

I thought I walked into RYLA with the completely wrong headspace, I kept telling myself that this was the wrong year, and that I should have waited until I was in a better state of mind to go on this camp. I had high expectations for a camp where I didn't know what to expect, I walked into camp excited, apprehensive and a little torn amongst my feelings of going this year. I truly arrived at camp, and regretted going. I just wished I had waited and gone another year, I wish I had waited until I was comfortable or ready.

And although I arrived and truly wasn't in the best state of mind, it was the right time, it was the right year. I needed this camp more than I thought I did. I needed the chance to forgive and let go. Forgive myself for my actions and mistakes, and forgive others for theirs. One of the quotes that has stuck with me the most after my week at camp is "You can't drink poison and expect somebody else to die." It was my time to breathe and take a moment to focus on the positives while also being pushed to other extremes both physically and mentally.

I learnt a lot about myself, I learnt a lot about others. I learnt what roles our personalities play in life, and tools on how to best communicate, and even just understand the 4 major personality groups. I enjoyed doing sport daily, even if I could barely walk up and down stairs by day 4, it was nice being "out and about" and active. I really enjoyed the phone detox I had, it was amazing to spend a week out in such an amazing setting; fresh air, mountain views -just being surrounded by nature. I remember it being quite interesting being home, I went to dinner with friends of mine and was just so confused as to why they all pulled out their phones at the table, no conversation, just scrolling on instagram. It's been really interesting to see how much technology has taken over our lives. Since RYLA I have had a stronger urge than before to get back out into nature, and do quite often do so. I try to at least once a week, something that I definitely didn't do regularly enough before, and since RYLA I use my phone less often. Constantly having to be reachable is draining, so I tend to more often than not put my phone aside to have time to focus on life more.

I got the opportunity to build new friendships, and got to know others I already knew a little bit better. I am incredibly grateful for this experience and am incredibly grateful to have been sponsored by the you all. RYLA isn't over when you drive home on the Sunday, honestly, I have done my biggest amount of "changing" and "realisation" since I've been home. I really needed this experience, and I am looking forward to what is yet to come using the new skills and mindsets that were shared with us over that week.