

When I was a little kid I always dreamed of becoming someone cool. I remember watching cartoons and seeing these characters being immortalized in our every day lives. Every kid knew who “Scooby Doo” was. Every kid knew what a “Pokémon” was. Every kid watched and looked up to someone in his or her life. It didn’t take long for my interest in television and films to grow. I frequently envisioned myself as a character from a television show.

As a kid I just took for granted that the shows I watched were what they were. I never realized the amount of work that went into those productions. Little did I know that I would eventually take the tedious and exciting path of bringing my drawings to life. I can talk forever about my fascination with movies, music, and animation. They’ve always been in my life and have played a huge role in making me the person that I am today.

Before I go into detail with how I got to where I am today, I need to back up to the very beginning. I was born on Thursday, September 17, 1992 as “Randy Stair”. I have resided in Pennsylvania ever since. I was the first child that my parents had. Two years later on September 11, 1994, my parents had a second son who would become my brother, “Jeremy”.

For as long as I can remember, I was always a shy kid. I remember my parents saying how I would bawl my eyes out when they would drop me off at pre-school. I just remember feeling helpless and lost when I was away from them. Every time my teacher would greet me as I walked through the door my head would be down or my eyes would look straight up at the ceiling to avoid eye contact with people. I didn’t hate my teachers, I just hated being acknowledged that I existed. I wanted it to be as if I was a ghost in the room; sitting in class and learning, but not having anyone know that I was there.

I’ll never forget about the play that we put on for our parents in preschool. While I don’t remember what the play was about, I can remember standing at the back of the stage with my back turned to the audience; in plain sight. I just zoned out. I just started looking around at *anything* to take my mind off of the nerve-racking situation. My mind was still developing at that young age but I soon began to realize how powerful it can be, and how emotions can get the best of you.

You could say I was a daydreamer; that’s what the average person would say. As time progressed however, it became something much deeper. For some reason I always liked being alone. In elementary school I would see all of these kids in my classes talking with each other, smiling, and acting like they’d known each other for years. I would sit feeling confused and feeling like I was missing something. I wanted to cry whenever group projects would be issued. I was always one of, if not the last person to partner up. I felt like a nobody. Here were all of these kids that conversed with ease and wanted to interact, whereas I would rather sit in the front of the class

near the teacher. I desperately wanted people to like me, but at the same time leave me alone completely. It was something beyond being just an introvert. I just felt lost.

I started to learn that things couldn't be handed to you in life. You had to make decisions and you had to make friends on your own. I did make some friends in elementary school. Although I made friends in school I never hung out with them out of school. I was afraid to even call them on the phone. Hell, I was afraid to call my own grandmother on the phone fearing my grandfather would answer; I would always hang up on him. The first sad memory that I can truly say that changed my life was when my friend Michael moved away in first grade. It was emotional for me and I really don't understand why because I barely knew the kid. I just remember hugging him and fighting back tears on his last day at school. To be fair he wasn't the coolest kid either. That memory stuck with me for a while for some reason but it had no control over me on trying to make and keep friends.

In first grade I met someone who would help make me the person I am today; Matthew Gilbert. We were both big football fans and enjoyed recording with video cameras; it was the perfect combination. He was the first friend that I felt like I could tell anything to. We made a bunch of videos together on mini DV tapes. They started from just simple plots of two boys that wanted to try and find a friend, to parodies of Wes Craven's, "Scream". Matt helped me realize my love for the video camera.

Whenever we would hang out I can remember begging him to make some videos with me. I didn't even care what they were about; I just loved to record things with the camera and be able to watch them back on my television later on. I think a big reason why is because I loved to remember the moments we had together as friends and be able to relive them whenever I wanted. It got to a point where he grew tired of repeating the same formula for a video, and we just stopped doing them. I however kept making them with just myself in them.

From the first time I ever picked up a video camera and looked into the viewfinder, to the videos I made with Matt, my love for film never faded. I remember watching movies like "Titanic", "Scream", "Pirates of the Caribbean", and "Harry Potter", and just being in awe of them. I got lost in the visuals, the soundtrack, the dialogue; everything. I wanted to be able to make videos like that. I would just walk around with the video camera and fantasize about what was happening; even though it was just me narrating with a camera angled upwards, twelve inches away from my face.

Matt and I eventually went separate ways at the end of ninth grade. He had been in a relationship with a girl for a year or so, and it just limited the amount of time that we could hang out. I just remember feeling enraged. I felt like that girl was more important than I was. I wasn't in love with the guy but I felt abandoned. I haven't spoken to him since. I think the last thing I ever said to him was that Brett Favre had retired; him being a die-hard Packers fan.

I basically just drifted through elementary and middle school. Matt was my best friend throughout those years; no one remotely came close. The biggest mistake I made was not branching out to other students. For some reason I just didn't connect with them; always feeling like I was in the wrong class of kids. I had more friends in my brother's class than my own. It eventually got the point that I just stopped trying and caring to make friends. I was always the isolated, quiet, and shy student; and it never changed.

In middle school I met someone who I am decent friends with to this day; James Schwemmer. Like Matt, he really helped influence my life. Although we wouldn't become friends until ninth grade, James and I would share a strong interest in filmmaking. James was the one who *really* got me into YouTube and helped motivate me to make content of my own.