

Case Study of Kristine Lee Staton

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Kristine Staton

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### Abstract

This paper is about a girl named Kristine Lee Staton. It is about her emotional, physical, and cognitive development. In this case study her life starting from conception to current age of 20, contains important facts and memories that has made Kristine who she is today. Her likes and dislikes are discussed in detail, and her distress that she had faced as a young adolescent. Cognitively, Kristine was a very smart child growing up who enjoyed reading and going to school. As she got older however, it was noted that she gave up on many school related situations. Emotionally Kristine went through a lot, but she persevered through it all and everything she emotionally went through has made her become the strong person she is today. Physically Kristine has always been bigger, starting at birth and still has maintain above average since. These memories that are discussed were the essential building blocks to who Kristine has become today.

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### Part 1: Introduction

Kristine Lee Staton was brought up in a traditional Christian 2 parent home. At the time she was born she only had an older brother Robert but eventually 2 more siblings were added to the family, Mackenzie and Luke. Kristine's brother was only 12 months older than her, so her mother had already quit her job to stay with the first-born and continued to stay at home and watch Kristine. She was rarely put into daycare. Kristine had many pets growing up, there were a few dogs that lasted throughout the years and currently she has a dog named Callie. Kristine is 20 years old now and is a sophomore at Manchester College. She enjoys playing volleyball, writing, and relaxing at home in West Lafayette. Kristine also is very in tune with art. Although musically challenged she learned to play the piano when she was 10 and took a few months of lessons which she stopped after it got too difficult for her to try to understand. In all the four years of high school she took painting, painting was one of Kristine's favorite pastimes. It was something that she could always say was there for her. It relaxed her and she always said it was her escape from reality. Kristine from a young age always knew that she was going to be a teacher, her first grade teacher; Mrs. Erdman made her realize that she wanted to change the lives of students just like hers had been changed. Kristine was also very close to her mom's parents. Her Grandpa died the summer before she entered college. She was devastated he would never get to see what he wanted he had always wanted. His dream was that Kristine would again be the happy girl that he had known so long ago and would succeed athletically and academically.

Kristine and her mom did a lot of butting heads because of what she realizes now. She and her mom are very similar in everything; they both have high stress level and low tolerance for anything that they don't agree with. The one difference was that they had different opinions about many things including friends, boys, and relationships. Her dad soon became her best

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friend that although didn't agree with many of the tough decisions Kristine faced stuck by her and made it clear he would do absolutely anything for her. Kristine can say her dad is one guy that she has always loved and will always love. Through all the tough times he was the only one there for her so she thought even though her mom took excellent care of her in the difficult times she was dealt.

Kristine is a very happy person now; however, that has not always been the case. She disliked about anything that came her way. There was a time in her life she hated go to school, practice and church. That was the low-time of her life, now she enjoys spending the time with friends and wishes she could redo her four years of high school and take the years she wasted back. She doesn't like to spend time reading or being by herself. She also doesn't enjoy dairy because it makes her sick. She loves the way her friends make her feel and doesn't know what she would be able to do without them. Friends are the one thing in her life that may always change but will always have the same affect.

## Part 2: Physical Development

Ever since Kristine was born she was above average in height and weight. At birth she was 9 pounds and 2 ounces and was 23 inches in length according to her Mom who received the information from birth records. At age 18 months she was able to do the monkey bars, it was her favorite thing in the world, her dad even build a set in the backyard so she could practice whenever she wanted to. Kristine's parents would brag about her completing them at such a young age and family friends and family would have to come over to the house to

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believe what they had heard. At age 4 Kristine had surpassed her brother who is 12 months older than her in height and has remained taller than him up until about a year ago where he rests only about an inch taller. At age 3 she could ride a bicycle without training wheels because she wanted to beat out my older brother in everything.

Kristine did every sport you could think of that a 6-year old girl could possibly do. she did the girly ones that consisted of gymnastics and the tom-boy ones that included soccer, basketball, swimming and softball. With an older brother who Kristine was always comparing herself to she was able to advance in technique much faster than my peers and developed the label of the tall sporty girl. At age 8 Kristine had given up the girly sports and stuck to a strict schedule of going to school, soccer practice, basketball practice, and swim practice; barely making anytime for homework even though she enjoyed school and excelled in the classroom. At age 11 her love was swimming. It was all she ever wanted to do, and so her parents signed her up for more competitive leagues and meets.

