



Dear Program Peeps,

I know exactly how you feel about the program because I've been there. It's two thumbs down; sometimes even more.

It all started one day. My mom had almost given up on me. They had gone through therapy and more therapy, metronome, fast forward, neurofeedback, marble jars, and everything else. Then one day my mom's friend, Kira's mom, heard a talk about a program and my mom decided to try it. I was not very enthusiastic. I threw daily tantrums for months, but my mom was not going to listen to me this time. Very wise. All I had was 20 minutes of belly, 20 minutes of crawling, patterns, and a bunch of brushing and breathing. It stretched for H O U R S! Very unhappy me. Very tired me. Very "I don't want to do this at all" me.

And then it got worse. Fetals. We thought it was just movements up, down, back, forth. But it wasn't. It was a time portal that shot me back into the time when I was an angry baby. I was running in front of cars, playing with knives. One night I took a small medicine cup about the size of my mouth to my bed. It somehow got into my mouth, and I would have choked to death if my mom hadn't come along. I still don't know how it got there. These things went on for a long, long, long time.

Then my mom took me to see this doctor. I had this big blood test which proved I was allergic to eggs and milk. I went on an egg- and milk-free diet. That's when I started to change. Like a sonic explosion, I changed. Now, even though my behavior changed, my mom still made me do the program. There was still a part of my brain that hasn't been touched yet, so we continued. Feeling like a train chugging through a dark tunnel, I kept thinking I saw a light, but it was just a glow from the lamp.

Three years passed. Both my parents were fed up. My sister was fed up. I was fed up. Even the dog was fed up. He wanted his floor back. So I asked the dog, "Hey, what would you do if you had to get out of your warm pajamas at five thirty in the morning and crawl on the cold floor while your sister was still in bed snoring?" "Ah, I don't know," said the dog. As you see, my dog is not very bright.

Every day was different, but in a good way. I was getting more responsible by the day. One day I got permission to go play outside by myself. Might not sound very exciting, but we used to have alarms on all the doors so I couldn't run out and get hurt. I got bigger. I got friends. I had play dates because I was more respectful and fun to be with, doing things the grown ups' way - aka Miss Dawn's rules (Miss Dawn was one of my therapists).

I kept on creeping and crawling through the dark tunnel though, because I couldn't seem to graduate from the program. After many hopes and defeats, finally one of those lights in the tunnel was real. Very excited, thinking that it was very close, I got up and ran toward it. But something was pulling me back, saying slow down, slow down. Despite my effort, I had to slow



down. The force was too strong. But every day the light got nearer and nearer and nearer. Finally, it felt like I was a heartbeat away. But where I was, was a very strange place. I was on a train going to Washington DC on a field trip (yes, you heard me right, Washington DC, me, the Metro, and no leash). My mom had a phone consult, and when I got back from the trip, she told me I had graduated from the program.

Life now, this being the first year I have not been doing the program since first grade (now in 5th) is much more exciting, but not in the way you would expect. Now, still me, still bubbly and hyper, and freakishly happy according to my sister, I can do things I never could have done before. I can swim. I can play soccer. I can play my violin without melting down with frustration. I can go out to dinner. I can sleep away from home. I can go to concerts. I CAN SIT STILL!!!!!! Sometimes I can take no for an answer. And many more things, but that would take up at least five pages. So I'm not going to write it all down.

So friends, if you feel like you are going to freak out if you do this one more day, please don't stop. I'm not one of those people that's just saying this without knowing how you feel. I have been through this for three years, so I seriously know how you feel. So finish it up, and maybe when you do graduate you will write a story of your own.

Your friend,

[REDACTED]