

Megan Pohlen
Author's Note:
October 1, 2013

My biggest success in this reflective piece was my clarity and overall message to the reader. I feel I produced something most people can relate to and, because of that, it was not at all difficult to understand.

If I were to continue this piece, I would probably add anecdotes here and there to keep it interesting. I would also go a little more into detail in each body paragraph. The struggles of this piece existed for me mainly at the beginning. I couldn't get started for the life of me. I had trouble understanding what a reflective piece should sound like, along with coming up with a topic and how to write about it. Once I got my topic, however, the struggles virtually went away and I was left to just write how I felt about my topic and why.

The process, like I just mentioned, was rough at the beginning, but progressively got better. After coming up with my topic, it was very easy for me to write an outline. And when I finished the outline, I knew that writing this paper was going to be a breeze. I've had great edits from my group members who are always willing to give advice, not because it's what I want to hear but because they know I need it. One suggestion I got from a peer edit was that I should try to chop up my paragraphs and make sure I have solid transitions, which really made me look over my piece and check that. The only thing I wasn't sure how to fix was breaking up my paragraphs. I know that they are kind of lengthy, but I feel that they are necessary because each is on one specific topic. Each paragraph is a subtopic of my original topic and breaking them up would be like adding more subtopics and wouldn't flow right. (Not sure if that made sense). I guess in my opinion, the lengths of my paragraphs don't weaken my writing overall, so I hope that leaving them as they are is alright.

If this piece were a person, our current relationship would be a pretty good one. I wouldn't necessarily say I'm in love with my piece, but I think it's a great first piece.

For the most part, I have good reason for everything I've done to this reflective piece. I wrote on the topic that I did because it was a relatively easy topic for me to talk about and I enjoy it. I broke my paragraphs up into the categories I did because those were what fit my ultimate topic the best and made great body paragraphs. I made my intro kind of open up for the rest of my paper and end with a thesis. My conclusion summarizes my paragraph as well as leaves readers with the message I hope they can take from reading it. The font was in Cambria simply because that is the standard font on my mac. It is double spaced, as I believe it is supposed to be, and the margins are all set at one inch. Finally, as you had asked, my reasoning for stapling my paper in the upper left hand corner is because that is where I, as well as everyone else, staple things. I suppose it's just custom.

Where'd the
staple go?
==

If does
make
sense
Let's hope
it's correct

1

2

Megan Pohlen
September 30, 2013

Have you ever looked back on your life and wondered how exactly you ended up where you are today? If so, you're not alone. I continuously find myself wondering who I would be had I taken an alternate path or made a different choice. My life has been an uneven, winding road with ups and downs. Yet, I am grateful for every step, as well as every stumble, for it hasn't been so much where I'm going, but how I get there that matters to me. With that being said, I cherish the journey of my life, simply because I haven't had to endure it alone. God has been beside me every step of the way. His involvement in my life is seen in many ways: through my sacrifices and sufferings, my prayer life, and most importantly, through my blessings. ~~So~~, in looking back on my spiritual life, I have learned that it is my relationship with God that has greatly influenced me and made me the person I am today.

A couple of years ago, it came to my attention that far too much of my life is spent on meaningless things like worrying and stressing, both of which originate from everyday pain and struggles that I encounter. Focusing on all of the negative things in my life seemed to become a routine thing for me. If I bombed a test at school, I'd get down on myself. If something didn't go my way, I'd feel sorry for myself. If I experienced some kind of physical or emotional pain, I would continuously question God and why he would allow such suffering to come upon me. I couldn't understand why God would allow someone who was for the most part an all-around good person, to endure such things. Yet, after contemplating it for some time, it eventually hit me. Life simply cannot be without some suffering. And the more suffering we experience, the closer to God we become. Suffering and sacrifices are

A bit cliché but not enough for me to take any points away

Typically, I would suggest to avoid using the 2nd person, but you address the audience in an appropriate way. It is general enough that any reader should follow along.

Good detail

Solid REFLECTION

both essential parts of life in that they help us to take nothing for granted and cherish the good in our lives. Since I've come to understand this a little better, my life has in turn *been* better. The more I appreciate my suffering, the stronger and more rewarded I feel in the end. No matter what kind of suffering we experience in our lives, it is important that we know that it is all in God's plan and if he brings us to it, he'll bring us through it.

