

My Favorite Older Friend

First Place

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“One of My Favorite Older People”

One of my favorite older people always tells me to enjoy life even though I have been diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes this school year. His name is Mr. McKnight. I have chosen Mr. McKnight because we share Type 1 diabetes as our special bond. Mr. McKnight was diagnosed with diabetes at age 13. He has taught me that diabetes does NOT define who I am.

Mr. McKnight told me the true story of when he was diagnosed with diabetes fifty-four years ago. In 1957, he was returning from a school field trip in the 7th grade. He went into a coma from extremely high blood sugar and woke up in the hospital. The doctor tossed Mr. McKnight an orange with a syringe and told him to practice because he would be taking insulin for the rest of his life. The glass bottles needed to be sterilized on the stove top, nothing was disposable. Mr. McKnight has witnessed the change in modern medicine.

When I was in the hospital this past September, Mr. McKnight made a surprise visit to my room with his son (who was diagnosed at my age with Type 1 diabetes also). Since that visit, Mr. McKnight has been a good friend and mentor to me. I know he can relate to testing blood sugar and taking insulin shots multiples times daily. Mr. McKnight always has a good sense of humor and manages his diabetes well. He teaches me good tips and tricks learned from his many years of experience. I know that I can ask Mr. McKnight any question when we are together. Mr. McKnight understands my feelings about diabetes because he can relate to me. Mr. McKnight is one of my favorite older people whom I admire.