Later that June Kristine made the national qualifier time and attended nationals for the first time, placing and receiving a medal. She was a competitive swimmer up until her freshman year in high-school where she gave up swimming and soccer. 2 sports that she thinks now she gave up because of the many years she had invested in them and just became bored and ready for a change.

Kristine entered high school and was drawn towards basketball and volleyball because of my height, she still played softball my freshman year. Kristine spent however most of her free time playing volleyball, club and school. Kristine's friends were her volleyball or basketball

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teammates. She had kept her spot as the tallest girl in her grade the next four years as she began to excel more in basketball and become the star on the volleyball team, again mainly due to her height advantage over the rest of the girls.

Kristine's Jr. Year she could label as her best year or her worst because of the things that had happened to her physically. Kristine began to wake up in the night with severe pain in my back and side, after being rushed to the hospital in ambulances many times the doctors finally had figured out what was wrong with her. She had developed gall stones because of genetics on her dad's side. Kristine was forced to give up basketball for that year because of surgery but recovered in time to continue club volleyball in the spring. The good part of the year consisted of making a trip to Houston, Texas with her volleyball team because of placing first in a qualifying tourney for nationals. That is when she decided to make it my new goal to keep playing volleyball and go to college somewhere to play so she didn't have to give it up the following year. That is when she began her search which landed Kristine where she is today at Manchester College, without volleyball she wouldn't be here today at this school because of the size. A little school wasn't her dream but volleyball was and she had to make the sacrifice of going to a large social school to play volleyball which turned out worthwhile.

### Part 3: Cognitive Development

Before Kristine could even talk she understood language, although her first word was dada, she knew who Grandma was before anything. With her index finger she would point to what she wanted, mostly being Grandma. Until she could talk and then even afterwards that little finger

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seemed to give her the power to get anything and everything that she wanted, whether it would have been a cookie or a knee on Grandpa's lap.

As a toddler she used her words carefully, not speaking too much but just enough to get what she wanted. If there was one thing Kristine knew how to do it was use her words to get what she wanted, which she still does to this day. When she first went to school Kristine lived in Illinois and was taught to read by using whole language and not phonics. Because of this Kristine wasn't a very strong reader, even though she loved reading at this point in her life. When she and her family moved to Indiana she was separated from her classmates and taught phonics which to no one's surprise raised her reading level to above average. By the time she was 9 she was reading chapter books weekly, mostly "The Babysitter's Club," and "Goosebumps. According to Halcyon House (2010), a website that publishes articles about critical topics in education whole language is not as effective as phonics. With whole language you can learn familiar words that you may hear or see on a normal basis, for instance your name, but what about unfamiliar words. As young kids learning to read it is crucial for them to be able to sound out instead of recognizing words. With this phonics is used. Although both techniques have memorization it is said to be better to learn the rules of phonics which may seem boring but help you out in the future with reading rather than try to just memorize every word.

Kristine who doesn't read as often because of an incident that happened in 5<sup>th</sup> grade with the librarian is much better off with learning phonics. Although stupid she realizes now Kristine has still never been able to enjoy reading as much as she once did after giving it up for

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so long. In her school there was a list of books that you could read and take tests on to earn prizes. Kristine was the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in my grade with 65 points. As she was looking at the title of books that she could take tests on she realized they had books that were way under my reading level. So since Kristine thought it was fair game, she read the books that were offered and took the tests. With these tests she had passed her soon became the leader in the whole school; however the library looked at the titles of the books that Kristine was taking the quizzes on and decided to take all the points away, which embarrassed her to a great extent. The librarian had accused Kristine of cheating and she then was sent to the principal's office. Although she was 11, she did not understand that these books would be on there if she couldn't take them. After the frustration and difficulty with the librarian Kristine avoided the library altogether and didn't earn another reading point after. She still doesn't understand now why she had thought that way at that age because it all just seems so stupid to me now. At the age of 20 there are still words that she doesn't recognize. If she hadn't have learned phonics she wouldn't be able to make an educated guess to decide on a words' meaning and sound.

