune system is too young, and catching a virus of infection is really easy and can be detrimental. I have to stay isolated until July 2nd, and even then my immune system will still be weak. I would complete an entire section of AP Biology notes in one day, take the test and then not even look at the material for the next section until next week. I understood it was putting me behind but sometimes I couldn't try. I could also argue I gave it all I had, I brought my AP Bio book down to the ICU with me, who does that? I have put in a lot of effort this trimester, enough for people to say I inspire them, but not enough for me to feel proud of it.

I can't say I did much intellectual risk taking this trimester, I wasn't given the opportunity to ask many questions or engage with many people during this time. Attempting to learn and do new things I did try. However it wasn't intellectual, it was more physical, pushing my body to it's limit, allowing myself to be in the most vulnerable state possible, without any way to fight off the killers we can't see. I was also weak, from laying in a bed for two months. Physically I realized that my body is resilient, and capable of so much. The body wants to survive, it has all these systems with tons of signals it will send out if something is wrong, to warn you, so you can make the conscious decision to save it. It's amazing to me how that works, that during my stay I received high dose chemotherapy, something foreign to my body, and came back from it. That

during my stay I got up to 130 pounds and at the end I left 114. My body took more risks than my brain if I'm being honest.

I want to read more because of this experience. I didn't have much to do in isolation, and reading passed the time while helping me become a better reader. It helped me want to be more invested in the ideas of the novel I am reading. Due to the time I had I could really focus on the book and understand what I was reading and I am grateful for that, reading benefits a person very much. I'm happy I want to read.

Writing, I have gotten better and I am a real writer. I began writing my book about my life experience with Aplastic Anemia. I also wrote often while in the hospital, it's important to document things, milestones in your life. Once you have moved past it years down the road the days will begin to blur together and some of the worst and best days of your life will feel almost foreign. I would write as soon as something happened, the feelings I have in that moment are real and have depth. Trying to re create them the next day will not leave you with the same originality. Now I will be able to look back and feel again, what I felt those days. Writing makes sense for me, it's expression and words are beautiful.

Myself as a critical thinker, I would say that I have not left the spot I was at when the first trimester ended. I can engage with people easier and I will give my input if I feel it will be a good contribution to the group. Outside of critically thinking about AP Biology and trying to visualize what the book said while taking a test, I think I have improved since the beginning of the year, but my time in the hospital has slowed down the pace at which I was picking up the skill.