



Hannah Benneche

16 Year Old Group

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Jones Beach Junior Lifeguard: Three Impacts

Sunday Drives:

Sunday summer mornings begin with my dad gently waking me up from a deep slumber as the scent of sweet morning dew fills the house. A routine that has been repeated for four years. Routines eventually turn into habits, and habits eventually turn into comfort. My dad has been repeating this routine for four years, which soon turned into a habit that is now our comfort. We drive together as the sun reaches its rising peak. In the passenger seat I look out my window and watch as the sun shines through the sea grass that breeze back and forth along the parkway. My dad knows how I like to sometimes sit in silence, the windows down, the misty ocean air blowing in our face. Silence is a sensation that can only be tolerated between two people that are grounded and comfortable with their relationship. My dad and I have created a bond that is unbreakable. Junior Lifeguard has given my dad and I another chapter to our unbreakable bond. From ages two to seven waking up early smelling the scent of Crayola crayons and creating drawings that are later put in the refrigerator, to opening cabinets, collecting bowls and spoons, measuring flour and oil to make little morning treats, to coffee and chocolate milk in the mornings, to waking up and talking about anything and everything, to twelve to sixteen driving every Sunday to junior lifeguard. Junior lifeguard is its own chapter in me and my dad's story. It has become our routine, which has become a habit, which is now our comfort.

Kindness:

The power of one action taken by one human being can change another forever. Two years ago I remember the image of the waves crystal clear in my mind. Two words came to mind when I saw the waves. Rough and impossible to tackle. I remember entering the water with my toes curled, my mind racing through dark scenarios, nervousness and anxiety building up my chest causing my heart to race. I stopped when the water reached my mid-thigh and began to turn around. I was letting my fear get in my way. My fear was causing me to give up. Little did I know there was one person who was about to change my fear into comfort. I remember being led back into

the water by my coach. I remember how he guided me through the waves making me feel more comfortable after every one. Making it back to shore together we continued with the rest of the morning. I remember feeling stunned and thankful at the same time. Those are two wonderful feelings placed together. The morning came to an end and I was still feeling so fortunate enough to have a coach that recognized a weakness in a child and was determined to change that weakness into strength. The only thing that came to my mind was to thank this kind person for changing the way I looked at the ocean forever. Walking my way up to greet my dad I saw my coach. I stopped him and thanked him for helping me tackle the waves. Of course saying you're welcome and being extremely enthusiastic and kind. Kindness is something very rare to find in this generation. When you come across a person who is kindhearted it's like discovering a precious gemstone in rubble. Kindness is simple yet extravagant. When I received a personal gift from my coach, I was speechless, surprised, taken aback by the whole moment. But then I realized what comes around goes around. Kindness is something that comes around and goes around. It is a never ending cycle. Kindness is the gift that keeps giving. Whether it's going out of your way to make someone feel strong or simply thanking them for their wonderful help each person; the person giving the help and the person receiving the help feels equally as happy. There is never a day that I do not think about those two moments. It brings me pure bliss and inspiration. One simple action taken by one extraordinary lifeguard and coach created a permanent footprint on my heart forever.

The beach and its features:

The beach has always been my place of meditation. A place where I can take a deep breath and soothe any harsh emotions that rumble within me. The features of the beach should be cherished and learned from. For example place your bare feet on the sand. Feel as your feet brush through the sand like a paintbrush on a canvas, feel how your feet sway in the ocean like the way lyrics sway through a sweet song. Now lie on your back and feel the way the sand clings to your body like a baby clings to its mother's arms. Float in the ocean and feel the way the ripples of the waves tickle your body, you can sense how the ocean makes you feel worryless and light as it caresses you in its greatest depths. Let the ocean breeze consume you and meditate by the sound of the waves it's a sacred place that we must be intimate with to understand.