

Positivity

Smiling. Positivity. *Smiling*. We do it a lot less than we think we do, but luckily my mom was always there to remind me. It's woven into the fabric of my family; it's authentic to us because no other family smiles the same way we do. It is a living being in itself, the corners of our mouths tipping up almost the moment we wake up, the moment we know that we are breathing, living. We smile because we are alive and well, a conspicuous gesture of positivity and its yet deeper, sadder meanings.

Positivity is a powerful foundation. Searching for beauty in life is what helps me out of bed every day. Knowing and believing that I am fortunate enough to have a roof over my head and all the food, money, and water I need is a blessing that motivates me to unravel all the challenges that life attempts to tangle me up in. This world can be a painful place, so being positive about the littlest things is vital for my mental health, and it assures me when I am concerned about anything that I come across that their conditions will eventually improve.

You could not deny that the troubling present haunting us as I speak brought formidable negativity to the pleasant world we call home. Positivity was how my parents and I transitioned as smoothly as possible from my mom leaving at 7:29 AM and dropping me off at school and then going to her part time job, my dad waking up early in the morning to head to his full time one to waking up later and knowing that we would stare at screens and then finish our distance learning and working routines for the day. I chose to take the path of staying in a bright mood because I knew that my family and I were prepared, and my school worked hard to and succeeded at bringing all students back to school. At least we were alive! Many people have succumbed to the Coronavirus. Therefore, we kept on smiling because all the world's largest issues right now had not drastically affected us, and that was *such* a blessing. The year, 2020,

passed by just as fast as any other year because my family and I stayed positive. Well, my dad was almost there. He still randomly starts talking about how worried he is about my mom and me.

You all might be wondering how this ray of positivity became this shining sun, something that almost the entire family is inspired by and lives by. When my mom was younger, her older sister, Fanny, had fallen into depression, and Fanny sometimes couldn't even get out of bed. Once she passed away, my mom's dad began to follow in Fanny's depressed tracks, and he eventually died of colon cancer because he was unwilling to go to many places during his depression, sitting in darkness at home, even when the lights were on, unwilling to go to the doctor's office to ascertain the reason behind his declining physical health. Ever since those two heartbreaking deaths, my mom and her younger sister knew that the only thing they could do was to stay positive. They decided that this black hole of emptiness, loneliness and darkness swallowed many victims; they decided this depression should not even begin to form in a human. It claimed lives, and they saw that up close... twice.

Positivity means a lot to my family and me. There is still so much hope for all the inhabitants of Earth. Positivity and smiling: there is nothing better, and there is *nothing* stronger, outshining negativity, beginning as a ray but bursting into a sun once it inspires enough people.

I'd love to thank my mom for instilling this unbeatable ray of positivity in me. I have no words to explain how far it got me. Now a flaming, spectacular sun, the positivity within our family continues to shine. Thank you.