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Nia Darville



When I entered college my freshman year I was an excited, focused 17-year old. I knew exactly what I wanted to do with my life—or so I thought. I had an extensive ten-year plan that outlined every aspect of my life. By my sophomore year, I was thriving. I was excelling at the top of my class, serving in student government and padding my resume with extracurricular activities. But something was missing. I was so successfully independent that I didn't need to be dependent on God.

So with my ducks in a row, and my confidence at an all-time high, I was in the perfect position to receive a divine wakeup call. Toward the end of the first semester of my sophomore year, I felt God leading me to transfer schools. While I was flourishing at my previous school, I had to admit: I was not evolving. With that realization, I determined to follow God and his plan for my life rather than sticking with my well-laid-out strategies.

Many would think admitting my state was the hardest part, but searching for a new school was by far the most challenging. I am not ashamed to confess that in high school I swiftly ruled out Andrews as an option because of the cold weather. This time, I denied myself the luxury of picking a school based on location. After evaluating each school, visiting, praying and seeking the counsel of my parents and friends, I decided to transfer to Andrews University. Great, right? Wrong! That's when the panic set in.

Never before had I gone somewhere completely new by myself. After high school, my brother and I entered college together. In college, I knew many of my closest friends long before we arrived. For the first time, I was starting an experience completely by myself, and that terrified me. But I wasn't alone. Once God removed me from my comfort zone and forced me to depend on him, he became my truest confidant. Daily, I began to revel in the intimacy of my relationship with my new Best Friend.

Upon arriving at Andrews, God decided to change another part of my plan—my major. Originally, I was an elementary education major with an emphasis in language arts. I have always been passionate about helping children overcome the challenges that prevent them from learning. For this reason, I thought teaching would be a perfect fit for me, until my new Best Friend threw me a curveball.

God used several people and “accidental” encounters to expose me to a career path I had never considered: speech pathology. I was hesitant to change my major at first because I was still attached to my previous plan (after all, it was a great plan!) but once I made the switch, I couldn't believe how fulfilled I felt: I didn't know this level of fulfillment existed!

Now, after finishing the toughest semester of my college career, I'm excited. My new major stretches me and forces me to grow, while simultaneously inspiring and stimulating me. I am no longer dependent on a ten-year plan. I only take life week-by-week now, doing the best I can with what I have been given. I have learned to wait with expectation, watching to see what God will do in my life next. I admit, living by faith is sometimes scary, but God has not let me down yet. In just one semester here at Andrews, so much has changed, and I suspect the change won't stop here.