

## My Story

I remember our first craft in the hospital. Paper mache out of medical gloves. Yes, it was as weird as it sounds. But it was the best experience of my life so far. At first, when Ooch would come around to my room and ask me to join, I would politely decline. I just didn't think I could find anyone else with the same mindset as me, that could share the same emotions I was feeling.

That was my mindset at the time. It was a blur. Dull and depressing. IV needles, getting woken up in the middle of the night. Ooch made me happy, it gave me something in colour instead of black and white. And when I heard about the camp, I knew I was in.

I had never been away, and I was a bit worried. But more excited and that overpowered the worry.

It was the first place I could ever talk to other people about treatment, medications, about other things that kids my age wouldn't ever understand. That common bond, wow it is strong.

I remember exploring camp for the first time. All that beautiful outdoor space, but also perfectly contained. I knew that wherever I went, I wouldn't be lost.

I learned a lot about myself. I also learned that I suck at archery. Oh man, it takes forever to set up your shot and then every single time you either overshoot or undershoot. It looks easy, but it was not! But I challenge myself—like how far can I get it into the woods. Forget about the target!

Speaking of targets, I have this memory of being able to hit someone in the face with a pie. All I knew at the time is that it was one of the staff. Over a year later, I met Alex, the CEO at Ooch, and I turned around and said, "Mummy, this is the guy I pied in the face!"

What would I say to people who support Ooch? First, I would say thank you. And then I would probably hug them. Thanks to you, I have the greatest friends and the most amazing memories.

