

There is nothing I want more than to hug Ryan and tell him it is going to be ok, but I cannot. I cannot because he had an illness that we did not totally understand. All Ryan had to do was take his medicine, but like so many of us, he got lazy. Or maybe having gone seizure free for a year he just got careless. Ryan missed several doses of his medication and had a seizure. He got himself to the hospital and received a dose of his medication, but it was not enough, he had a massive seizure before he could take his next dose, the damage was irrevocable.

Ryan was a red headed ray of sunshine. He had boundless energy. He started day camp before he was diaper trained and a counselor whispered to his dad and I "he needs a bigger program next summer".

From the time he was a little boy, Ryan knew how to make friends, he was a magnet for good people. Ryan was always trying to keep up with his big brother Jake and followed him to camp and religious school as soon as he could. We put him on a camp bus to day camp before he was three and by six, he was begging to go to sleepaway camp.

Ryan had an incredibly high verbal IQ of 156, he read a lot, he talked constantly, he was a walking Reddit, but he had learning differences which made school challenging for him. His first school skipped him forward for two years and then moved him back. He was so unique; nobody knew what to do with him! His academic life was challenging and created low self-esteem issues for him, so he focused on excelling socially. But even before this, as a toddler Ryan was unbelievably social. We met every senior citizen at our beach club because Ryan would work the beach to get cookies and snacks. We also had to put him in a life jacket because Ryan would go running into the ocean even though he could not swim.

Ryan participated in every sport even teaming up with his brother Jake in Sport Acrobatics which I think he did for the attention of the girls. Ryan and Jake wore matching leotards with shorts over them, they were quite a team. The sport Acro period was short lived with Jake moving onto martial Arts and Ryan ice and roller hockey.

Ryan loved sleepaway camp. Every evening his dad and I would anxiously scan the latest pictures on the camp website and Ryan was always front and center usually doing a split, making a clown face, or just beaming beautifully. Ryan came home loaded with awards and great memories every summer.

Ryan ran, he never walked and was constantly running into things because he was looking where he wanted to go and not in front of him. I was worried about child and family services taking him away when he was a toddler because he always had a huge lump on his noggin. The best was in Disney World. Ryan ran into a post and we had to bring him to first aid. They put an elastic gauze band around his head and tucked an icepack into it. It looked like he had brain surgery and Ryan thought it was the coolest and strode around the park with it on all day.

After our divorce, Ryan let us know that he was unhappy about the situation in not so subtle ways such as throwing his stepmom's expensive flatware out the window piece by piece over

an extended period of time, Ryan thought this was hysterical. His stepmom did not think it was hysterical the day she looked out the window and saw her flatware lying in the ally way.

Ryan flourished socially in middle and high school where he played varsity volleyball with his bussies. He stopped playing hockey in 12th grade so he could spend more time on his “social life” which is pretty funny considering how active his social life already was. He occasionally came out of retirement to play with me and of course he had picked up more friends while he played hockey, one of whom who was like a brother to him.

One of the most significant things that has happened for his dad, stepmom and me, was spending Ryan’s last week with a bunch of his friends who came to be with us while Ryan was in the hospital on life-support. They told us over and over again that Ryan was the glue of the group, the peace maker when rifts arose, many of them told us how much they learned from Ryan especially recently as a result of all of the work Ryan had been doing through rehab, AA meetings, therapy and his work with his counselor Sarah who is an integral part of this foundation. We had not realized how much he had been getting out of all of this and how much he had grown until we heard from his friends how wise he had become and how he was sharing that knowledge.

I should also mention that Ryan was a fraternity member of Phi Kappa Psi at the Universities of Colorado and Loyola New Orleans, where he was first diagnosed with epilepsy three years ago. He made great friends at both schools and of course brought them into the bigger fold of Ryan’s friendship universe.

Ryan was in California for a year before his death, where he continued to work on and maintain his sobriety. It was the calmest and happiest Ryan had ever been. Ryan moved from Orange County to LA and continued creating community. He bonded with people at his internship and again established relationships with many great people. Ryan also got a job as assistant stylist to the assistant stylist to the stylist for a well-known celebrity, and the head stylist borrowed **his** well curated wardrobe for photo shoots. Ryan made her sign a detailed invoice before he would lend her anything. He loved his apartment, his girlfriend, and his roommate. He worked hard to get into FIDM the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising and was very excited to start school, a chance he never got.

Ryan’s life was filled with many challenges and disappointments, but he always bounced back and was clearly on an upward trajectory. He was incredibly proud of his sobriety and would have been proud of the opportunity to help others through this foundation. His loss was a tremendous one. His life one we can honor.