

Donor Pen Sketch and Goodwill Message

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I was born in [redacted] after my parents moved there for work. I am the eldest son [redacted] and we lived in [redacted] until [redacted] we all moved back to [redacted]. I was a creative kid who loved painting, drawing, singing, and acting. I had a lot of energy, and I was not afraid to express myself - usually disrupting everyone else - which drove my parents and teachers to despair. Some would say I was restless, and some would say I was a troublemaker, whereas I'd say I was precocious. Early in school, I struggled to concentrate and achieve anything, which invariably knocked my confidence. Luckily, my mother realised that I had severe dyslexia, which was probably why I struggled so much, so I went to a specialist school [redacted] which helped me overcome my learning difficulties. We all moved further out into [redacted] for a more peaceful life. This helped enormously although the behavioural side still wasn't great, but at least I could spell correctly at this point. After getting specialist teaching, I achieved good grades in more academic subjects. I learned to play the game regarding behaviour and became the head boy in my primary school after turning my bad attitude around.

I was good at sports, not through any natural ability but sheer enthusiasm—which is how I got anywhere in life. I played rugby and tennis to quite a high standard and played at [redacted] Rugby Club when I was a teenager. I still enjoy rugby games occasionally. Outside of school, I pursued my creative endeavours at every available opportunity. I went to Saturday acting school and regularly took singing, acting, dance and music lessons on the piano. Out of sheer luck, one of my music teachers recommended that I audition for a role, and at the age of [redacted] I got a part in [redacted] production [redacted] on the West End. I did a [redacted] stint performing multiple times a week [redacted] I'd finish at school, get dropped off [redacted] perform on the West End, and then do my homework while on the train home. For a long time, I wanted to be an Actor. I was a child actor who appeared in multiple [redacted] shows, [redacted]. While I was studying for my GCSEs and A-levels, I was always rehearsing for a show. I did [redacted] musicals during the summer and always got a leading role in the school play. [redacted]

[redacted] I worked as an actor for a few years which were some of the most rewarding of my life. I did everything from TV to panto and travelled the country acting in anything I could. I also produced and acted in multiple shows [redacted] over the years and loved it. However, being an actor is tough, and my lifestyle had begun to take a toll on my health. I could never settle in one place and got a mysterious illness which woke me up to how difficult it is to stay healthy when travelling and under enormous stress. I was a great actor, singer, and musician, but it was a hard life. I saw many talented people who were much older than me without any accomplishments to show for themselves. I didn't want to wake up at 30 with no job, nowhere to live, and no hopes for the future—a fate shared by many actors. Creatives can be incredibly talented but that's not a guarantee of success and I was not impressed with the road that lay ahead of me.

At the age of [redacted] I ended up pivoting my life and built a career in corporate events which is what I do now. It combines my love for creativity, travel and earning a decent living. Luckily, I threw everything I could at my chosen career path and made a success of it. I have a great life [redacted] with a house, girlfriend and great friends. It could have all gone Pete Tong but luckily I was honest to myself about my strengths and weaknesses and built a life after trying to be a professional actor. I've learned that failure is not the end of the line. When I failed, I picked myself up, dusted myself down and walked into a new challenge with just as much enthusiasm as the last. I have no doubt that I will fail again some time in the future or I will need to pivot again. At that point I'll do what I've done before and try again. As I get older my perspective changes on the life I've lived. I am thankful for the dark times and the challenges. I hated them at the time but without them I wouldn't have been pushed to find the meaning in life.

I've noticed that I gain immense satisfaction by contributing to greater causes than my own selfish wants and desires. I have a small [redacted] company which donates to charity every quarter and I go out of my way to help my friends and others whenever they are in need. That's why I wanted to donate and help families who had trouble conceiving. The more I give with no expectation of anything in return the more satisfaction I get. Life isn't about avoiding the storm, it's about learning to dance in the rain.

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I donated because I wanted to give couples who had difficulty conceiving the chance to become parents. I've had close friends struggle with fertility and witnessed the pain of being told that you're not able to have biological children first-hand. Solving that problem for a couple is one of the greatest gifts I can give.

Beyond that, I have many friends who are same-sex couples who often face severe barriers to having biological children of their own. If I can be a small part of making a happy family, I'd be proud to have contributed. I feel fulfilled when I know I have contributed something to the greater good. Life is a gift and bringing that to others will bring me joy to know that I'd been part of it.

I'm writing this [redacted] years old and aware that you'll be reading this when you're 16 and I'll be [redacted]. I remember thinking at 16 that I was going to have it all figured out [redacted]. Needless to say, I didn't then, and I still don't now. That is okay. The roads that life leads you down often surprise you, and I ended up in a totally different place than I thought I would. What would have helped me at 16 is to say wherever you are and however you've arrived, it's how it's meant to be. That's a lesson that I continually forget and have to remind myself. I often look back at my life and find that the times I found incredibly difficult were the ones I grew the most. In the dark moments, I think that everything is going wrong, and I despair at my situation. I beat myself up wishing that things hadn't happened or I'd done something different. It is only years later, when I gained perspective, that I realised the lesson that those tough times taught me. Life doesn't give you what you want; it gives you what you need. If you're anything like me, you may make some mistakes along the way. That's what it's all about. Take that energy you have and go for it. If it doesn't work out, do what I did, dust yourself off, and try something else. 16 is the time to take risks. Think big and go for it.