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September 2018

## How Idiopathic Juvenile Osteoporosis Will Not Ruin Your Life; Also How God Can Turn Your Pain to Joy: A Memoir

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### Recommended Citation

Podnar, Aubrey B. (2018) "How Idiopathic Juvenile Osteoporosis Will Not Ruin Your Life; Also How God Can Turn Your Pain to Joy: A Memoir," *The Idea of an Essay*: Vol. 5 , Article 12.  
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## Aubrey Podnar

Aubrey Podnar is a freshman nursing major from Akron, Ohio. She enjoys language and descriptive writing. Aubrey's interests include drawing, playing sand volleyball, and riding horses.

How  
Idiopathic Juvenile Osteoporosis  
Will Not Ruin  
Your Life;  
Also How God Can Turn  
Your Pain to Joy:  
A memoir

In the third grade I went to  
The doctor's for an x-ray of  
My lungs. They were looking  
To improve my vocal cord  
Dysfunction, but instead  
Found two fractures in my  
spine. My T7 and T8 vertebrae  
Were misshapen. I was forbid  
From playing any contact  
Sports, which meant for me  
No more soccer or horseback  
Riding. As an active nine-year-  
Old girl I was devastated to have  
My favorite things taken away  
From me. I was not allowed to  
Participate in the normal gym  
Class activities, for fear of further  
Injuring my back. Self-esteem is  
Crucial in a girl's adolescent years,  
And mine plummeted after this

Revelation. I grew unsure of  
Myself and doubted my self  
Worth. From birth to my fifth  
Birthday I had unwillingly  
Succumbed to seven seizures,  
And my vocal chord dysfunction  
Made me wheeze like your average  
Asthmatic. To top off the new  
Knowledge that my spinal cord was  
Missing pieces, I was transferring  
Schools. Elementary school is crucial  
For developing friendships, and I did  
Not know a single soul at my new school.  
I was the freak with the back brace.  
However, I was not alone. There were  
Other children who could not play  
In gym class with everyone else either.  
I showed up on my first day of gym time,  
And I saw my future. I was no longer the  
weird new girl with spine problems who  
had to drink                      glasses  
of milk at all of her meals, the child  
Wearing the                      ugly  
Beige back brace contraption, swallowing  
pills the size of Texas. I was just  
Another student in gym class, trying  
To make it around the gym on the  
Specially crafted tricycles. My new  
Gym classmates were the occupants  
Of the special needs classroom at the  
End of the hall: as a third grader, they  
Were already known as the weird kids.

Now I was a weird kid as well. I knew there  
about them that was different,  
And I also knew as an innocent nine-year  
Old that Jesus calls us to love everyone.  
So I tried to ignore the reproaches of the other  
and I got to know my new friends  
Over  
The next three years, some of my best friends  
Struggled with Autism and Williams syndrome.  
play together on the playground, share  
but our  
Gym time together was unique. It was where we  
together, laughed together, got frustrated  
It seems inconsequential, a recounting of a  
Third grade girl's experience with a minor  
Back injury. 'Tis a woeful tale of misfortune starring  
child from a middle class suburban  
family. But I believe that my close relationship  
with a mentally disabled elementary class gave  
Me new eyes. Getting to know those children  
As a child myself gave me an appreciation for how  
have all been created, and how similar  
characteristic that  
Most imaginative Creator. No matter how quickly  
your genetics, or at what level  
I learned pretty quickly how cruel people can be.  
With my own abnormalities, I felt a fraction of  
My friends' pain. Long after I outgrew my own  
Osteoporosis, I thought about my time with the  
Special needs class, and I decided that I wanted  
To make my experience a part of my future. I  
Chose to pursue nursing to help people feel  
Valued. No child should have to grow up  
Thinking they are alone in their struggles.  
Through my own physical pain and

Was something  
Students  
As we spent an hour together each day.  
We would  
Meals together in a cramped lunchroom,  
grew  
Together, learned together.  
A middle  
Diversely we  
The one  
Bonds us together is that we were all formed by the  
Your brain develops,  
we are all created in Christ's image.

Emotional turbulence, I learned that every  
Person has a place in God's kingdom. We  
All were created with purpose, and I  
Wish to spread that message to the  
Ill and broken people throughout  
The world. I have a special place  
In my heart for the mentally  
Disabled, people who may believe  
They are not worth much in  
Today's chaotic society.

“But even the hairs of  
Your head have all  
Been numbered.

Fear not; you are  
More valuable  
Than many  
Sparrows.”

Luke 12:7

I am a  
Child  
Of  
God.

Psalm 139:13-14

“For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.”