

The person who has  
had great influence in  
my life essay



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There's always a time in one's life, when a hero comes along. Somebody who has inspired you, and helped you learn what life is about. I remember it as if it was yesterday, surprisingly, as my state of mind on that cold December night can be described only of numbness and confusion. It was around eight o'clock p. m. when my mother received a phone call from her brother-in-law, who told her that her sister had just recently been admitted into the hospital after experiencing difficulty breathing and chest pain. When my aunt was diagnosed with coronary artery disease, my family became worried.

A physician had informed us that my aunt would need a Coronary Artery Bypass Grafting and she needed surgery immediately. While my aunt spent her time in the hospital with special care, my cousin Mark, who is mentally disabled, spent time with our family. Mark was seventeen at the time, two years older than I was, and had been born with severe mental disorders, which created a wide range of social and physical obstacles for him throughout every day life. He never had any true friends because no one could relate to him, and because he was so different from everyone else.

I must admit that first I was filled with a great deal of uncertainty as to how much of a burden my cousin would bring on my family, and looking back it saddens me to see the ignorance I once displayed. I had passed judgement on him, and proceeded to assume that the time I was about to be forced to spend with him was bound to seem like an eternity. Over the two weeks that Mark lived with my family, I probably learned more about life and its meanings than I ever did before. Thinking back, I took everything in daily life for granted. I never even thought about being able to do things like walk, brush my teeth, or go to the bathroom on my own.

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Now I see how lucky I am to be able to do these things independently. Mark was seventeen, and learning on a nine-year-old level. Although his learning ability was exceptionally slower than most, he could still, like the rest of his classmates, learn. He showed an ambition to love life and now I have that feeling. Mark is my hero, for his disability, and my chance to have been able to live with him for two weeks, has forever changed my perspective on life. Situations such as this seem lifethreatening when you're fifteen, and it's amazing how in two years perspective on an event or time period can change so profoundly.