

## **POSITIVE IMPACT THROUGH PIVOTAL CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES**

At age four, another pivotal experience shaped my childhood. This one is not traumatic; it is pleasant and continues to have a powerful impact on my life for which I'm grateful.

Growing up in a small rural town, every one of the same race and socio-economic class could have fostered a single-minded view of the world. Instead, a powerful experience taught me to embrace diversity. I have often recalled this positive memory of my first encounter with color in humanity, holding onto the feeling of affection it holds for me.

Severe asthma diagnosed at two months old had me hospitalized 98% of my life until age four. During this year, I had a Black boy as a roommate; we always played with his Fisher Price School Days Desk; the one with a green chalk board and magnetic letters and numbers. He was always afraid of the daily breathalyzer treatment, thinking it would hurt. So that he would not be afraid, I always went first, doing the treatment a bit longer than necessary. One day, his parents came to celebrate his fifth birthday; his gift was a brand-new Fisher Price School Days Desk which he gave to me as a thank you. Over the years, I have often wondered where is and how he is doing in life.

In addition to the positive impact already mentioned, this experience helped to counteract the traumatic experience mentioned in my first post, teaching me the world is not all evil. If it weren't for this beautiful memory, I could have learned to perceive the world through a single lens of hate. Instead, I learned the world holds a balance of good and evil. By choosing to keep my eye towards the goodness in society, my life has been enriched and my soul saved.