

KELSEY TAINSH: Two brain tumors, a stroke, and bullying won't stop this girl from changing the world!

By Lisa Beebe



Kelsey Tainsh's fascinating life story started the moment she was born - she's a triplet, one of three girls. When Kelsey was five, she was diagnosed with a brain tumor. She had surgery and radiation, and the tumor went away. In the next few years, Kelsey became a world-champion wakeboarder, and appeared in movies and on TV shows, including *Entertainment*

Tonight. At fifteen, Kelsey was in the best shape of her life, competing as a varsity lightweight rower. That's when she got the news that her brain tumor had returned. While she was in surgery, she had a stroke, and woke up to find the right side of her body paralyzed.

Kelsey had to relearn how to do everything, and because of her physical challenges, she faced bullying at school. Other kids called her things like "brain tumor girl." Kelsey told *BYOU Magazine*, "I was picked on and excluded. It was a very difficult time for me, but what I realize now almost ten years later, is that **I wouldn't trade what I've been through for anything, because now I get to help people every day.**"

Many people weren't sure Kelsey would ever be able to walk again, and they thought it was unlikely that she'd ever graduate high school or go to college. Kelsey proved them wrong, finishing high school with honors and earning a degree from the University of Florida. Now 25, she gives speeches around the country to share her story and inspire other people to overcome the obstacles they face. Kelsey says, "Because of what I've been through, I've learned that life



"We're all different, and there's no such thing as normal. We should embrace our differences and the differences of others."

is about nothing else but being happy and helping others. The key to my happiness in life is helping other people."

Kelsey believes that being different has made her a stronger person. "When I was fifteen and I woke up paralyzed, I wanted nothing else but to be normal again. Over time, I realized that there's no such thing as normal. If we learn to accept our differences and challenges as well as the differences and challenges of other people, and even embrace them, the world will be such a different place. Every challenge or obstacle has an amazing opportunity somewhere along the way. We just don't realize it while we're going through the hardest moments."

Kelsey has learned the importance of girl power first hand. "I believe that girls can be mean to each other because there's something going on personally in their lives that they don't know how to deal with or handle. They take it out on other people.

Instead, they need to ask for help and be able to support one another." Kelsey points out that asking for help isn't a sign of weakness - it's a good thing. "We all need help. We all need each other. **If we worked together as opposed to being mean to each other, the world would be such a different place.**"

Kelsey is currently on her largest speaking tour ever and hopes to write a book in the next year; she's also planning a TEDx Youth talk. When she gives speeches, Kelsey encourages others to overcome the challenges they face and make positive choices. She says, "I hear about people going through challenges and giving up. I chose not to give up. I chose that life was worth it." ♥

To stay up to date on Kelsey's story, check out her website at **KelseyTainsh.com** or follow her on Twitter (@kelseytainsh).

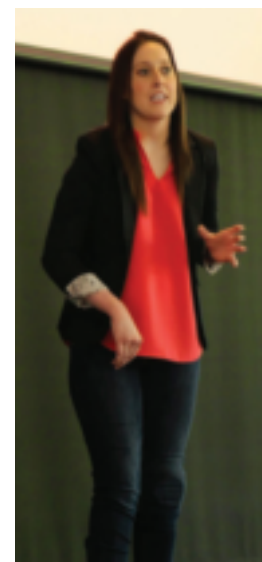


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