By the time she had completed 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Kristine had major accomplishments in school. In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade she was published in the top 100 poems in her school, earned more "bookits" than anyone in the entire school, and had perfect attendance. The next years she had won the class spelling bee, been in multiple school plays and musicals and received straight A's.

As Kristine got older she entered the logical world of math. She began to realize that she could be the star of the class. Kristine was far more advanced in the problem solving of both math and science and felt above everyone else when she was the only 7<sup>th</sup> grader who



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could get a certain problem right. As students caught up with her though she stayed put and slowly went back to average in all school subjects including math and science.

As she had entered high school everything seemed to go downhill, her grades began to slip and she skipped class multiple times a week to hang out with her boyfriend. Since her parents had forbidden her to see him it was the only time she was able to get away to have time with him. Although looking about on it now, she had loved him then and would have done anything for him. Those 3 years were filled with decisions that ruined her sister and hers' relationship, her mother and hers' relationship and seemed to tear her family apart little by little. The once loving caring girl became violent and self indulged only in herself and what she felt was important.

By senior year though she was single and ready to take on the world to boost her GPA and get ready for college. Kristine was a painter, she loved to paint; portraits landscapes and anything else you could think of. She had won the local art show with a painting she did that portrayed a beach which she had painted for her Grandpa before he died. Painting was the one thing Kristine knew that she would never give up, sadly though the expense and lack of location has made her decline in the amount of paintings she had produced.

## Part 4: Emotional Development

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As a fetus Kristine was comfortably wedged in her mother's uterus. At this point she was probably the safest that she would ever be. Her mother, a nurse who had recently taken a leave of absence because of a month old newborn, was a healthy woman. She cared for herself, took prenatal vitamins regularly, and followed the guidelines to what a mother should be eating. Since Kristine was her second child she followed the same regiment as she did with her previous child. In a mother interview conducted between Kristine and her mother Karen; Karen talked to the baby, sang to the baby, and read aloud to the baby, however, this time around there was not as much talk as with her older brother Robbie had had previously in the womb. Even though Kristine's parents were thrilled to have Kristine the excitement for a second child was not as high as it was for the first, causing both Kristine's mother and father to not talk and read as much to her as they did her older brother. Another factor was that her older brother had taken time away from her mother to enjoy the pregnancy with the new born obtaining all of the attention.

As Kristine's mother became very stressed about a second child with a nurse salary and a husband taking classes at Purdue she developed anxiety. It was obvious how Kristine, although made both her parents happy, was causing more stress than the previous pregnancy. According to an article "Smart from the Start" written by Dr. William Sears and Dr. Martha Sears what goes on in the mother's mind might also affect baby's mental development. Mother and Baby are said to share hormones and an environment full of stress hormones may affect the wiring of the developing brain causing a baby to be more anxious. Kristine ever since she was 2, was a very anxious person, and now although in her 20's she becomes stressed very easily and has a very anxious personality which fortunately doesn't affect her schoolwork

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anymore. However as a middle and high school student when her stress levels raised her academic success deteriorated causing much strain on how she was able to perceive her work. This created a strain on the decisions she could make throughout the day, mostly leading into her early adolescent years that included not only school but boys, friendships, and social acceptances.

As Kristine began to grow older she began to stop having imaginary friends and had stopped playing with her dolls and stuffed animals which she thought came to life at night and had their own secret world. Sadly as this disappeared and reality sank in she gave up on Santa Clause, the Easter bunny, the Tooth Fairy, and the many mythical things that made childhood so much fun. At age 20 she would give anything to be able to go back to those days where she didn't have a care in the world. According to an article "When Kids Stop Believing in Santa," written by Tricia Ellis-Christensen (2010) children stop believing in these characters because of many factors. The first is they begin to realize the logic aspect, for instance you begin to realize that "Santa's" gifts are addressed in your Mom or Dad's handwriting. Peer relationships also play a role in when you stop believing, if you have friends who were never told about Santa, the Easter Bunny, or the Tooth-fairy it might get brought up in a conversation and make you realize what really was going on, where the tooth went or where the gifts came from. "There are some children and adults who never stop believing, especially when they view Santa as the spirit of Christmas, and an extension of Christ." (Ellis-Christensen, 2010) Unfortunately however Kristine's spirit of these magical beings was short-lived because of her brother who decided it was his place to tell when they were both very young. Kristine now having a 10 year old brother, who is lucky enough to be one of the few who may never stop believing, gets to

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pretend to believe on Christmas, Easter, and when he loses a tooth. It is evident that he has logically accepted that what is happening really cannot be but chooses that to believe because it is more fun.

