Ted Talks Essay

Many of us like to keep moving forward and like to get better at everything. For example, we like to be smart, healthy, good looking and so on. What many don’t know is that doing this in exaggeration can lead to death. I have to admit that it is hard to understand the fact that someone is trying extremely hard to be healthy even though it can be unhealthy. When I first saw the title of the article it caught my attention right away: “How healthy living nearly killed me.” A.J Jacobs starts with his experience about reading the whole Encyclopedia Britannica and how it affected his life with his wife. He talks about how he also tried to be extremely healthy for about ten years, and gives some examples of how he did it. For example the use of sunscreen, washing his hands, and even using a helmet every day. It’s hard to believe that he was doing all this just to be healthy, especially to know it consumes a lot of time and requires a lot of attention. Jacob mentions how if you dedicate yourself to just being healthy more than likely you will lose friends, family members and your social life. Jacobs experienced this life style and is not afraid to share his adventures and memories. I think he is very brave for trying it and sticking to it for so long, but at some point in the presentation he started making jokes that weren’t necessary. Although I agree with him about how too much healthy living can distract you and even hurt you, I believe he doesn’t have credibility about this topic, because of the way he presented it to the audience.

I really dislike how he tries to be funny about this true fact of healthy living can actually kill you. Through the video he kept trying very hard to be humorous and come up with jokes, maybe at first it was okay to have some jokes as ice breakers but after a while I just got sick of it. He was using his experiences as a way to make people laugh. He even showed funny pictures of himself, which is totally okay because he’s the one who comes out in the pictures, but he doesn’t see that others have experienced this situation with not too many happy memories. The reasons why he tried being healthy are not clear, at least to me, but I do know someone who is very healthy and tries to be almost perfect, her name is Esme. She is my mom’s friend and is a dentist. I know for a fact that she is extremely clean and careful with everything she does. She is paranoid of having any kind of bacteria or germs around her. A couple of months ago she almost passed away because of her lifestyle. Her body didn’t have the anti-bodies to fight back the flue she had. She had to go to the hospital and she was there for quite long time. I know how painful this experience was for her and her family, and now when she talks about it she never laughs about it. If she were to see the video she would be glad to know someone is aware of the problem but at the same time she would be offended by the way he presented the topic.

A.J. talks how he tried to follow the bible amendments and all that, but when he’s talking about it I can’t take it serious anymore. I feel like the whole talk is just meant to be comic and make the public laugh about it. Going back to Esme, she is very religious and she does try to follow the bible rules everyday of her life but I’ve never heard her make fun of it. I honestly lost interest on the video by minute five because he keeps making jokes, and at some point I feel like is disrespectful to those who are really experiencing bad consequences from healthy living, like Esme, and I know there’s man more out there. I don’t think that she adopted that life style hoping to die from it. I’m sure she was really interested in having a better life. Now it’s very hard for her to adjust to the world again, she still has issues thinking about bacteria and germs, she still likes to wash her hands often but at the same time she knows she has to change her life style to be normal again. She has to have an average lifestyle, and it’s for the best.

I think that if A.J. would have made fewer jokes during his presentation it would have been more successful. People would have been more aware of the serious situation and not just think it’s a joke as he presented it. He could have added more things to it as well, for example symptoms or ways to help. I’m sure we all know someone who’s trying to achieve this lifestyle but we just don’t notice it or don’t know how to approach it. We need some kind of guidance to deal with this problem.

After doing some research I found out that this condition is a mental disorder, just like eating disorder or anything like that. It’s all in the mind and it needs professional help such as a counselor, therapy, and support groups. It’s very serious and even though it’s not common it’s still dangerous and we have to be proactive about it. The hardest part of it is to accept it and be willing to get help, after that there’s plenty of people willing to help. For instance, the Healthy Living Group, Care2, BCC, and those are just few of the many groups who offer help. There are also hotlines, or even internet resources to help you while you are in front of your computer. The help is out there waiting to be used, we just need to know when to use it, or who needs it. He could have done some research for his presentation and point out some groups or organizations people would have gotten a better message and idea about the situation.

In conclusion, I think that even though I end it up thinking this video is disrespectful for all the sarcasm used with the topic, it pushed me to learn about it and understand better Esme’s situation. I can now say that trying to be too healthy is definitely unhealthy. We, as humans need a balance in our lives. We need to be aware of the different situations and conditions around us. It’s good to understand how germs and bacteria work in your immune system, and even though we know them as something “bad” for our bodies we need to understand they help us too. Once we see past that, we will see and understand things better. Especially with this concept of healthy living killing you. It’s very hard to believe, but it’s also important to understand it.