

Level II – Grades 7-8

California: Level II First Place Winner

Kailey McCoy

Individual Entry, Temecula

Wrote to Blake E.S. Taylor, author of *ADHD & Me*

Dear Blake E.S. Taylor,

I absolutely loved your book, *ADHD & Me*, because I am growing up with ADHD and this book really helped me to accept the fact that I have it. I am a 13 year old girl and I am also hard of hearing and wear hearing aids. A double bummer, as you can imagine. Your book helped me to see that there are other people like me out there who have done some of the same crazy things I have.

I thought your book was funny because you lit a fire at the dinner table. I did that too, in Las Vegas. I actually stuck my napkin in a candle and before you knew it, our table was on fire. I was 4 years old. But my fire setting problem didn't stop there. When I was seven I fell on our BBQ and caught it on fire. My mom had to get the fire extinguisher to put the fire out. There are so many stories of things I've done when I'm distracted; I couldn't possibly list them all.

I wasn't diagnosed with ADHD until I was in the 3rd grade, a year after I got my hearing aids. I have spent my childhood trying to find ways to deal with both disabilities. Like you, I have forgotten to take my medication before an exam and I was distracted and worried. I can really notice a difference between when I take my medication and when I don't. Let's just say everyone prefers that I take it.

When I read your book, I felt like I had come home. I took some of your advice on how to deal with distractions and stress and it has really helped me. I decided to join a softball team,

started making bracelets, learned how to sew, and started meditating. All of these things helped me with the distraction and stress. That's not to say everything is perfect now. I am still struggling with some of my grades. It is difficult when you can't hear what a boring teacher is saying and you are distracted. Needless to say, I am working extra hard to pass science this year.

The other part of your book that really made me think about my life and how I see it was the part about the "Gifts" of ADHD. It is difficult sometimes, when everyone is telling me to focus, to listen, to be serious etc... to see what my gifts really are. I know that I am intelligent, funny, energetic, creative, adventurous, honest, passionate, and I sure as heck am spontaneous, but it was really nice to see that there is research to prove it.

My Mom bought your book for me because she thought it was funny that you set a fire at the dinner table too. She had no way of knowing how much your book would really help me. I want to go to college someday. The fact that you did it gives me faith that I can do it too.

Thanks so much for writing such an honest and amazing book about what it is like to live with ADHD.

Sincerely,

Kailey McCoy