

We all have that one thing that we wish we could change about ourselves. For me it's always been my height. I'm a solid 5 foot 2.5 inches. Yes that half an inch matters; it makes me taller than my mom. When I got to middle school and everyone got their growth spurts and passed me in height I always used to wish that I was taller, that I would get a growth spurt. On the bright side I've never had any growing pains. But, I also haven't grown since then. One day I was at Disneyland with my best friend and my sister and her best friend and we all wanted to go in a bounce house. Yes a bounce house. Since it was for younger kids there was a height maximum. I was about half an inch too tall and the only one who couldn't go in. I pouted over to my dad and told him I had been wishing very hard to be taller and now I was wishing that I was shorter so that I could go in with them. He looked at me and said "be careful what you wish for". It's ironic that my grownup epiphany happened at Disneyland when I was sad that I was unable to go in a bounce house, but at this moment I realized the grass is not always greener on the other side.

There are many times in our life where events occur and we have no control over them. These experiences can blindsides you, but how you choose to handle them defines you. One such event was when I broke my foot my sophomore year of high school. During soccer tryouts I started to get a terrible pain in my foot, but I was told that there was no way it could be broken because that would be too much pain for anyone to walk on, let alone play soccer on. After three more days of sucking it up, I finally went to get xrays and it turns out that one of the bones in my foot was split completely in half. I was very upset at first. Six weeks seemed like an awfully long time to watch my friends play as I sat on the side line. The grass truly was greener on the other side. Well unless it was a home game, we played on the outfield of a dead softball field. Eventually I came to look at this as a time to get stronger and healthier. But, (dun dun dun dun) when, I went back for my final check up my foot had not healed at all. It turns out that both of my feet have bones that are permanently separated. In one moment my life was completely flipped around. I have been playing soccer since I was five years old and it has become a huge part of identity, When someone asks me what I like to do my first response is always soccer. I felt like my identity had been taken away. Even though my

feet always feel like they're fractured I still play soccer and work out. I'm not supposed to wear heels, so if you see me wobbling in them let's blame it on that. This injury made become a better and more determined player and the mentally and physically strong person I am today. As Big Sean told us in *As Long As You Love Me* "the grass ain't greener on the other side it's green where you water it". Our weaknesses are just hidden strengths. From my bounce house epiphany I learned that it is no use wishing something else happened. All that matters is how you cope with it. And there is a positive side or silver lining to everything.

Although we have learned that the "grass is greener where you water it", humans are innately curious and we are always looking to peek at the other side. It's pandora's box. My parents used to call me curious Kaitlin because I was constantly asking questions. Why is the sky blue? Why don't all people have money? Why can't I have a puppy? One day I was a little bit too curious and quite hungry and when my ball went over the fence and into my neighbors yard I saw a mushroom and I picked it out of the yard and ate it. It turns out it was poisonous and it took a lot of ipecac too get it all out. I am terrified of mushrooms to this day. Sometimes, the grass is literally not greener on the other side and it may have poisonous mushrooms. But, what I learned here is that it is important to be curious and to want to learn, but it is also important to be cautious with your actions.

All of these moments in my life where I have faced adversity have made me the strong, curious, cautious, and confident person I am today. None of these were particularly happy stories, but the endings are always up to you. There are some things in life that cannot be changed. One's experiences, culture, parents, background, class, height, race, etc. But, these things have make you who you are.

So don't forget to water the grass where you stand. Although you may get a fine since we're supposed to be conserving water in this drought.