
Who I Was, Who I Am: College Admission Essay Sample

A smile spread on my face even before my feet touched the ground as I landed my flip and saluted the judge. I had just finished competing at the last meet of my first gymnastics season with Irvington High School, and my routines had all gone well. But I was completely blown away when I heard the words, “And your 1st place Varsity All-Around MVAL Champion is. . . Michelle Brier.”

This accomplishment in its own was an incredible feat. As a freshman, I had the honor of competing on the varsity gymnastics team and making it to the MVAL championships, although I definitely was not expecting to win first place. However, recent events in my life gave the achievement much more meaning to me.

In the year leading up to this final competition, I had gone through the most difficult period of my life as I struggled with anorexia. I had spiraled lower and lower until I woke up one morning and found myself in a hospital bed with wires stuck to my torso and a heart rate monitor beeping next to me. Laying in that bed, I recalled months of sitting in a therapist’s office, always silent; I recalled the final weeks of 8th grade that I had missed and the moment my gymnastics coach told my parents that I was too sick to practice; I recalled the weekly, then semi-weekly, doctor visits to check my vitals, and finally the visit that resulted in me arriving at the hospital. Confined in that hospital room, I realized that it was time for me to pick myself up.

It took every ounce of strength, willpower, and determination I had to recover. I had to swallow my pride and embrace my failures. Every day was a struggle, but slowly I fought for my life back. During the summer, as my freshman year of high school approached and with it, the high school gymnastics season, I begged my parents to let me participate in gymnastics again. The moment they and the doctors conceded was a shining milestone in my ascent back to my normal life.

When I stepped up onto that 1st place pedestal and looked into my parents’ proud eyes, I knew I had made it. That moment, in my mind, is the point when I successfully overcame anorexia. Getting to that point required not only physical and mental strength at gymnastics practices but also the tenacity and drive it took to pull my life back together. The journey I embarked on to get to that 1st place stand made me a tougher, more experienced person, and the determination and strength I built during that time is a large part of who I am today.

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