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Please describe the personal achievement of which you are most proud.

Me and my mother sitting in front of the fireplace at night was always the worst part of my day. Every time my eight year old self got my list of ten words I needed to memorize by the end of the week for the test, I knew it was coming. Writing and reading was always hard for me. Nothing ever clicked. In my mind the words and letters just felt all jumbled and twisted. The weekly spelling test was a fantastic demonstration of my struggle. While other kids just glanced at the list of words unbothered by them, I glared at them in horror. The thought of spelling ten, five letter words terrified me more than anything else. No matter how hard I tried I could never accomplish these seemingly easy tasks like the other kids. So while my classmates didn't stress about the dreaded test, I studied. Every night my mom, a whiteboard and me, sat in front of the fireplace to tackle the most impossible task imaginable, my ten word spelling test. These tests underlined every weakness I had when it came to school. They showcased the missing pieces in my brain. These nights were filled with tears and the constant wiping away of my jumbled misspelled words from the white board. The same sequence repeated almost every night, write, wrong, wipe, repeat. This same torturous pattern repeated over and over again until it was past my bedtime or I was too tired from crying to continue. These nights were some of the hardest for 8 year old me because they portrayed the differences between me and my fellow classmates. Every day in school felt like a losing battle between me and words, but what I couldn't understand was why no one else seemed to be having the same battle as me. Why was school such a struggle for me but not for them?

This question riddled my mind everyday, confusing and frustrating me. This question made me even more determined to prove that I was capable of the same things everyone else was. I knew that I didn't want to fail and that I wanted to succeed like everyone else. This mindset encouraged me to try hard with my moms and I's study sessions. and eventually through many hours of work and tears I was able to break the constant sequence and started getting the words right. This work ethic and determination led to my first 100% on a spelling test. That's when I truly felt accomplished and proud of my achievements, to me this was a massive milestone that I didn't think was possible. While having dyslexia was rough in my early years, this work ethic that I had developed young just set me up for success in the future. I went into middle school and highschool with the realization that It wasn't an option to put in as much effort as the other kids and just expect A's. I came to the realization that to succeed I needed to try twice as hard as everyone else. Even though I have fought to get to the place I am today where I do well in advanced English classes and can read books for fun and not struggle to keep the words unjumbled, there will never be a time where I can stop putting in the work. While I was fortunate enough to have gone to a specialized school focused on teaching kids with dyslexia how to read and write using techniques that are proven to help. It doesn't mean that I no longer have dyslexia,

it means that I now have the tools to make reading and writing attainable. I have been very privileged throughout my life but my privilege doesn't take away from my struggle. I was very fortunate in my life to have a caring family who were able to put me in a specialized school that allowed me to be able to achieve success. My dyslexia was a struggle and still is but all the work payed off because being able to succeed in school and read books for fun is the achievement that I am most proud of.