

I'm a Tory because...

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I'm 22, working class, a medical student and a Conservative. A combination of 4 things, which in today's political climate may seem strange. I'm the son of a carpenter and a dinner lady. I live in one of the safest Labour seats in the country – a majority of just under 40,000 (70%). I 'should' be a Labour man through and through. I am not.

'Pick yourself up, brush yourself down and carry on'. These are the words of my dad, who whenever times have been difficult, has lived by this saying. I have done my best to follow him. I wasn't born into wealth, property, positions or titles. I am from humble origins and have lived in a 3 bedroom flat in east London all of my life. My origins may be humble and I may be working class, but I am ever so proud of my background. My parents have worked every day of their lives to give me, my brother and my sister a loving, secure home and future. Times have been difficult though. I've seen my parents argue about money and paying the bills at the end of the month. I've seen my parents with their heads in their hands wondering how they will make ends meet. It was the talk of bailiffs one time that truly worried me. But you know what? We got through it as a family. From time to time there are challenging periods, but it is fighting spirit and determination that gets us through. I learnt the value of money at a young age the hard way. Seeing my parents struggle.

I don't want my children to ever see me struggle. It hurts to be so helpless and so young that you can't offer anything more than a hug. I wanted an education. I wanted to go to university. I wanted a good life for my family to be by whatever means or route. This period was also where I discovered my desire to help people. When you experience difficult times, sometimes a hug and reassurance are all you need. I developed a passion for people. I've always marvelled at how resilient people can be when faced with adversity. Seeing the amazing work the NHS did to look after my grandfather and his Parkinson's in the last years of his life, convinced me that I wanted to become a doctor. 'You? A doctor?' People often made that remark when I told them what I wanted to do with my life. Being working class and one of the first in my family to even attempt to go to university often provoked sneers and laughter from some people that I knew. But here I am. A fourth year medical student so passionate about the NHS, its staff and the amazing work they do to help people in their darkest hours. I would not be here without the amazing support of my family and friends. But I would also not be here if I had listened to negativity and if I had not put the hours in. Because what I have learnt in my (fairly) short existence, is that you can only truly rely on one person. Yourself. Believing in yourself, your abilities, your potential and believing most importantly in your motives and driving force are what gets you places. My upbringing makes me a proud working class lad, but my belief in myself and passion are what makes me a Conservative.

Some people think of Conservatives as cigar smoking, brandy drinking, Downton Abbey like individuals, who tease and mock the poor. Who want to oppress change and keep the working class where they 'rightfully' belong? This stereotype couldn't be further from the truth. I sat my GCSEs in 2012 under a Tory government. I sat my A-Levels at a free school in 2014 under a Tory government. I am studying at university and working on the front lines of the NHS under a Tory government. Don't ever let anyone tell you that Conservatives stop you getting places in life. I wake up at 5.30am to commute to hospitals, I've done night shifts in A + E, and I've seen people peacefully pass away right before my eyes. I'm not saying this for a pat on the back or a well done. I'm saying this because I truly love what I do. For people to cry in front of you and trust you with things they have not even told their own families, is truly humbling. But as a student, I know what it's like to turn your mates down on going for a night out at the pub because you can't afford it. To go to work after lectures to help you parents financially. I don't want extravagance or privilege. I just want to come home at the end of the day knowing the bills are paid and my family are happy, healthy and proud of me. The way I live my life now is how I always have done. 1,000,000% commitment and a passion for change and progress. Conservatives are real people, out in the real world, experiencing the very real problems that the rest of the population face. I wouldn't have it any other way.

A very real problem that this country faces is Brexit. As someone who voted leave, I stand absolutely and resolutely behind the Conservatives in delivering the will of the people. But I also recognise the need for compromise. The need to listen and collaborate with people we don't necessarily agree with for the good of the country. This is about the futures of every person on these islands for decades to come and is more important than partisan party politics. I lost friends over my position as 'Tory brexiteer scum!' An 'uneducated racist' who should be ashamed for condemning this country to hell on earth. The fact is I love my family, my friends and my country equally. As a Conservative, I want to promote freedom, open mindedness, tolerance, courage and above all, optimism in our country and our future as British people. I make no apologies for flying the flag of a global Britain. For all those that say Britain can't or won't, just as was said to me about medicine, as a Conservative I say try me. For all those that say Conservatives are detached from the real world and only care about big business, as a Conservative I say come with me to a hospital for a day. For all those that say conservatism is just about austerity and Brexit, as a Conservative I say watch this space.

I came into this world with nothing. I'm determined as a Conservative to leave it a better place than I found it.