

When I turned 12, I found out about Camp Du Balloon Rouge. I can't fully explain how much camp helped me. I realized I was not alone and that I have this huge group of people to support and love me for me. Camp not only helped me grow and accept my T.S. It gave me confidence, I tried new things and pushed myself. With every passing year at camp, I came to accept my TS more and to love myself.

### *Everyone has something*

I will say I couldn't have done this without having my mom by my side. She never once gave up on me, knowing I had her to come home to made it so much better. I can't stress how important it is for a child to have a strong support system. Knowing their family is behind them makes it seem a little bit more bearable.

In order to get to a better place, you have to accept that T.S is a part of you and always will be, have faith and confidence in yourself, lean on your family and friends, any type of support group you have. Just love yourself, life is too short to worry. Find your voice, don't let others being you down and remember T.S doesn't have to own you or define who you are. I chose to use my T.S. as a positive thing and I am happy with myself and where I am in life.

### **Mom Denise's Story:**

Good Evening Ladies, Gentleman and Fellow Heroes, I am **Denise Lovshe**, the proud mother of this beautiful young lady, Taylor. If anyone would have said to me 20 years ago that I would be standing before you now, listening to the divine testimony of my daughter's journey, I would have thought you were crazy.

Most of Taylor's life had been for me, just trying to breathe. To get through the year- usually the school year, the month- especially March and October, the day- her birthday or Christmas, and sometimes done to the hour- like a 504 meeting with a teacher or a visit with a doctor.

As I listen to Taylor share her challenges, her opportunities and her success, I know that they have come with great pain and suffering at times. Not only for her, but for the entire family.

Since she turned 5 years old, we have been waging a war, a war that is full of battles. Some have been harder than others, but none of them have been easy. We have endured struggles with learning, hours of after school tutoring, bullying, poor decisions with friend making, alcohol and drug experimenting, Menniger clinic visits, cornerstone recovery programs, and drunk driving car accidents.

So, although she stands before you today a beautiful, confident, caring, well-adjusted person, please realize this took years of unrelenting hours of investigating, educating, questioning, challenging advice and never giving up.

### *Surrender was never an option*

As a parent with a Tourette child I constantly remembered to leverage my faith, family and my Tourette association family.

I had to daily surrender and pray for God's help to leverage the support and encouragement of my family- who would drive her to meetings, appts, and carry me when I was immobilized by an event.

To leverage the support and resources from our Tourette family that were vital to Taylor's success. From advice on 504 versus special needs, how to handle an uncooperative teacher, to rebooting Taylor with a scholarship, camp counseling opportunities, advice on excellent medical doctors such as Dr. Carol Brady and Dr. Carlos Guerra to join our team. I am a firm believer that the Tourette Association (particular Sheryl Kadmon) has saved my daughter's life.

So if you arm yourself with the shields of Faith, family and the Tourette family --- you too will be standing up here with your own hero.