

ELENA SINCOCK, STUDENT, SHARES HER PERSONAL JOURNEY OF SCHOOLING AND HER EXPERIENCE OF A MICRO CLASS

My name is Elena, and I am 18 years old. I home-schooled from 15 and it completely changed my life for the better.

Growing up I had some traumatic events that made me so fearful of being shamed that it dictated everything about my social life. In the classroom, at a Steiner school, I was in fight or flight mode when we were learning so it was very difficult for me to absorb anything, and it often made me feel like I was stupid. I know now that was not the case. Year 8 was one of the hardest years of my life because all these traumatic feelings resurfaced and I would try to suppress them through an unhealthy relationship with food, cutting myself and doing drugs and alcohol. Mix that with my past trauma and it did not turn out pretty.

My family decided to try me at a Christian school which was a big change for me culturally as I was used to smaller sized classes. I really enjoyed being at the Christian school and I made lots of new friends. However, my trauma was still threatening to burst through, and I experienced severe anxiety most days. After a month, I decided it was too much for me and I told Mum I wanted to try a local public high school. I lasted two days. I was used to teachers having a more intimate, meaningful relationship with their students but going to a public school felt like the opposite. I remember sitting down with my friends and everyone seemed to be on autopilot, even the teachers. I thought: 'This can't be what life is'. I felt caged and wanted to escape. So I told mum I wanted to try home-schooling. And then my healing began.

For the next ten months, I unschooled myself which for me meant letting go of school systems, the pressure of exams and attempting to impress others, and retraining my body and mind to relax and trust I have a natural attraction to want to learn. I quit social media (one of the best things I ever did), mostly stayed at home to study and I only ventured out to attend regular psychotherapy and exercise with my personal trainer. I really enjoyed being able to choose my school work and doing it when I felt motivated, and for the first time since I was little, I felt a lot freer to think clearly and be myself.

In the Christmas holidays I met Rachel, a home-schooling mum and tutor. It was the first time I had reached out to anyone in the home-schooling community. My first impression of Rachel was that she felt like a dear old friend who was generous and loving and I Instantly felt safe with her. When she asked If I could tutor her daughter for pay as an Art tutor, I was thrilled. It was my first ever job. And her daughter became a new friend for me, even though she was years younger.

I began tutoring with Rachel as I felt like I needed guidance with my work and structure for my week. For the first time in my life, I was passionate about what I was learning, and I was captivated by Anthropology and Human Evolution studies. Rachel really supported me, and I felt like she was enjoying learning alongside me. Our tutoring sessions were very fun, and it was all based around my interests, and I found that learning didn't have to feel like you were trying to push a bag of bricks up a hill. I even did extra work because I loved what I was learning. I improved with my English and my confidence to learn.

In my second year I began my personal development work with great books by Rhonda Byrne, Joe Dispenza, Bob Proctor, and Lester Levinson. I also introduced new activities into my schedule such as Yoga and dancing.

During my third year of tutoring, I joined a micro class with another girl who has become a lovely friend. I am so grateful to have met Rachel because she is so giving and loving without anyone asking her to be. I felt like I could tell her anything and she would accept me with love. Rachel was a big part of my healing, and I am eternally grateful. I am also happy that I chose to do home-schooling because it has given me the space to find out what life really is, to be myself, and not be influenced by belief systems of school or subconscious conditioning.



Elena's Artwork