

Title: It Only Made Us Stronger

Abstract: A story about how the recession has changed my families and my life. How it has left many people unemployed in my family, including myself. Through all the hardships, worrying, and stress has brought us together, and has taught me what hard work is. I grew up a lot through this recession, and even though it was a difficult experience it had taught me a lot about life, and has made me a better person.

Keywords: recession, unemployment, economic decline, stress, worries, difficult times, moving forward, tensions, arguing, responsibilities, and sticking together.

If you had asked me 5 years ago what a recession was I wouldn't have an answer. I'd be able to tell you what a depression was since it's in all the history textbooks, but a recession? I had never heard of that. Today, on the other hand, I can tell you what it is in detail. According to google.com, a recession is a time of economic decline, but what this definition doesn't tell you is how it affects everyone from the richest person to the poorest. This recession has left many people unemployed, homeless, broke, tired, and hungry. It has touched everyone; of course some more than others, but never the less, we all have been affected in some way, or knows someone that has lost a job, or house.

I remember being a senior in high school taking economics; the year was 2009, and that is when i heard about the stock market crashing. My economics teacher would go on and on about Wall Street this, Wall Street that! It all went through one ear out the other one. He would tell us, "this is going to be in the history textbooks years from now." I thought he was a little crazy, I have to admit. Everything seemed normal to me. My family was doing fine. My dad was making good money. Two years before that my sister had gotten me a job at Mervyns, and she had just gotten a promotion. Life couldn't be better. It was my senior year, and I was feeling the

senioritis more than ever, ditching school, and spending my money like it grew on trees. I had no worries, bills didn't exist. I thought this would blow over sooner or later.

One afternoon my sisters came home, and turned the television to the news, all that came out her mouth was "we've bankrupt!" There on T.V were the main offices to Mervyns. In big letter it's said, Mervyns has gone under! What does this mean? I thought we were fine? All I had was questions but no answers. One by one I watched the president, vice president, and other employees walk out with their boxes of stuff. I had been so occupied watching the news that I hadn't noticed my sister had left. She spent the rest of the day locked in her room. I would knock and knock but she didn't want to open. "Are you okay?" I'd ask. I was getting worried; maybe I shouldn't take this recession so lightly. My mom told me to leave her alone that she had a lot to think about. "Is everything going to be okay?" I asked her. She told me to pray and that God would help us get through this difficult time. The next morning my sister came out ready for work. She told me that we had to accept what happen and move forward. That God had something better in store for us.

Three months after the news of the bankrupt Mervyns closed down. I was my last semester year in High school. I didn't have a job, so I couldn't afford to go to prom. On top of that my grades were horrible, and college wasn't an option. I barely graduated. It now had been a while since I had gotten laid off, and finding a job was more difficult than I thought. My sister had already found a job, but I couldn't seem to find anything. I started to get depressed, and instead going out to finding a job I'd lie to my mom and hang out with friends.

It had almost been a year since I had gotten laid off, and I was going crazy at home. My parents argued about bills all the time, on top of other arguments. I couldn't stand being in my house. I fought with my siblings about every little thing. I had become the family chauffeur, and I was getting tired of doing nothing with my life. One morning I left early and applied everywhere possible. Three weeks later I had a job. But, after the holiday season I remember why I dislike retail so much. I knew that the only way out would be going back to school, and after my grandmother's death there was no doubt in my mind that I wanted to become a nurse. That following fall I started school. Things weren't looking any better for my family, my brother had gotten laid off, and my father hadn't been working for the past 2 months. Unlike my other checks that I'd spend on clothes, I started to learn about responsibilities. I realized that one no was going to pay for my classes and books. I was actually surprised how easy it was to hand over those 400 dollars for my school books, because I knew I was investing in my future, and I was not just throwing it away like before. Even though things were getting better for me, my family's situation was getting worst.

Tensions were growing, and my father was stressed out more than ever. Soon it had been 6 months that he hadn't work. We went from having all we needed and more to only being able to spend on the necessary things. My mom cried all the time, worried about how they were going to pay the mortgage. I spend most of my day at school trying to avoid arguments.

My brother finally found a job, but he lived pay check to pay check. It had now been a year since my father had worked. You could see in my parent's face that the stress was wearing them down. So I decided that I'd drop out and help them with bills, but when I told them my plans they said that they wouldn't let me drop out of school. Either way I was determined to help them. So I went out and found another job, and started helping with little things here and there. But that

wasn't enough; my dad couldn't keep up with the bills. Till one day he had enough cracked and took off. He had done this before, but was never gone for more than 3 days. Five days later he came back, and told my mom that he was done and he was leaving to Mexico. The next couple of weeks it was a living hell at home, more arguing than ever. A couple of weeks after work started to pick up for my dad again, and we all decide to help him out with the bills more. His idea about moving slowly disappeared.

This recession has affected everyone around me. It has put my family through thing that I will never forget, but it has also taught me about responsibility, and hard work. I have learn that things in life will never be handed to me, but that I have to work in order to get through life, and only educating myself will help me and my family have a brighter future. I respect my parents so much for what they have done for me, and always making sure I had what I need. For not letting me drop out of school even though they could have used my help. I've seen how many students have drop out due to the recession, and I'm very fortunate that I didn't have to do the same.

I've seen multiple friends lose their homes, and seen how devastating it has been for them and their families. It has even broken some apart, almost like it did to mine. I've had many family members lose their jobs, and I always recommend them to go back to school.

The recession isn't over yet, and we never know what hardships are on the way, but my family has been through so much already that we are ready for whatever comes our way next. This has brought us closer together, and as long as we stick together we will be fine.

