**Significant Event Lifeline**

1. The year 2007 was very difficult for my family. In January, my Oma and Opa on my mom’s side passed away within one week of each other. In December of that very same year, my dad’s father died. This was a huge blow for my entire family, and it completely altered our family dynamics. Although my mom was a stay-at-home mom, she became depressed and stayed in her room all day long. My dad took on all of her responsibilities, including cooking, cleaning, and taking care of my siblings and I. The deaths of my grandparents was absolutely devastating for me. However, all of these losses greatly developed me as an individual. I came to understand what true loss and heartache was, I learned how to deal with grief, I had to grow up quickly and accept more responsibility in my family, and I was better able to decide what was truly significant in life. Throughout my life, I never felt as much sorrow as when my grandparents died, so I never allowed something that upset me to become an important event. This has helped me focus on not only the positive aspects of my life, but also on the positive aspects of the world and people around me. I believe that the early death of my grandparents aided me in becoming the very mature, optimistic, and caring person that I am today.
2. Ever since I was twelve years old, I’ve had a job. I first started working at a barn to pay for my own riding lessons and a lease on a very old, grumpy, and stubborn horse. Eventually I was able to save up enough money to begin searching the internet for my own horse, which I began during the summer before I turned sixteen. The constant checking for new ads, emailing owners, and frustration with my budget taught me how to be patient and thorough. Finally I came across a horse that was not only in my price range, but also looked decent. I immediately decided he was perfect for me, even though I had slight doubts about what we would be able to do together. I brought him home, and immediately found myself swamped by the constant responsibility of ownership. I had to calculate my income to create a new budget, purchase food, pay for vet bills, set farrier appointments, and go out to the barn every day. Everything about this experience was difficult and tiring, but I learned plenty about responsibility and the hardships of owning a horse, including the realization that this horse and I just didn’t pair up well. I still loved this horse, and I’ll always remember how he helped me grow and kept me out of the trouble other teenagers my age were getting into.
3. My brother and sister are twins, and they are two years older than me. For some reason, they decided to go to the exact same college. I honestly didn’t care where they went, as long as it was AWAY! I was so excited to become an only child and have quality time with both of my parents. While I did enjoy the time I got without my siblings, I also came to value my brother and sister much, much more. Not only did I have to take up the slack in chores, but I also had to take the full brunt of my mom’s and dad’s frustrations. I missed being able to talk to my siblings, complain with them, and have random, surprise outings with them. This experience was far from negative though, because I placed a greater worth on time with both my parents and time with my siblings. I also developed a deeper relationship with my mother. Ever since she became depressed and distanced herself from the family, we’d had a non-existent relationship. When I was forced to spend more time with her due to the absence of my brother and sister, my mom and I worked on becoming closer, of which I will be forever grateful, except for the fact that I now miss her.
4. For as long as I can remember, my goal in horseback riding was to Event. In Eventing, a horse and rider combination compete in Dressage (patterned riding), Stadium Jumping, and Cross Country in a single day. Each stage is scored, and then the scores are combined to find the overall champion. Just the idea of one day Eventing completely excited me. I worked to pay off my lessons, and I practiced riding when I didn’t have lessons. I sold my first horse and bought another that I knew I could one day Event on. I even changed trainers in order to better my chances of reaching my goal. After I turned seventeen, I did just that. It was literally the perfect day, and my horse behaved relatively well. I know I made some mistakes, but in the end, what mattered most was that I finally reached my goal. Although I placed very, very last, I thoroughly enjoyed myself. I also learned several lessons. I found that my horse behaved better when I was calm and relaxed, and I learned I could best achieve calmness and relaxation through breathing exercises and concentration. I also learned exactly how eventing shows operated, and other riders taught me riding techniques and tricks to help me succeed in the competitions themselves. On this day, I was extremely proud of my horse, myself, and my abilities. I became a much more confident person and rider after my first Eventing competition. It was probably the best day of my life.
5. On Sunday, June 8th, my mother surprised us by bringing home a pregnant Labrador. She had been fostering dogs on and off for a shelter called Reno Ranch for over a year now, but Daisy was different. Daisy gave birth two days after she arrived. At first, I was very closed off to the whole situation, as we already owned four dogs, two cats, and a bird. I also knew my mom would get crazy attached to each and every one of the puppies. Not only that, but the thought of watching a dog giving birth absolutely disgusted me. Despite my initial stubbornness to helping my mom with the dog and puppies, I eventually became their primary care-taker. I was even present for the birth of all but the very first of eight puppies. I quickly became extremely attached to the tiny creatures, and spent much of my days sitting, playing, and cuddling with the puppies. The whole nine weeks of raising the puppies gave me a tiny insight into what it’s like to be a parent. I was constantly worrying about the puppies and checking in on them. I scolded them when the argued or made a mess. Even when they hurt me or frustrated me, I knew I still adored them. Now that they’re gone, I miss them like crazy. Through this experience I became even closer with my mom and more open-minded to new experiences. I also have a new appreciation for parents. It’s extremely hard work raising eight puppies for nine weeks, so I can barely imagine what raising a child for eighteen years would be like. I am, however, much more excited to raise a child of my own.
6. Although I just started college here at the University of Cincinnati, it has already impacted my life an incredible amount. So far, I’ve left the life I’ve known nine and a half hours away to meet over forty thousand new people I never even knew existed until now. I attended the Honor’s Welcome Retreat, and learned what it took to be a better person, leader, and Honor’s student. I’ve sat through several classes, and am developing more organizational and time management skills. I’m a part of four clubs, and I even already have a job. I can feel myself changing every day that I’m here. This is also my time for a fresh start so that I can become the person I want to be without anyone knowing who I used to be. I’m also finally working towards the career I want to be in for the rest of my life. Coming to the University of Cincinnati is already a life changing event, I know it will probably have the biggest impact on the person I turn out to be.