

Being diagnosed with ADHD and anxiety in 2022 was not only a validating reality check but a wake up call as well. I recognized the struggles that come with ADHD as well as anxiety are real and I had been experiencing them exceedingly; I wasn't just slow and couldn't keep up with my peers, I now had a concrete explanation for my behavior. I had been diagnosed with an extreme anxiety disorder when I was young, however that was something I always believed I had grown out of; that diagnosis being confirmed as an adult changed my perspective on my mental health. I promised myself I would keep a conscious effort to never let that diagnosis become an excuse but rather an explanation for my thoughts and actions. I refuse to let my mental illness become my identity; but rather use them as tools to better understand myself and others. I would try to do my best to work with ADHD and anxiety, and focus on their strengths as a means of better understanding myself and others in the psychological field rather than let its weaknesses formulate a setback in my own life.

Psychology and human behavior have always been a keen interest of mine. I am passionate about learning and understanding the reasoning and perspective behind people's actions and what caused them. Not only that, but how the root of those beliefs and behaviors can be changed in order to help people live healthier and more grounded lives. I have the ability to notice behavioral patterns that may seem abstract and disconnected to others; but are clear explanations to me defining someone's demeanor. I believe the ability of pattern recognition is linked to ADHD in one capacity; and with the opportunity to study psychology in university, I hope that my experiences with ADHD and anxiety allow for an empathetic and fresh perspective within the scientific realm, to help people better understand themselves, as well to help contribute to the community through scientific research.

Anxiety in its own regard manifests itself in many different ways. Throughout my life I've witnessed it show up in completely new circumstances I hadn't thought possible. As I seemed to get a hold and an understanding of the root of my anxiousness stemming from one problem; it would take on a completely new form and I would have to refocus and relearn all over again as soon as a new conflict in my life appeared. Because anxiety and ADHD are not really things you can grow out of; but rather neurological disabilities, I will always be living and growing alongside them. As I learn more about myself and why, how and what I can do to cope with them, new doors reveal themselves, discerning how I'm able to help others with similar problems. I believe my general interest in psychology has been linked to the desire to better understand myself and my perception of our world. The fascination with psychology promotes a constant inclination with learning and researching; which creates unique opportunities for profound empathy and understanding for others. As I want to help others learn and cope I'm constantly learning to do the same. These disabilities left me with first hand experience in all of their extremes. A neurodivergent brain can easily get overstimulated and be prone to poor time management skills and low frustration tolerance making it difficult to prioritize tasks and daily function. On the contrary, ADHD gives me the ambitious edge of being resilient, being able to

see numerous perspectives as well as being able to hyper focus on a task which can be advantageous in high interest activities. The strengths and weaknesses of these disabilities gives me the deep desire to learn more about myself through psychology, which in turn leads to growth in the overall community. I hope with this program I am able to learn about psychological problems and how they affect thoughts, behaviors, actions, and physical health. With my ambition to learn how to cope with these varying abilities, I'm able to make that knowledge more accessible to others while continuing to personally grow.

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