

My Earliest Memory



Laura Ann Tull

May 19, 2018 · 4 min read ★

My earliest memory? I'm not sure. It seems like a series of images, like random clips in a movie. I'm not sure which clip came first.

Memory one is a tiny tadpole swimming in a bowl that I think is probably a butter plastic tin, empty and cleaned out to be the home of my new pet. I think my babysitter brought it to me. I seem to think it grew legs eventually. I don't think though that it made it to being a full frog. I look back and think how cruel that was. But I did not know. I had no idea. As a tiny child I had full hope to watch that little squirming embryo grow and hop right out of that tiny plastic watering hole.

Memory two is the shell of a cicada. The trees of Virginia Beach, Virginia were full of them after they emerged from 17 years of hibernation. Interesting fact, they don't hibernate. They just live underground for years. I remember the sounds they made at night. The mating calls of the males. I was somewhere between two and five years old. I picked the discarded skins the cicadas shed off the trees resembling something out of some terrifying horror film or a mini version of a monster from an alien race.

Memory three is going to a convenience store for bubble gum. Giant jaw breaker candy with a gum center. My babysitter would take me. An adult had to take the candy and smash it with a hammer in some foil so I could reach the center with out breaking my teeth. I think it was a giant lollipop on a stick. It was too big for my tiny mouth.

Memory four was playing mouse trap with a boy across the street from my house. We lived on a street I think with Fox in the name or some

animal. The boys name I think was Denise or he looked like a Denise to me. I don't remember his face. He had as my memory recalls, hair that was short in the back but long up top and it covered his face when he leaned down. We played mousetrap on his front or my front lawn. He would bend over the game and what I remember was his hair. It was perfect and smooth and shiny. It may not have been, but that is what my brain remembers.

Memory four being in my room on the second floor and looking out the window into the back yard of my best friend Barry. He moved away to Guam near the time my parents also moved from Virginia. I had a doll that was tall and if I moved its arms its legs would move too. I would make it walk across my bedroom floor and paint its face with lipstick from little Avon samples the Avon lady would give me when she came to visit my mother. I had barbie dolls but I managed to destroy their hair and very quickly lost interest in them. The doll my height was my favorite. I used to think there was a monster in the closet at night. I think I had glow in the dark stars on the ceiling.

Memory five is locking my baby sitter out of the house. Actually I locked myself out too. I pushed the button on the back of the back door when we went outside to play. My mother was pregnant with my brother and I wanted to go play with my best friend. My mother left I think to go to the doctor and said no but did not explain why. I was about two and half years old. Well turns out that Barry my friend was not home. My mother could have told me that. The baby sitter went to the neighbors for help and finally her brother came and found a window to climb into the house and let us back in. It was decades before I told my parents that I kind of did that on purpose. It was a very hot day and I was miserable. I never tried that again. When I finally told my parents it was to inform them that I remembered a lot of things from when I was young. I remembered every mean word and gesture and act of abuse.

Memory six are a bunch of things I did with my friend Barry. Playing with his kittens. Trying to play badminton but hitting the wrong side of the bird. Barry pushing me on his swing that spun in a circle, not back and forth. Making pies from mud. Going to the beach and building a fort castle together from sand. Climbing trees in the front yard that had long tresses like hair, willow trees.

All of the above memories happened when I lived in Virginia from the age of birth until I was five. So if you have kids let this be a warning to you. They are not ignorant. They will remember potentially what you do and say. What happens at the age of two will stay with them their entire life.