By the time Kristine was in High school she had developed friendships and enemies. Kristine was a very outspoken girl and many girls didn't like her for that so she began to befriend more of the male sex. She only had 3 good girlfriends in High school the rest had been guys. She seemed to relate to them more for many reasons, including sports, and also not being in turn with her feelings. As her girlfriends would be excited for prom, getting their hair and nails done, Kristine wouldn't even think about it till the night before. She got her senior prom dress 3 days before prom.

It was clear to many of her friends that Kristine would have mood swings frequently and be faced with problems that dealt with her abusive boyfriend and her mother. She was diagnosed with depression at the age of 15, when she was a freshman in High school and spoke to a therapist twice a week for 3 years. Her problems were hers she felt like and didn't want them to be discussed with anyone so she would skip many of her sessions so she didn't have to open up about anything. Kristine to this day is still that way; most of even her good friends have no idea what she is dealing with in her life as she tries not to display any of her negative emotions. With her life spiraling downwards she finally became strong enough to put a stop to her relationship that seemed to hold her back from everything she loved to do for the last 3 years. Kristine was a wreck, it was very evident to many people that something was going wrong, and something just wasn't right with her. That smile she had shown for so long began

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to fad and her depression worsened as she went through a long and rough Jr. Year, going through court cases and concentrating on school so she could go to a good college.

Kristine at age 20 is now for the most part emotionally stable; she has learned coping methods to learning how to deal with her problems and attends counseling on a weekly basis. Ranging from what seemed like child play with the imagination to emotions that a young teenage girl should not have gone through her perseverance in everything she loves to do has made her the strong, intelligent young woman she is today.

## Part 5: Final Reflection

As I wrote about myself in the case study, I learned many new things about myself. I have never been fond of my own memories and always have had to rely on other people, my parents or other family members, telling me stories about how I was when I was little. I sat down with my mom for the first time in many years and had a heart to heart with her. I learned many things about my childhood that I never thought existed. I was a very happy and trusting child which I was surprised by because of the unhappy and untrusting teenager I was.

It was hard to listen to my mom explain how she felt when I went through my emotional part of the paper. Asking her questions that I knew answers too were heartbreaking to listen to. She broke down many times and it made me realize how much I had destroyed her as a person with the hurtful things that I said when I was a teenager. That had to be the hardest thing about writing this case study.

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However, it was also really difficult for me to write about anything that happened before the age of 10 because my memory isn't so wonderful. My memory has been filled with more recent memories. I am the kind of person that blocks out old ones and replaces them with the newer happier ones. From what I heard from the talks I had with people who loved me I was a very happy child, so I don't know why I don't have memory of those years.

It was very limiting to have to trust the people telling me stories and trusting that what they were saying was true. However, as I was writing this case study stories that I had been told came back to me in memory form. I don't know if it was just because I had heard the stories over and over again or if it was because I actually was able to pull them out of storage since they had always been there.

I enjoyed writing about myself because of the many new things I did learn, although knowing that I was very competitive I had no idea that I was able to beat my older brother out in a lot of things we had learned to do together. It is also very encouraging to know even as little I was able to do anything I wanted to accomplish and still have that personality trait today.

Writing this case story has been very beneficial to me. It has made me closer to both my parents, specifically my mother, and has made me realize the mistakes I made so I could apologize for the past. With the experiences I have experienced I am lucky to say that I now am a very strong, talented, and smart young woman. This paper has made me realize what all I have to be thankful in my life and what all I have to live for in the future.

Alongside benefiting me as a person writing this will benefit me as a teacher. As a professional I will have to write case stories and understand them for multiple children in my class. Understanding the difficulties I have faced and the cognitive, physical and emotional

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development of my being will help me compare why children may be the way they are. Case studies although very personal are great for what I as a teacher will be able to use to understand a child's psyche more exact.

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### Resources:

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