The Cost of the Decision

Smudged vision in a grey, cold room. Weighted down by a blanket that somehow provided me comfort. *Wait, how could I feel comfort?* “Where is my dad?” I asked the nurse as she flew by with a clipboard in hand. With a fast snap of her head, followed by a vicious stare she explained I could not see him. My eyes closed. Tears began, with a steady flow crawling down my face I felt the touch of a hand. Opening my swollen eyelids was a slow struggle. “You alright Sweetheart?” The most angelic face was beaming my way. “I want to see my dad please.” My eyes sunk back into my foggy head. My body relaxed. I heard squeaky, wet shoes approaching me. Grey Nike Shox. It was my Dad. I never knew relief could be felt within sight.

Flashback to when it happened. Five minutes left in our last game of the tournament. The day before I left to travel across the country on a soccer exchange trip. Screams so loud people who lived close by came running. I knew it was over. In so much pain I couldn’t help but cry, the paramedics arrived. Inhaling a gas that would allow some relief, I became confused. Strapped into a stretcher that caused more pain and dizziness, we arrived in ambulance. Looking back, the ride was foggy and confusing. We safely arrived at the hospital. After being completely analyzed by at least three different doctors, my father asked the question. “Will my daughter be able to go on her exchange trip?” I was advised not to as having done all my scans, the results could come back within two days. I was not going on the trip. Injuring yourself at the beginning of summer is not something that any student should have to do.

Four days after being in the hospital, my father and I received a call. I had heard the most upsetting sentence in my life. “Jayden has completely torn her ACL, she has torn her meniscus, she has chipped pieces off her kneecap and broke cartilage in her knee.” Devastated. This is the moment one of the most challenging obstacles I’ve had to go through in my life began. What did this mean? We began researching doctors and surgeons until one up to my parents’ standards fit. Luckily my uncle had known a world known physiotherapist, I went to see him. He advised me with the name of two surgeons, then we picked one. Before surgery it was time to get my knee as flexible as it could be in order for me to come out with relatively acceptable results.

Eight months later, it was time for surgery. I had gone through surgery as a young child, but nothing to this extent. It was an early morning in January, it was raining and cold. I sat in a room with other people who were looking to get help as I was. Signing numerous different documents and getting dressed into an ugly gown, I walked myself into the operating room. My anesthesiologist asked me a couple different questions about what I wanted to do with my life. My answers were descriptive, but said in a shaky, scared voice. The last thing I remember before being put under was my surgeon stating that everything was going to be okay. The surgery was alright but everything to come after was going to be difficult.

Physio throughout the week, schoolwork and limited movement cost for a lot of unhappiness in my life. I saw most of my days on a gray tone scale. This is really difficult time for me. I had always been someone who was passionate in every relationship and putting a lot of effort into each one, but I became very distant.

Fast forward to August of 2019, and I was told I was finally able to play soccer again. Now what? My surgeon is very strategic he told me that I could play soccer and I became excited. Little did I know I should listen to what he said after. The best sentence was followed by very confusing ones. If I should play soccer again, the possibility of me tearing the same ACL or even my other ACL became very high. So, then I was left with the decision, do I play soccer again or do I accept the fact that I have now healed after a two-year process and just be happy with where I’m at. This decision was not made very fast September came around and I had my two coaches asked me if I was going to play, I really didn’t know what to say. How am I supposed to make a decision when while I’m going on a run, I completely slow my body down to turn a corner or when it’s a really cold day and I still get aches and pain in my left knee. Mentally I was not ready to play. It doesn’t matter the countless hours I spent at physio, or all the hard work I’ve put into the last two years, I knew I couldn’t play soccer to level I once did ever again.