

**KYLE EDDINGS**

**BACK  
TO  
BACK**



**The mind of a curved spine.**

Title: Back to Back

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Release Date: June, 2019 [file was first posted on August 25, 2019]

Edition: 1

Language: English



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***"Don't count the days,  
make the days count."***

***-Muhammad Ali***

**Bless everyone at  
Texas Scottish Rite  
Hospital for  
Children!**

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**I love you all! Thank  
you for never  
giving up!**

Here I am, in the chilling office of a world-renowned orthopedic surgeon (at age ten I started to develop Scheuermann's Kyphosis Scoliosis, which severely altered my appearance.) going to make a decision that will impact my life more than I could comprehend at the time. Me, only thinking of the ideal picture of myself set in my mind, just wanting to look normal like the other kids. Not knowing what was fully in store for a young fourteen-year-old me.

“You know this is a major surgery and is going to take time to heal and get used to”, says Dr. R. He explains all the effects and possible outcomes of the surgery, without hesitation, I agree to schedule a date that will impact me more than I bargained for. Weeks of calm nervousness pass an unknown fear of what to come.

I arrive at Scottish Rite Hospital a day before my appointment, where the surgery is being performed. Keep in mind, this is a hospital that specializes in orthopedics for children. Walking into this place felt relaxing yet somewhat off-putting seeing all the other kids with the same deformity as me in these contraptions and braces. I make it up to my assigned room and get prepared for surgery that is set for 6:00 AM the next morning. Unable to sleep because of how anxious I was, never before have I had such a major surgery.

The morning hits, still tired from the sleepless night, two nurses walk in and check my vitals and give me a gown to wear. Dr. Richards walks in and checks on me before the surgery. He goes over the scenario with me and tells my parents how long it will take. "He's in good hands" says one of the nurses. I lay on the gurney they bring, and we stroll away; the quiet roll to the post-op room made me even more nervous. Arriving at a sealed metal door waiting for confirmation to go through I start to get cold feet, but with my parents, by my side, I was reassured everything will be alright ... that was true for the most part.

We get to the post-op room where there are three other kids waiting for their operation as well. The best I could describe this room would be "...something from a kids television show background" including all the horrifying hospital equipment. The room is full of colorful happy cartoon animals which tried to soothe me. This is where they added my I. V and site mark me. Shortly not too long after I get a dose of Dilaudid to ease the stress I am having. After all the preparations are made I get rolled into the operating room where I was greeted by the familiar face of Dr. Richards. The anesthesiologist puts a mask on me and said "Countdown from ten". Things begin to move slowly, and my vision gets blurry as I count down 6...5...4... and gone.

Waking up stiff and groggy feeling as if, (... I was run over by a bus,) I kept spamming the Morphine pump to ease the pain. My nurse walks in and tells me “You did very good, everything went as planned.” Pleased with the news she gave me my parents walk in and see me for the first time in six hours. Ecstatic to see everything turned out fine. Unable to do much I sleep the day away.

On the second day of my stay for the first time, I got to get out of bed and see my transformation, seeing what I have always wanted in my life. I take my time and stand up wires and hoses dangle from me. Feeling extremely uncomfortable about moving I gently take half steps towards my parents, seeing that I was now eye level with my father. The doctor corrected my spine and I gained a few inches in height! Tears rolling down our eyes of the pure joy we had, finally, I looked somewhat normal. Day three comes and I get discharged, I finally get to go home and show my grandparents the new me! On the way home, it felt as if we were in a school zone the entire way going as slow as possible. My parents were being as careful as possible avoiding every bump and hill. Getting home my grandmother was shocked to see how much I had grown from surgery. “Mira qué tan alto eres” says, my grandmother. Here on out happy and relieved turns to sad and broken.

The next morning I wake up to get my bandages changed and see something that changed the mood I was referring to. My parents tried to be optimistic, but I was fully aware something was wrong. There was a green discharge coming from my wound, so we call the doctor and tell him what we had just discovered. His nurse answers saying that "You need to come in so we can check it." We rush to the hospital and see the doctor, me crying because I know that it was going to be bad news. Do you ever have that feeling of pure devastation that you just don't want to believe? That was me but just hearing the words come from the doctor made it even worse, because at that moment reality set in. Dr. Richards says "We're going to have to go in and clean it out." Terrified and emotionally unprepared I was transferred to a quarantine room that I would be calling home for the few months. A three-day visit turns into a vacation nightmare unable to escape. Turns out I was diagnosed with M. R. S. A, a super staph infection resistant to most antibiotics which taken over my spine. Depressed and scared of what was to come, I was prepped for emergency surgery. Going through everything all over again as if I was stuck in a never-ending loop nightmare. I woke up with even more hoses coming from my back after the emergency surgery.

Living there for such a long time, because, of the infection, it really changed me and my personality; it made me numb to things and showed me how much I should value my body and be grateful for what I have. On a ordinary day in the hospital would go as stated: Wake up early around 7:00 am, being very hesitant to order breakfast because of the harsh medications I was on; stay in bed to eat till I was made to get up and walk around for physical therapy (keep in mind while walking I had four hoses coming from my back that lead to a small bag that filled with fluid.) that terrified me and made it so that I was nearly bedridden. When dinner came around it would be the same dreaded experience as with breakfast. Even though being in and out of the hospital for the years, It really couldn't prepare me for the future and what was to come. After my second stay at the hospital, I was changed, very scared to do even the simplest of things. This is where the drill head of regret dug deeper into the block of wood I called my life. That point on I stopped going to school and talking to the small number of friends I had. Yes, I had the ideal figure that I have always wanted, but at what cost was it worth?



How much time wasted in depressed sorrow? Only to be haunted by the same thing that brought me down, got me and took me out of the hole it left me in. Later on in life, at nineteen, I was reinfected with the same staph infection and it changed my life for the better. I was forced yet again to be a slave to my illness; this time getting the titanium rod that was in my back removed. The very same rods which caged me, set me free for I would not have to worry anymore. Feeling the weight lifted from me I knew, I will move on and accomplish any goal that I set my mind too, without worrying about the rod which caged me.

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**The next page is dedicated to those who have felt these struggles.**

**May you never give up!**

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This is to anyone who is in the spot that I was in. You are gonna feel like this will last forever, your gonna feel like you are just a fragment of your previous self. I know the feeling and dealt with it for years. You must thrive and I don't mean just "live" you must keep everything that matters close to you. Keep that picture of who you are deep inside and project that future and manifest those intentions. Then once you have that mentality nothing can stop you. I missed out on so many things such as high school, making friends, and all the fun activities young teens enjoy. All the things that happened to me in life fuels my motives and powers me to move forward. You cannot let life win until you the inevitable occurs. Sure some will say giving up is easy, but once you do so there will not be anyone to build you back up. Only you can change the way you do things, you are the captive of your inner self. Happiness is a mindset, problems are temporary and solutions will bring happiness. If a problem occurs I smile and try to find a solution as soon as possible. Do this, figure out what you want to become and work towards that goal. Use your inner self to shape your outer self. Make it realistic, sure I believe anything is possible but you must start small. These small steps add up and slowly but surely give you the confidence needed! I procrastinated for years because I felt I "wasn't ready" but frankly that is just an excuse. Less saying more doing no matter the scale.

# Thank you for reading!



Leave me any feedback good or bad I am all ears and not afraid of criticism. Also, I would love to help by providing advice if needed. Just email me

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