To be Young, GIfted and a McDonald

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â The Importance of Writing About meâ

To most people in the world Iâ m just another California valley girl. Even if thatâ s true I have more to me than just that. The things Iâ ve been through in my life are some things that people fear will happen to them. Yes, my parents are divorced, Iâ m adopted, Iâ ve broken bones, I have braces and Iâ ve lost so many people that were close to me.

Though many people donâ t know I even exist I have a lot of messages that one day the world will thank me for. Like my friend Alex Paulin says â Everyone has a place in this world, even if people tell you different.â Alex and I have similar believes. I believe that everyone does have a place in this even if itâ s small. Everyone teaches us something new, which makes our very world go â round.

Iâ ve taught many people the value of friendship and the value of communication. Iâ ve lost so many friends since grade school. Junior high and high changes every single one of us. We make new friends and do new things that our old friends might not like. One of my very close friends Steven Dutcher went into the military after he got out of high school, and I didnâ t talk to him or see him for about 5 years. One day I was walking around and I saw him. We were so excited and now I talk to him almost every day since he lives in New York.

The one thing I wish the world or at least the people who I met in life will take from me is that, even on the worst day of your life there is always someone else having a day worse than yours. I know everyone has had one of those days when everything that could go wrong does go wrong. These are the days when you want to just curl up with a book and stay home, well you canâ t! Somewhere in the world someone else is having a day that makes your day look like you won the lottery. I want people to take that those two pieces of advice from me when I die.

Itâ s good to write about myself because it makes me feel good about the things I have to say and the experiences Iâ ve had. The things I have to say are important and when I write about myself I get to express my opinion about myself and the other topics that relate to me as a person.

â Chico California is where Iâ m atâ

The one place that I could always count on for being totally lame yet the only place in the world I couldnâ t be without was probably Chico. As a child Chico was the place to be, even if I hate it now it was still a great town to grow up in and it still is.

When I was little I would always move from house to house. I probably moved 6 or 7 times in 12 years! Every house I moved to my neighbor was a teacher at one point or another! I was probably the smartest kid on the block because of that. Through out the years I learned important life lessons. Such as â Donâ t go to downtown Chico when collage kids are here.â

I thought the town of Chico never really influenced me. I think its lame and I wish I was in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, or in Girdwood, Alaska. Even though I couldnâ t think of anyways it influenced me my brother did. He told me all things Iâ ve done and all of the things that might have influenced me and he was right. Chico influenced my choice in music, my choice in lifestyle, my choice in friends, the places I went, the things I did, the sports I played and the risks I took. Chico influenced the way I live my life today. The poor choices it influenced and the good ones it was the key factor in carving my life. I learned never to go to farmers market or downtown Chico at night during the school year. I learned to enjoy summers here even if itâ s hot. Not once could I go on vacation and not want to be back in Chico, but when I got home I hated it again!

If there was one big thing Chico helped influenced it would probably be how to enjoy the small things. Chico was never a big place and most people only know of it because of Chico State, but thatâ s the beauty of this town. The love and affection everyone has for each other and being able to go somewhere and knowing half the people there, or in my dadâ s case everyone. I love how you could be in an empty room but still have

someone there for you when you need them. All-in-all the town of Chico really did influence me, even if I didnâ t realize it and itâ ll keep influencing me until I leave and I bet even then itâ ll always be there for me.

â Do we Really Relate Emotionally?â

Growing up in a big loving family was amazing! You always had someone to hug and someone to count on. The McDonald family is like a blob of love and affection. There was always a â helloâ a â goodbyeâ and of course an â I love youâ during every conversation. We rarely had an â I hate youâ or an â I donâ t love you anymore.â

Growing up with all this love made me a loving caring person. I learned to tolerate and love people even if they get on my nerves. When there is ever anything wrong with someone in our family everyone senses it. Itâ s kind of like we have a 6th sense. Never in my life have I ever heard my grandpa say the words â I hate you.â Heâ s probably the most loving person youâ ll ever meet. He is down-to-earth and doesnâ t care about any of the stupid stuff people care about these days. Sometimes I wish I was exactly like him! My cousin Maddie and I are the black sheep of the family. We only relate to each other. All the drama we go through and all the emotions that run through us. The confusing life we all live today are all created by the emotions that we have. All-in-all my family relates to me pretty well. Plus one of us always has a smiley on our faces.

