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A voice for Epilepsy

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Being diagnosed with Epilepsy at the age of 2 1/2 years old defiantly created several obstacles for myself and my family, but being the stubborn and positive individual that I am, I was able to get through it; I actually Beat Epilepsy. On December 03, 2002 my life was changed forever, I underwent neuro surgery at University of Alberta Hospital in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. My surgery was called Left Selective Amygdala hippocampectomy and the procedure was a 100% success. I had 6 grand mal seizures two days before my surgery and those were my last, I can even say that I have been off all medications now for over 10 years. That is an extremely proud feeling. My past history with epilepsy was like a roller coaster, on meds, off meds, side effects, seizures, no seizures; it was a never ending hurtles, but I stayed strong and survived it. I was never in special needs classes; I played sports and was an individual with an infectious personality, so I am regularly told. Since my surgery in 2002, I have accomplished some amazing tasks and ones I would never have thought possible. I have published two books have had several articles published in papers and magazines, as well as international medical sites like SNI (Surgical Neurology International) and CURE. My number one goal is to educate others around the world, but not from a professional side of things but from someone that has lived it, that understands the obstacles others go through. From my understanding, there are not a lot of individuals that speak on the topic of epilepsy, locally or internationally and I want to change that. I have been a people person my whole life and I feel that there was a reason I am here today speaking about my story; Epilepsy needs to be talked about and I am the one to do that! I want to be that Voice for Epilepsy.

Biography

Ann Marie Gillie works as an Education Assistant for Parkland County School Division in Alberta, Canada, where her role is working primarily with students who suffer from ADHD/ADD/ ODD and other behavior disorders. She was asked in 2012 to be a Canadian Advocate for Epilepsy and with her passion and drive for motivating others her role has taken her internationally to speak. She is also a published author (If Walls Could Talk and Let's Talk about Epilepsy) and had several articles published in regards to experience with epilepsy and surgery. Her topics of discussion at conferences and seminars are - her surgery (Left Selective Amygdalahippocampectomy), women and epilepsy, sex & seizures and her books. She is passionate about helping others that struggle with the disorder and her goal is to help others internationally.

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