

## Final Reflective Writing

I am so very happy I took this class. I have learned so much about myself. The majority of the material we covered in this class was new to me. There were some things I was vaguely familiar with, such as Sigmund Freud's psychology, pregnancy and delivery, and autism, but I gained significant insight into the complexities of human development and the many variables that affect it. What was reaffirming for me, something that has concerned me for a long time, was that my depression may not affect my children as negatively as I feared. I am a chronic worrier; I am constantly dwelling on the past, and always find myself asking "What if?" I think it's time I accept myself for who I am and my life for what it is, because it's not bad! I have become stronger and more courageous because of what I have endured. I have been gifted and blessed with 4 healthy babies (despite Robbie's autism), I have become stronger and more courageous, more willing to take risks and explore the depths of my dexterity and resiliency. I've been surprised at my ability to cope. Now I need to work on acceptance.

What I will remember a year from now are all the developmental changes I can expect to see in my children, the differences and possibilities that are likely among them, particularly in middle childhood and emerging adulthood, because those are the stages my children will be in throughout the next several years. Knowing what is likely to happen will keep me aware of any delays that may occur that may potentially become problematic. This class has taught me how important it is to communicate with my children, how influential my relationship is with them, as well as those that they have with their peers and other adults. I want to make sure my children are capable of and recognize the value in making good decisions. I want to know that I've made a difference

in their lives, that they feel like they can confide in me and trust me, even if they don't always like what I have to say. More than anything I hope they always feel loved.

There is not much about this class I intend to forget. I really think what I've learned, not only from our text but also from our discussions, will stay with me for a long time. I'm amazed at people's willingness to be open and share. For me personally, it was much easier to do it in a forum such as this as opposed to face to face. I am painfully shy, and some things are difficult to look back on and face. But everyone made it so much easier because they shared their own feelings and experiences, and there is a great deal of value to be gained from the wisdom of others. It's inspirational to see what some have been able to overcome, and to see the strengths that lie within different people, in their ability to endure and cope, to overcome adversity and tragedy. Some have the best, most infectious attitudes, and offered me a positive twist on life that I may not have otherwise ever noticed.

What I learned about myself as a student is that speaking about myself and defending the way I feel isn't so hard, it's liberating! That was probably my biggest challenge. It's led to a little cleansing of my soul. I learned that change is always possible, but being aware of and accepting of my strengths and weaknesses is essential for continued, healthy growth in my life. I need to be able to forgive. I've come to recognize events and situations from earlier in my life that have affected my development, and I've learned that I am resilient! That makes me feel good! The interaction that I took part in with my fellow classmates through our discussions has been an incredible experience that I have benefitted and learned from. Even more so, to have had a teacher who offered so much insight to all things in each discussion, who participated along with us and provided

constant feedback, was very rewarding and so appreciated. Thank you. This class really has been a pleasure.