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cruz essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Short film, photos, e-mails and messages are media vehicles to keep a record of a moment, event or conversation. The 21st century, a time when ephemeral is the word in vogue, we try our best to make eternal the moment we are living. The constant obsession about the past is understandable; after all, memories cannot be changed, stolen from you or erased. Passing over and over a good moment that you have been through can be, definitely more effective than a Prozac box to bring somebody up. However, as any medicine, if in excess or in the wrong dosage it could have adverse effects. E. B. White in his essay, “once More to the Lake” – which talks about memories, is filled with nostalgic since the first paragraph, showing to the reader how much his boyhood moments meant to him. When he comes back to the lake with his own child, his memories with his father there starts to come livelier. In that journey the reader is tripped by indirect flashbacks, when the author has almost no longer control to distinguish what is present and what is the reality in almost a schizophrenic scene. He shows an incredible emotional and psychological link to that specific place: the lake. Even though White was immerse in nostalgia he does go back to reality in the end of his essay displaying a beautiful meeting between reality and memories, present and past. This technic of converting two different realities/times was also used by Joan Didion in her essay “On Going Home”. Didion’s first statement is related to static, a house full of dust, immutable. Her memories are a way of preservation among a world of constant changes. Her strong connection to her premarital life is an attempted to remain in her “old” life. She even tries to convince the reader that her feeling of pain about leaving home is shared by a whole generation – her own generation.

Obsessions as Didion's, in most of the cases, are barrier that keep somebody from going forward. Being bent to the past can keep a person from exploring new opportunities. I am not denying that is hard to get away from emotive chains, I can tell in first person how I am trapped in mine. I realized my memories had a big role in my head when I moved to Argentina to live with "strangers".

During volunteer work time my memories were my security my anchor to stay strong. It was the thing that calmed me at night when I was trying to sleep among my homesickness' tears. The thought of my sister's laugh or my Mom's perfume gave me strength to wake up for the first two months. Of course, after a while, the memories which once were only about Brazil started to mixing with those recent ones of beautiful sunsets in the Argentinian fields or with those of late dinner in a Friday night with my new friends. These examples are positives, but when a simple memory of a place or situation holds you from keeping going in life? Stressing situations and failure should not be allowed to have a spot in "memory's collection" in our brain. Some people have the amazing ability to turn rough situation into a jump step to greater things. Unfortunately I am not one of them nor was Didion when she had to return to her house.

The intimacy with her family brought by seeing each other closely led her to a particular acting mode, one which she was not proud of or truly happy, one she thought she had left behind a while ago. I feel related to her about it. I am trying to discover myself, set my own values. I am trying to find out the lenses I will use to see the reality that surrounds me but when I am with my family I cannot distinguish what are my thoughts and what is my family's.

Joan Didion had to get back to her house to get caught in this trap, for me it is not hard, a skype call is enough for me to put into question my brand new attitudes and decisions. The past can haunt you in unbelievable ways. It can define choices, guide paths and change points of view. Being aware of it makes people more careful and thoughtful. Didion and White's perspective about this subject are different.

The first brings her memories showing a strong dependent and almost depressing link about it; White has a lighter approach. He shows us how the memories of a more distant past (when compared to Didion's) can bring joy to the present. The outcome of the use of memories it is up to each one of us. Memories can be the joy or the destruction in life; it can be a soft painkiller or a monster under the bed. I have an idiosyncratic way to outlook it. I like to think that memories are not addictive unbreakable emotional tides. Memories are the composition of a personal scrapbook about life with a timeline of important events either bad or good.