â From Being the Baby to Becoming a Role Modelâ

As a child growing up I was the baby of the family. For twelve long years I was the shrimp. I had an older brother who always picked on me. I learned to defend myself from my brother DJ at a young age. Being the youngest out of all my close cousins meant I was the â human chew toyâ as they called it. Iâ d be picked on everyday and they made me do things I shouldnâ t have done.

When I was little I always thought my cousin Maddie and I were going to be the youngest out of our families and the only girls. Oh boy was I wrong. Finally after 12 years I got a new sister. When my dad got married my brother and I went through a massive change. I was no longer the youngest and I now lived with more girls. DJ and I officially got a new little sister on June 15th, 2008. I now have someone of my own to pick on.

The huge age gaps between DJ, Gracie and I always makeâ s it hard for us to get along. DJ and I are 5 years and 364 days apart so we always had to share a birthday. Gracie and I are 5 years apart and we are completely different! I like guys but she is obsessed with them. Now if you add 5 years and 364 days plus 5 years you get about 11 years between DJ and Gracie. The only thing they have in common is how much they want to throw me out the window some days.

Since I was the youngest child for 12 years I have a lot of characteristic that the youngest children are known to have. Iâ m charming but manipulative, Iâ m extremely outgoing, I love attention and I can be absent-minded. I also have characteristic of a middle child such as; being flexible, a good mediator, an independent thinker and Iâ m pretty sure Iâ m going to be the first to leave Chico. My sister is different the description of a little sister. She can annoy me at times, but I still love her. She can be manipulative, and canâ t stand when other people have more attention than her. DJ is nothing like the description of an older child, he is the complete opposite. Heâ s unorganized, doesnâ t care if things are perfect and heâ s a free-spirited person.

Being best friends with an only child taught me to love my siblings. Even though Kaylie and I are like sisters itâ s not like the real thing. Kaylie might not ever get to know the great feelings of having a person to pick on and someone who you get to love unconditionally. Thanks to her Iâ m very appreciative of my siblings even if they are annoying and get on my nerves.

â Midnight hide and Scream, or Mud Fight frenzyâ

As a child I played very dangerous games! My cousins and I would play hide and seek at midnight, and in mountains! Occasionally a team would get lost in the mountains and weâ d have to go find them. One night Joel and I were â itâ we couldnâ t find anyone until I spotted Cameron and Maddie. We called â you guys are itâ but they didnâ t move, so Joel and I went up to tag them and we too just stood and didnâ t move. Up in the tree across from us was a baby bear, uncertain of what kind of bear or where its mom was we

all ran down the mountain screaming. While we ran down my cousin Maddie tripped over a tree stump and fell flat on her face! Cameron had to carry her down the mountain! As soon as we came down the mountain we did a head count, we realized that we didnâ t have Christian and Jake! Christian and Jake being newbieâ s up here were the worst two to lose! They had no idea where anything was besides the creek, which was probably miles away! Nobody was brave enough to go find them. Eventually Joel and I went up the mountain to find them, trying to stay clear of the bear. I was terrified to I made Joel hold my hand. After an hour we found both of them sleeping under a fallen tree. Uncertain if they were unconscious Joel and I didnâ t bother to wake them up, or move them. Joel and I walked down the hill and told the gang we couldnâ t find them and everyone went into a panic. Joel and I headed off to bed and about 2 hours later the rest of the gang did too. But eight A.M. the adults noticed that Christian and Jake were gone and we got in so much trouble! Joel, Cameron, Brett, DJ and I all went up to get them and they were unharmed and peaceful. When we brought them down Joel and I finally told everyone that we knew where they were the whole time and oh boy did we get in trouble! Never again will Joel and I leave someone in the mountains!

Oh boy its time for the most painful game of all! More people get bruises, cuts and bloody noses from this game than any other game that we played! Whatâ s the name of the game you ask? Extreme mud fighting! My cousins and I would go down to this certain swimming hole after we all got down tubing. Kelly, Brett and I would go and lure my cousin Maddie down to the swimming hole so we could ambush her with mud balls filled with rocks! One day her and Lana were coming down to sun tan and we didnâ t even know it. As soon as I called out â Maddie alertâ , everyone ducked and got a few mud balls ready. Maddie and Lana walked down to the water unaware of the ambush about to take place. Out of nowhere DJ and Russell both threw huge mud balls filled with rocks the size of quarters. Maddie and Lana ran up the creek screaming, to the nearest landmass that we didnâ t inhabit. Of course while running to another landmass Maddie and Lana both Fell in the water and did face plants! Maddie crying, because she was bleeding and Lana complaining that her hair was ruined, we ran for our lives! When they got back and told everyone what happened DJ and Russell we toast! All of us kids apart of the ambush had to go out and sit in the freezing cold water and had to clean all the dishes by handâ ¦literally. We learned great teamwork that day but we were cold by nine P.M. that night! After that we never included Maddie in the mud ball fights and I became the target, but by the time Christian and Jake came I was protected. They never let another mud ball hit me as long as they were there.

