

Monsters in My Head

NICK STENTO

My name is Nick Stento I'm 16 years old and I'm in 10th grade. I have a very rare form of epilepsy. I've had seizures since I was six months old. I've been on countless medications. I've had many surgeries and have gone through many tests. After all of this doctors cannot figure out how to cure my seizures or help them.

When I was little, four or five years old, and I was having a seizure I used to think the monsters were coming to get me so I hid under the table. Now that I am older my seizures don't bother me so much, because when I have a small one I just pretty much ignore it and when I have a big one I scream and it wipes me out so I sleep for about an hour after.

The past couple of years school has been so difficult for me, because I was so frustrated and it was hard for me to remember all the facts and everything for tests and quizzes. I worked so hard in school because I really care about my grades. Every day in the past I ate my lunch in, like, five minutes, and after I ate I went to the library to do homework and study for tests. Even though I worked so hard some of my teachers thought I was being lazy because my grades weren't reflecting my efforts.

Now that I am in self-contained special education classes, I am doing so well. I made the honor roll and my average was 90.6. Since I've changed classes I've had a lot less seizures, because I'm not as stressed out anymore.

I am really lucky because a lot of people care about me. Many adults at school really stand up for me. My guidance counselor and many other people had to fight for me to have my program changed in school. I have a 1:1 aide who helps me when I have seizures. I am also lucky because nobody picks on me when I have a seizure. A lot of the times my friends are helpful when I have a seizure.

One thing that really bothers me is that I won't be able to get my drivers license unless I am seizure-free for one whole year. I have a girlfriend who lives in Manchester. I would like to see her, but she lives about an hour and a half to two hours away. If I had my drivers' license I could drive there myself. I get frustrated because I feel like I don't have my independence. I feel that way because I have to have somebody with me where ever I go, and in school I have an adult with me at all times. Sometimes it bothers me because I'm home alone all the time, and I don't have any seizures. It's pretty much the same way in school. I just want to at least try to be in school by myself for one day, but I can't. What I plan on doing in a few years is move out of Cortland, get a job and get married.