I was fresh out of high school, excited to move on to college and challenge myself as an athlete and a person. Throughout the course of this system, I began to play a college sport, tore both of the labrums in my hips, went undiagnosed for a long period of time, and eventually got surgery to repair the damage. I am consciously choosing to set temporal boundaries to this system, as opposed to spatial. The boundaries are arriving at Hamilton College in the fall of 2015, through June 2016 when my hip surgery was completed. As this was a big event in my life, the system could potentially extend further to include issues with medication, shifting flows of doctors and physical therapists, as well as general flows in my recovery. Brooke's personal story of her medical problems (as a system) inspired me to reflect back on the system of my body (and more specifically, my hips) during this time.

As a freshman in college, the entire setting of my system (me) had shifted location to a whole new campus. There were so many different parts and feedbacks being introduced to the system, from dining hall food, to new friends, to pulling all-nighters to study. Some of the parts of this system were pre-existing, such as my genetic conditions: my hips were misshapen and therefore predisposed me to this injury. One important new part of the system was the heavy lifting regime that was prescribed by the coaches. As a result of this part, a new feedback loop of pain in both of my groins emerged. The athletic trainer in charge of our team diagnosed the pain as a groin pull, and treated it as such. My system was introduced to intense treatment to try and rehab this injury, but saw no improvement in the pain. I reacted by continually asking why, pushing the athletic trainer until she finally consented to an MRI to look for other explanations. After hearing Brooke's story, I realized that I could have taken this even further and asked why she was the only trainer looking at me. It might have been helpful for another trainer to take a look and give a second opinion. Another important part of my system at the time was my emotions. This could even be seen as another system in itself, with the different flows and emotional highs and lows of being a freshman in college in addition to dealing with this injury.

One of the defining features of humans is our ability to be self-aware and feel/express emotion, as discussed in *Panarchy* by Gunderson and Holling. How are emotions displayed in a visual diagram of a system? I think they are more than parts, as they are intricately connected to feedback loops, as well as other parts. They are also constantly changing, and often hard to conceive both by others and oneself. What is the difference between conscious and subconscious emotions in regards to their place/representation in a system? I believe that these differences simply result in possibilities for alternate perspectives, depending on which emotions are apparent to each individual trying to describe the system.

Looking back, I gained a lot from the experiences that seemed so negative at the time. How does the representation of a system change when you are trying to describe it in the moment, vs. in hindsight? If I was to tell this story at the time, I would have included more of the adverse experiences, and not been able to see how they positively shaped me as a person. I also would have beeh less likely to include the unintended consequences, as this is something that tends to become apparent with time. Is it possible for someone outside of the system to describe it when the system itself is a person? I think it is, because even though they might miss out on some of the factors that the system (human) itself would have included, this does not make it "wrong" or inaccurate, it is just the reality of the system from an alternate perspective. Even when we explain systems that seem like they should have an inherent right and wrong description, what is defined as "right" and "wrong" is still up to each individual. As was previously discussed in readings and class, we as humans assign meaning to the words "right" and "wrong;" it is constructed, not inherent to the system itself.

Another important lesson I took from Brooke's story is the fact that every thing and every person you interact with has the potential to further you as an individual. I found this to be such a positive, refreshing, and inspirational message. The more I thought about it, the more it came to be true for me. Going back to my point about differences in describing a system in real time vs. in hindsight, my description of this story is continuing to evolve even now. Within this system of my torn labrum, there were not a lot of clear positives. I was in physical pain, emotionally frustrated and disheartened, and it felt unfair. I had to spend an entire summer in bed, recovering, and learn how to walk and run again. However, I believe that everything you do builds your character in some way. My interactions with doctors and trainers taught me how to continually ask why, and fight for myself until I got the answer that I wanted, since no one else was going to do it for me. It made me fiercely independent, while also increasing my ability to empathize with others. It humbled me, as this was my first exposure to surgery and a serious medical situation. It definitely increased my pain tolerance and toughened me up, physically and emotionally.

This experience made me thankful for so many things, from the people that went the extra mile to make me smile during the time of this system to being able to sleep on my side. I now have such an appreciation for the ability to move and run and be comfortable in my own body. I am so happy to have been made aware of these little things by this system, because they shaped me as an individual today. I am most definitely straying from the prompt, but the more I write the more I am connecting with her message of taking advantage of every interaction and experience as an ability to further yourself. Systems would exist with or without humans, but we title them and choose to define them. Just as systems can be "right" or "wrong" in many different ways depending on perspective, so can experiences. Viewpoint obviously varies among different people, but also changes internally based on your perspective and outlook. Brooke's stories inspired me to appreciate both "good" and "bad" parts of systems, and focus on seeing everything as an opportunity to further myself as a human.