â Hole in the Groundâ

One tradition my family and I have is going camping in Lassen Nation Park. Weâ ve always gone to a place called Hole in the Ground H.I.T.G for short. H.I.T.G is right out of a small town named Mineral. The McDonald family has being going to H.I.T.G since my grandpa was 18! Thatâ s about 58 years. For about 6 years we didnâ t go to H.I.T.G, because my uncle Mike died on the road down there. For about 54 years weâ ve gone camping with The Page family. They are my other half! I adore all of them.

H.I.T.G is probably the prettiest place Iâ ve ever been. The trees are green, the water is clear with white ripples, and the grass is luscious and tall. My favorite place there is the emerald meadow with golden flowers that flow in the wind. It has a sapphire colored creek running through it where we spend our days playing and running.

While weâ re at H.I.T.G we go tubing, play games, have mud fights, have contests and make new friends. Every year we have duck race and I always win, but my aunt being herself makes sure I donâ t get a trophy and she gives it to some other kid.

Weâ ve always welcomed new people to our trip our peak was in 2001 but now itâ s slowly declining. With the death of my great uncle Angus and the sudden coma of my dear cousin Andrew was the start of the decline. 2 short years later Reggie Page died. In her honor we planted a tree last year in her favorite spot.

I hope in years to come that Iâ ll be able to take my family up there and have as much as I do now. For 12 years of my life Iâ ve known H.I.T.G. Even if this only happens once a year for 1-2 weeks itâ s still my favorite family tradition.

â My Grandpaâ

My grandpa Francis Skip McDonald is probably my great hero. Heâ s kind, caring, loving, supportive and best of all funny. Heâ s always been there for me, through thick and thin. When I think about it Iâ m

blessed to have him in my family let-alone my grandpa.

Heâ s taught me a lot of things in my life. Heâ s taught my honesty, trust, compassion, and of course a ton about sports. Everyday I wish I could be as great as him, but I know nobody can do that in a million years. Those who know him see him as a leader and all-time best coach Chico High school ever had. I see him as the man I spent Friday nights with, not thinking about how important he was to other people not in my family. Even though being the granddaughter of him is difficult, I still love him to death. I have to watch what I do, what I say and how I act, but it makes me a better person. I donâ t ever want to embarrass my grandpa so I have to try to be the best I can be.

â To be Young, gifted and a McDonaldâ

To be a McDonald is a great honor. Everyone in Chico knows you and has the upmost respect for you. There are some down sides of being a McDonald though. You have to be well-mannered and you canâ t do anything that would embarrass anybody in the family.

The responsibility that comes with being a McDonald is huge. Everything I do as a person is reflected upon my grandpa, my dad and the rest of the family. I always have pressure on me not to mess up but thatâ s what itâ s about when youâ re a teenager. My grandpa has always been proud of me, and I never want that to change. Iâ ve tried my hardest to get good grades and Iâ ve tried to be the best person I can be.

The problem with being a McDonald is that everyone knows you and they watch your every move. People also expect you to act a certain way and when they donâ t they penalize your whole family. The worst part-of-all you know most of the town of Chico and when you donâ t know all their names you have to pretend you know who they are which is usually pretty hard.

Being a McDonald isnâ t all bad, most of the time itâ s wonderful. I have a wonderful family. My grandpa is amazing. My uncle Pat, or as we like to call him steamboat, has taught me so much. I have a big loving family who may be weird at times, but people who die to have a family like mine. Honestly I wouldnâ t change any of them. They are perfect in everyway.

Being a McDonald singles me out from everyone in the world. Each and every one of us is different and special in our own way. Not all the McDonaldâ s are outgoing and like sports. Although most of us do we have two people in our family who surprisingly donâ t. Iâ ve never met a single person like me. Iâ m unique.

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