Correct explanation of how you came to this revelation

Probably the strongest part of my spiritual life is my prayers, which are a good portion of how I'm able to keep my sanity. Knowing that I have someone to come to ^{↳ is this the right word?} whenever I'm in need is one of the greatest feelings. I pray on a daily basis and my prayers most often consist of either requests or gratitude. As obvious as it may be, answered prayers are amazing. What is better than asking for something and having God return to us exactly what we were hoping for? Having a prayer answered always makes me happy and grateful to God. Still, I think there is one thing better than answered prayers and that's ^{simple, but appropriate transition.} *unanswered* prayers. For the longest time I viewed unanswered prayers as God simply ignoring them, whether it be because whatever I asked for wasn't right for me or that I didn't deserve it. I always thought, ^{↳ put thoughts in quotation marks.} "Okay, God, here I am asking, but when does this receiving thing come into play? Should I just stop asking?" I started to feel slightly confused.

It was then that I grasped ^{that} I was lacking a vital element in my spiritual life—trust. At first I brushed it off. I have trust, don't I? Of course I do, I'm a Catholic and I love God. How could I not have trust? ^{↳ can you distinguish this as internal dialogue? Either quotes or even italics?} Yet, I realized that to *have* trust must first require me to fully understand what it *is*. In my opinion, and I'm putting it simply, trust is keeping faith even when we are unsure of the outcome. It's believing that even though God may not give us exactly what we want, he knows what's best for us and it doesn't mean that we shouldn't ask for it. While I knew that God was capable of granting me all of the things that I wanted, I never truly

You make your lessons specific? That's a good thing

trusted in him for all that I needed. Now, unanswered prayers seem like a true blessing to me. Rather than seeing them as God not giving me something, I see that He is teaching me patience by holding me off for something much better; something that will make me truly happier in the end.

The biggest influence God has had on my life and who I am today is through the blessings he sends me daily. When I stop to think about how blessed I am and of all of the things I have, I kind of get overwhelmed. I could sit here and list an entire page of things I have to be thankful for, things that I don't deserve but that God has willingly given me out of love (for me). First and foremost, God has given me my faith. I never usually think of my faith as a gift until I see all the people who are without it. I can't help but feel sorry for those people because I honestly have no idea who I would be if it weren't for my faith. My faith gives me something to stand up and live for. It is the basis of my life and without it, I feel my life would be meaningless. A close second on my list of blessings is my family and friends. I am truly amazed by the wonderful people God has put in my life. He could not have picked better people for me to call parents, siblings, cousins, and nieces and nephews. I have the best relationship with my family, so much so that thinking of anything bad happening to any one of them could just about bring me to tears every time. They accept me for who I am and never leave my side. ^{transition needed} My friends are the best. I don't have to try to be anyone I'm not for them and I can tell them just about anything without ever being judged. The final, and probably most overlooked blessing in my life is, in fact, my life itself. I wake up every single morning and rarely think twice about how fortunate I am to still have life, let alone to have been given one in the first place. Not only that, but I have the most amazing and beautiful life. I am a healthy seventeen year old with no major problems or

Tons of great relevant details

ailments. I can walk, talk, and see; things that I take for granted far more than I should. I'm not sure why God has been so good to me. I mean, who am I to deserve such things? There are people in the world who have it so much worse. They are without food and shelter, and yet I complain about the most trivial ~~of~~ things like having to wake up early in the morning or that it's too hot outside. I think we all need to stop every once in a while and just take a minute to thank God for everything, especially the little things, because we often never fully appreciate what we have until it is gone.

Anyways, saying I am blessed is an understatement. Having God in my life has made it the best that it can possibly be. I will probably never understand exactly how God works or even be a close to ^{being a} perfect person, but I'm trying my best and improving each day.

Everything God has given to me is something to be thankful for because, whether it ^{is} ~~be~~ a good thing or a bad thing, it's gotten me to where I am today, and for that, I am eternally grateful.

Solid
~~CONCLUSION~~
CONCLUSION