

Name

Instructor

Subject

Date

An Experience That Changed My Life

I remembered when I was young and immature; I was facing some serious kind of depression. Youth, these days, often goes through a phase of anxiety and helplessness. Their self-esteem starts getting lower and makes them feel like they are not good enough. I was facing a similar situation. Nothing made me happy. I used to be in a constant state of guilt, restlessness, anxiousness, and sadness. I used to look at others and start getting insecure in a minute. I wanted to be more like them. I wanted to have what they had. I was losing interest in studies. My grades were getting poorer. I stopped hanging out with my friends and family. It was the darkest time of my life.

Teenage depression is increasingly growing in this society. And trust me; it is worse than one can believe. One in every 8 teens deals with depression. Why is it such a taboo to talk about it? It is a mental illness that needs to be cured. I remember my time, my teenage. It was one hell of a devastating experience for me, and my parents did not even know. My friends and family, they did not understand. They were worried about my grades. They were concerned about changing my behavior towards them. But they did not much care about my mental health. The stress I was continually going through, the anxiety that I used to face on a daily basis; these

things did not matter to them. I don't know if it was their lack of knowledge or interest, but it made that time even worse for me.

Parents and all the other adults need to be properly educated about this issue. They should look for signs of depression in their children, especially in teenagers because the chances of them falling into depression are the highest. The statistics about teenage suicides, teenage runaways, drug issues, alcoholism, and pregnancy are rapidly increasing. Depression can not only be life changing, but even life-threatening. It is a mental disorder that needs to be treated through therapy and proper medications. Family members and relatives of a person suffering from depression must be supportive to him at such a crucial time.

People often struggle in their teenage because of the changes being brought into their life. Changes in friendships and relationships, any type of pressure, trauma, death of a family member, parent's separation, any kind of abuse, puberty, sexual issue, being bullied, chemical imbalance or any other kind of problem being faced with a school or at home are some of the major reasons of depression. These physical, social and academic factors can cause a teenager to develop severe depression.

It is the time when you develop a negative perception of everything. You start looking at the world in the most pessimistic way possible. I remember I used to get frustrated, so easily. My attitude towards everything was changing. I felt hopeless. I enjoyed nothing. It felt like all my energy was draining. Even the questions and concern of my family and friends regarding me used to annoy me. It was like the end of the world for me. But then came this day that changed everything. It changed my whole perception about the world, about happiness. It completely transformed me into a new person.

There was this one friend of mine who was familiar with my situation. I even stopped hanging out with him, but he was worried. And he wanted to do something for me. He bought a book for me and gifted it to me on one random day at school. Little did he know that it would change my life and that this book would be my final rescue from anxiety and depression?

The title of the book is “The Power of Now” written by Eckhart Tolle. It changes your views about happiness and contentment. Tolle wants us to stop mourning over our past and worrying about the future and focus on the moment we are living in this moment. Yes, the current moment. He wants us to make the most out of it. To live it fully and to embrace it, that is the only way of endless happiness and constant satisfaction.

To be honest, I did not read that book immediately. It was kept uselessly in one of my bookshelves for a month or two like any random book. And most probably, I would have never read it if I have not heard this guy talking about meditation. A seminar was held in our school where this guy, I don't remember his name, presented a speech on yoga and meditation. The topic instantly attracted me. I knew I wanted it for myself. I was so done with this stress and anxiety that I believe I was waiting for someone to pull me out of it. As if his speech was not enough motivating that the peace and contentment in his voice made me crave for it too. His positivity pushed me, and in that particular moment, I finally decided to get over depression, to treat myself and to care for myself.

On the very same day, I started researching about meditation. I was skimming through my bookshelves when this particular book by Eckhart Tolle, The Power of Now, got my eye. I took it out and started reading it. That was the moment that I can't be thankful enough for. Once I started it, I couldn't stop. It reshaped my personality. It changed my outlook on life, about the

world. It changed the meaning of happiness for me. Every day it taught me something new. Every day I was mesmerized by it. What I needed was only the peace of mind. A little grooming helped me understand what life is. It isn't that bad. We complicate it ourselves. You need to be willing to help yourself. And Tada! Every little thing inspires you. The whole universe gets busy in making you achieve what you want.

Alongside that, meditation helped me a lot. It was a period of struggle too though. Meditation is a kind of yoga that helps you achieve a constant state of peace of mind. It helps you get control over your thoughts. You learn how to focus and concentrate on certain things. Meditation does not only benefit you mentally, but also physically, emotionally, spiritually and psychologically. You train your mind to achieve a certain level where you are in charge of what your mind thinks. You are capable of redirecting thoughts.

Thus, you maintain a healthy outlook, an optimistic approach of thinking and self-discipline. Your sleeping patterns improve and your patience increases. You experience a rapid reduction in your mental or physical stress. Less stress helps you get out of depression and anxiety. It helps you get control over your emotions. It helps you grow into a better and much positive person. It lets you understand what is best for yourself. Along with all that, it also increases your memory. All these benefits amused me, and thus, I started my journey of meditation.

It was not that easy from the start. Meditation requires practice and people suffering from depression often face consistency issues. But I knew I had to do it. It was the only way. Plus the Tolle's book did not let me give up. It kept me determined. You always need something that keeps you motivated. 'The power of now' played that role for me. I failed at it in the beginning.

For someone like me who used to question every single thing in life and who used to get insecure so easily, it was a big step down. And trust me; it wasn't easy to get up again. But meditation isn't a game of one or two days. It takes time, and you got to be easy on yourself in the beginning. Start with the basics and with determination and hard work; one can master this amazing skill.

Gradually, I stopped worrying about immediate results and started to connect with the process itself. I started connecting with my mind and thoughts and begin to get rid of all the negativity and unwanted garbage that was present in my brain. You have to stop focusing on the stress and the need to get rid of it. Just take it lightly as a regular feeling and start focusing on your present moment. That is the key. It helps you focus on chasing your dreams, setting daily goals and helps you to stop thinking about things that are unimportant and sometimes does not even exist. The meaning of success changed for me. A sense of permanent contentment was building inside me. To be honest, it also scared me at one point because the thirst to succeed was vanishing out of me. I started finding happiness in what I already have. The greediness, the hunger for wealth and power and the materialistic world; it all started to disappear. I was this new and different person then who held great gratitude for all the good things happening in his life. I started appreciating the smaller things, the important ones actually. I started looking at the world with a whole new and positive perspective.

Meditation was a life-changing experience for me. It increased my self-confidence and self-esteem. I don't bother about the things and people who do not matter now. It isn't easy to invoke me now. I react less. I worry less. It has helped me take my personality up a notch. I am the master of my happiness and contentment now.