

# Hopes and Dreams

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My mother had always wanted me to become a surgeon. Now, I wish I didn't let her dreams get inside my head because it made me question what I wanted to do. I love my mother, but it's sometimes best not to depend on what others want you to do, and instead do what you think is best for yourself.

I had always wanted to be a teacher, but I kept that to myself, fearing my mother would be disappointed in me for not wanting to become a surgeon. My mother wanted me to become a surgeon; she was a fairly successful small business owner but had always dreamed of being a surgeon. She wasn't able to complete her dream due to her family's lack of wealth.

My dream of becoming a teacher all started with school. I got assigned a project on Africa. I looked for information and found out African students weren't able to get an education. I thought about life without school. It would be boring, like a piece of normality was missing. I looked more and found out I could help by becoming a teacher. I wanted to be part of it. It would be sharing part of my childhood with other children. This was where my dream came from.

I came home from school and told my mother about it. She frowned.

"Jianna, why don't you want to become a surgeon? At your age, I wanted to become a surgeon. I couldn't afford medical school, so I had to become a small business owner instead. You can become a surgeon, but you won't?"

From then on, I started questioning my judgment and dream.

I went to college. I took several courses, including the courses for surgeons and teachers.

I passed them all. I decided to consider becoming a surgeon for my mother or becoming a teacher for me. I imagined my mother's happy face when I would tell her that I became a

surgeon. I put my pen on the medical school form. I stopped. Was this what I wanted? I could help people with injuries and save lives, or I could teach hundreds of children. These children could learn how to treat injuries, too, I realized. I would also be doing what I loved to do. The only thing holding me back from making my dream real was what my mother thought. My mother is not me; I could become whoever I wanted to be. I signed the teaching contract instead.

I now work for the Children's Education Center and teach hundreds of children who cannot afford an education. I decided not to depend on what others think of me. By becoming a teacher, I made myself happy, and that made my mother happy for me, too. Although she imagined my future differently, she accepted my choice and moved on. By taking this job, I am not only hoping for a better future, but forming one.