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An Experience in Childhood Bullies

I had my bullies, sure. I had certain ones that kept it up for quite some time. For a good while there, it kept me with my few friends, and my self esteem teetered back and forth. Middle school was difficult for me. The people I had known in elementary who were mean then truly became cruel. It was rough, but I just started keeping to myself. There were times where I wanted to take it back on them, but it just resulted in pent up frustration and anger that got taken out in my art and the like. I could have been a lot worse, but I ended up just being very passive aggressive... and still am in a LOT of ways.

High school pulled me out of the fire. The people I met turned things around a bit. There were others that I actually really did fit along with, and then there were the ones who shared just enough in common with me to get me through the times when my friends weren't around. I was still weird to plenty of people... most, in fact, but the friends I had meant that didn't matter to me anymore. I wasn't alone. It was a little rough moving to Utah, California, and back to Utah... since it meant having to find 'those people' again. I just chose not to look for them. I kept my head down, and they found me. I got lucky. Did I still have people that pushed my buttons and said and did things that hurt and upset me? Of course... but then I would turn to other outlets and it never caused me any trouble. The only real problem I ever had can be seen in scars. Pain became an addiction for me, but never something that was shown off. My shirts, sweaters, etc. were there to hide them at the time, and I eventually broke the habit when it truly became bad enough that it could have been a threat to me and I had an event (and a friend) snap me away from it. There have been times since where I have turned back to it without thinking... but few and far between... and it has been at least a good year since the last time.

So, did bullying take a toll on me? Sure. Was it something I took out on other people, got revenge for, or even really let people know about? No. Did it get so bad as to cause any truly bad lasting damage? No. I had my outlet for a while there, one that I look back on and realize could have gotten bad... and it's left me with some small scars as far as certain comments and the like go, even in jest... but I wouldn't say it dealt me any crushing blows?

Can it cause those blows for others, though? Most definitely. Bullying has only gotten worse as time goes on. The bullying I experienced is nothing compared to some of what I have seen around kids now. And even what I experienced when I was growing up was nothing compared to what plenty of others have been put through. Like I said, I got lucky. Despite being one of the 'odd ones', I found the right crowd to pull me through.