

I have a lot of different influences when it comes to my direction in life, and where I am at now. The influences that have shaped my life direction the most are sports, coaches, living in a close-knit community, and not growing up with the best role models, but learning from their good and bad traits. All of these aspects have affected who I am today and where I will be in the future.

First, I want to talk about how my coaches from wrestling, cross country, and basketball have influenced me. All of these sports test you mentally as much as they test you physically, and mental strength is something I struggled with for a long time. My coaches taught me discipline in these sports, and showed me that they cared and believed in me. I would often struggle with self-confidence and low-esteem, but my coaches were always there to pick me back up and support me when I needed it the most. With their guidance, I have been able to personally grow the characteristics of a leader and I look forward to bringing the same sort of support and encouragement that I received to others throughout my life.

Where I was raised has probably had the biggest impact on who I am. It's hard to explain what it's like to grow up in such a small, rural, isolated, close-knit community. While small towns have their strengths and weaknesses I believe it has had a huge benefit to my life. In small communities like mine, we all care for one another and can always be there in times of need. This has shaped how I view people and care for them, even the ones I don't know. This is a part of my decision to work in the medical field, growing up and experiencing what it's like to always take care of each other, no matter who they are to you.

I grew up around a lot of chaos, with a majority of the adults around me struggling with substance abuse. Although they have mostly turned it around, experiencing this while growing up showed me what not to do. It instilled a deep determination inside of me to do better than the

people that raised me. While I learned from their bad choices, but I also learned from their good. I learned that allowing substances in my life is something that I never want to do, because I have experienced the harm that it can cause. It has helped me prioritize stability and being a responsible role model for others. Over the last few years of watching them transform their lives I have also learned a lot about strength, resilience, and forgiveness.

Everything and everyone, good and bad, around me has influenced my direction in life. I am proud and grateful that I have been able to take the bad things around me and learn from them instead of adopt them. I am eternally grateful for all of the good and the way I have been able to learn the kind of person I can be and that I want to be. Between a chaotic and unstable childhood, a strong close-knit community, and coaches who truly invested in me, I believe that I have all the right tools to be successful through my next steps in life and lead a life I am proud of.