

Sean Powers

The greatest gift I have received in life, is life itself. There have been many aspects and events throughout my life that have shaped who I am today. My love for music, predominantly hip hop, the plethora of deaths of those who were and still are important to me, and of course the many people and friends I have surrounded myself with over the years. However, none of these things have impacted me more than being diagnosed with cancer when I was four years old. This was probably the best and the worst thing that has ever happened to me. When I was diagnosed, I was too young to understand what was happening to me. But now that I am older (seventeen), I have started to realize the profound impact this had on my life. I probably lost close to three years of a normal childhood as I went through this part of my life's journey. I was in a bed in the hospital, for a lot of that time. I was not able to go swimming or play sports like other kids. Instead, while in the hospital, I was surrounded by people, mostly doctors and nurses, that were nowhere close to my age. I was either asleep, playing video games, or watching the Disney channel. When I was in school, I had to wear a mask and sit away from my classmates in the back of the room due to my body's weaknesses. My teachers at the time were very understanding and supportive, and without some of them, I would have never been able to get through my classes. I made a lot of my life long friends at this time. Most of the other kids were always friendly, kind of like they were obligated to be that way, but there were also the kids that saw me as an easy target. As I look back at this, I think this is where I started to understand people. Due to my ailments, I was not able to be around people my age all that much. Adults dominated my life. Growing up, I was always told how mature I acted for someone so young. Now that I look back on it, it was probably the people that I was around that helped me to acquire that maturity. As I continued to undergo treatment, my parents and I were informed of some of the "benefits" that were available to children with life threatening illnesses. These benefits introduced me to some of the best friends and kindest people I have ever made or met. I would go to camps that were specifically for children who were immediately affected by cancer. Whether they had it or one of their siblings did, it was really a place you felt like a regular kid again. These times were really a big help for my self-esteem and my emotions. I met a few people at these camps that have become some

of the best friends I have. Now that I am older, I am a counselor at one of these camps. From the years that I was being treated, to the years I was just going in for check ups, there was always somebody that was helping me out or trying to make me feel comfortable. I ended up losing more than a few of them to various illnesses or unexpected complications. These people are the ones that not only have had a major impact on me as a person, but the ones that will ultimately influence my decisions for my future. I am not saying that I would like to be a doctor or even in the field of medicine, but I do want to be in a field where I could not only help someone, but also make an impact on them. I would like a career where I could have financial stability, but I think being happy and making others happy is more important. This is why I am considering both psychology and education as careers. I figure these are two ways that I could definitely make a positive difference in some person's life. I would also like to put my writing to use and put out a CD sometime before I start my life out in the real world. If I could reach someone through my words, that would complete one of my life's goals. My whole life people have given me so much, whether it be their time, support, medical knowledge, or simply their friendship. I would just like to do something where I could give back, or at least attempt to give back, all that has been give to me.