Angie, Cornea Recipient

An accidental scratch to Angie's left eye resulted in permanent damage to her cornea, causing her eyesight to rapidly decline. A college student in New York City at the time, Angie struggled to read for classes, had difficulty taking her exams and was no longer able to travel on the subway to school. A corneal transplant saved Angie from eventual blindness, making it possible for her to fully experience life again and enabling her to pursue a career helping children in underserved communities.

Corneal Transplant Saves Angie from Blindness, Enabling Her to Dedicate Her Life to Helping Others

Angie was a 19-year-old college student in New York City when she accidentally scratched the cornea in her left eye while removing her contact lens. Assuming that her eye would heal on its own, Angie went to bed, only to discover the next morning that she could barely see through her injured eye. Treatment with an antibiotic healed the infection, but scar tissue resulted in permanent damage to Angie's cornea and caused a sudden, rapid decline in her eyesight.

Angie's loss of vision had an immediate impact on her daily life. She struggled to keep up with the large amount of reading for classes, and she needed to sit in a specially lit room in order to take her exams. Angie could no longer ride the subway to school because she could not read the numbers on approaching trains in the dark, underground lighting. In pain and overwhelmed, Angie's fears of permanent blindness gave way to hope when her doctor told her that a corneal transplant from an eye tissue donor could restore her sight.

It has been five years since Angie's surgery, and her transplant has given her so much more than the ability to see again. After completing her undergraduate studies, Angie went on to obtain her master's degree and is now working as a school social worker helping children in crisis. Angie spends her free time volunteering to aid youth in underserved communities and is currently pursuing another master's degree in order to become a nurse practitioner. Her transplant also helped her to embrace a healthier lifestyle, inspiring Angie to lose 95 pounds since her surgery.

Angie's transplant was a transformational experience for her. She approaches each day with a greater appreciation for what she is able to do – big or small –and feels that it has made her more aware of and sympathetic to the challenges that other people face. Angie is grateful for the opportunity she has to pursue her dreams because of what her donor made possible.

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