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CIS102t

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Picking classes for next semester is always a pain. I remember telling my advisor to pick any class that is required and that fits into my schedule. When she told me I would be teaching seniors how to use computers, I didn’t think much of it. Going to the first couple of classes, I honestly didn’t know how I felt about taking the course. I thought will I have the patience for this? Will the seniors give me a hard time? I’ve never done anything like this. When it was time to visit our senior centers, my feelings started to change. The day that I went to Self Help Senior Center for orientation is the day that I knew this course was going to be an experience to remember.

During orientation, the people at Self Help were so polite. Many of the people working there are seniors. When given my tour, they showed me all the different activities going on throughout the day. I was amazed to see all the different events available for the seniors. They had a karaoke class, painting class, piano class and more. When discussing my job for the semester, they told me that rather than teaching one or two personal seniors, I will be facilitating a whole class. Believe it or not, that actually got me excited. But I must admit, it was a bit nerve wrecking knowing that I would be in charge of helping a class full of seniors.

I remember my first day of weeklies like it was yesterday. There were about 15 seniors in the class, almost all of Asian decent. I knew that it was going to require a lot more patience because of the language barrier. Right after I introduced myself to the seniors, they wasted no time and had questions ready to ask. Siok was the first senior I helped. She has hearing problems and her legs start to hurt when she sat down for too long. So when finding this out, it was essential for me to address these disabilities when working with her. She asked me what days I would be in and then told me that she will be in class each day. She also told me that she was going to spread the word to her friends. Siok really made me feel a lot more comfortable during my first day. She was so eager to learn and was full of questions. There were some seniors, majority being male, kept to themselves and just came to surf the web. From the first day on, I became more excited each week to help the seniors.

Some of the difficulties of working with seniors were that you have to repeat yourself a lot. I constantly had to repeat myself to each senior for them to understand what I was teaching them, especially because of the fact that a lot of the seniors spoke broken English. At the same time, they didn’t understand some of my things I said. This could be frustrating to some people. I never got annoyed or frustrated because of the simple fact that the seniors were all ready and willing to learn. This made me want to help them even more. There were also times where the seniors were the ones who got frustrated because the computer froze or they didn’t know how to do something. Times like that I would encourage them and go back from step one. I learned the key to teaching the seniors was simplicity. I had to make each step as simple as possible so that it was easy for them to understand and follow. It’s the greatest feeling in the world when you teach them something knew and they say, “Ohhhhhh!” It’s an even better feeling when they remembered each step and show you they can do it without your help.

I honestly never knew I would have enjoyed this course so much. I can be a very impatient person, but working with my group of seniors at Self Help I was a totally different person. It was an amazing experience for me. It showed me a lot of the disadvantages that the seniors have in society. It also showed me with a little bit of help and awareness, seniors can keep up with society and technology just as good as anyone else. The seniors were so good to me, I felt like it was necessary to do something good for them. They gave me an experience I would never forget, so I wanted to do something for them that they will always remember. I feel that having the term project at the end of the semester is a great idea because of the fact no matter what senior center you go to, they will always leave a lasting impression on you. And at the end you will always want to give back.