
I Always Knew I Wanted to Be a Teacher

My name is Ashley Rapata, growing up I always knew I wanted to be a teacher, so I could help children. I thought this was always the reason I was put here, but once I started my freshman year of college I realized I needed to change my dream. I switched my major to sport management this way I could work in sports, while I coach my special hockey team. So, after a year or so of being a special hockey coach, I realized my purposes has always been to be a coach for children with special needs. There are many strengths that I have that are helping me throughout this process but there are also things I need to work on to be fully successful in this field. I was told I needed an IEP when I was in elementary school, the only way I knew how to get through it was to use my strengths. I was always told you can't do this or that, you need to be in special education, but I didn't let that affect me. To get a better understanding of who I am here are some of my biggest strengths motivating myself.

I made sure to always study no matter how hard it got, along with teaching myself when others didn't want to. The one thing I use to motivate myself to this day is I want to prove everyone wrong. My dad always told me "you are different from others with your disability, you work hard and you don't let it affect you". if my dad didn't tell me that I don't think I would have seen that I motivate myself.

Teaching/coaching

Teaching has always been something I'm passionate about. I see this as a strength because it takes a special kind of person to want to teach, especially what I use it for now. After changing my major from teaching I realized I need to take this strength and use it in coaching hockey for children with special needs, as soon as I used my strengths to help me I realized this is my calling.

Hockey and dance

Being someone who is big into sports my two best ones are hockey and dance. This strength has not only helped me be an athlete but it showed my sports is my calling. Once I saw that I took this strength and put it toward getting my degree in sport management. Since I did this I have been way happier and can't wait to start my next chapter in fan development, promotions, or working with children with special needs and sports. While my strengths are essential I do believe I need to focus on improving some of my weaknesses. Although I don't like the word weaknesses, to me is just skills I'm working on perfecting. Everyone has weaknesses and being willing to improve them only makes you a better person and shows how hard you're willing to work. For an example, I will list a few of mine.

Confidence

I have always lacked confidence in myself. I think this was because I always had people telling me I was not good enough. Well, just recently I started to figure out how to improve on this. I saw that I just need to block them all out and believe in myself. Also, I saw that if you make a

mistake its fine it's a learning experience! So, although I don't have this fully perfected I am getting closer and closer each day.

Public speaking

This is an issue with a lot of people. For me, I really don't know when I can get over this. I work my hardest on it but it never seems to work, I still get shaky and fidget a lot. While this is probably my second biggest weakness I try not to let it affect me as much.

Worrying

Worrying is definitely my number one weakness. I worry about everything. I want to be so healthy that any little thing I think I need to go to the doctor for. This affects me a lot because I'm always stressed out about it. Days that I'm not worrying about something I get a lot more done than days I am. I'm constantly working on this weakness because I don't want it affecting me through my career I want to make sure I do my best in what I do later in life. Without my strengths and weaknesses, I don't think I would be the person I am today. All these examples have shaped me to be the person I am right now. They got me to see my purpose in life.

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