
YouthLAB
2019/2020



Unfiltered

YOUTH REFLECTIONS
ON MENTAL HEALTH
& WELLNESS § VOL. I

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& WELLNESS § VOL. I

YouthLAB 2019/2020
Family Services North Shore



Dear Reader,

This book was made by YouthLAB; we are a group of 11 people in grades 10–12 who are attending secondary schools across the North Shore. We put together this book to share our artistic reflections and perspectives on wellness with our peers. We made this so that other youth will know they are not alone in navigating these difficult topics.

YouthLAB is a Family Services North Shore initiative that was created to address mental health issues facing young people, from a youth—led perspective. YouthLAB meets throughout the year to learn, discuss and create art around mental health topics affecting youth including anxiety, depression, eating disorders, trauma, healthy relationships and social justice issues. Each year we work towards an outreach project with a focus on engaging other youth on these topics, reducing stigma, and creating stronger communities.

In viewing our work, we hope you will find something that resonates with you. We reflected on what messages we wanted to send to our peers and have included them in this book. Through our art, we hope other youth will know that:

YOUR EXPERIENCE IS VALID **PAGE 2**

WE ARE STRONGER THAN WE THINK **PAGE 9**

BE GENTLE WITH YOURSELF—IT'S OK TO NOT BE OK **PAGE 19**

YOU ARE ENOUGH **PAGE 29**

It is our hope that by reading this book you may not only learn something about mental health, but are inspired to take what you have learned & spread the message.

With Care,
YouthLAB 2019/2020

YouthLAB (Youth Leadership Advisory Board) selects a group of young leaders each year who are passionate about mental health and social justice issues. Family Services of North Shore is a non-profit, community—based agency that is committed to making a deep and lasting impact across the North Shore, from Deep Cove to Bowen Island and every point in between. The agency offers counselling, support, education and volunteer engagement opportunities.

Your experience is valid

LIFE ISN'T ABOUT FINDING
YOURSELF. LIFE IS ABOUT
CREATING YOURSELF.

—GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

You are not alone in your experience.

**Find someone you trust—you deserve support in
what you're going through.**

What you're feeling is valid.

Acknowledge your feelings without judgment.

**Try not to minimize your struggles or
compare them with other people's pain.**

SECURITY

The unknown is the cause of our scared feelings
Feelings that trap us into anger
Anger that can haunt the safety of others
Trace them back to the roots of failure
The moments that left us alone

Searching to be a part of something
Yearning for companion, a goal
A goal to guide us in this endless world
World of infinite possibilities

But sometimes we can get left behind
Stuck in our thoughts
Second-guessing each decision
Risking our safety
Only to grasp on to the feeling that we all want in this world
Security.

—N.S.



The rumbling
outside my
tent sounds
more like an
earthquake
than the wind.

This piece is to evoke an awakening of one's thoughts, feelings and emotions. Everyone is an individual with different experiences and views in life and this visualization opportunity is not intended to force an idea upon anyone. Instead, it is to encourage each person to look upon it with their own purpose. Enjoy your time viewing, analyzing, or just thinking about this picture and how it makes you feel while making you think about what you can take from it.

—M.E.



A.Y.

At the root of this dilemma is the way we view mental health in this country. Whether an illness affects your heart, your leg or your brain, it's still an illness and there should be no distraction.

—MICHELLE OBAMA

L.B.



A.C.

Be still and peaceful
 quiet, calm and tranquil
 feel your feelings

—M.E.

We are stronger than we think

FAIRYTALES ARE MORE THAN TRUE: NOT BECAUSE THEY TELL US THAT DRAGONS EXIST, BUT BECAUSE THEY TELL US THAT DRAGONS CAN BE BEATEN.

—NEIL GAIMAN

We are resilient.

In the middle of a struggle, it can be hard to remember how strong you are. It won't last forever.

You're gonna be OK.

Surround yourself with people who uplift you.

Reaching out for support is a sign of strength.

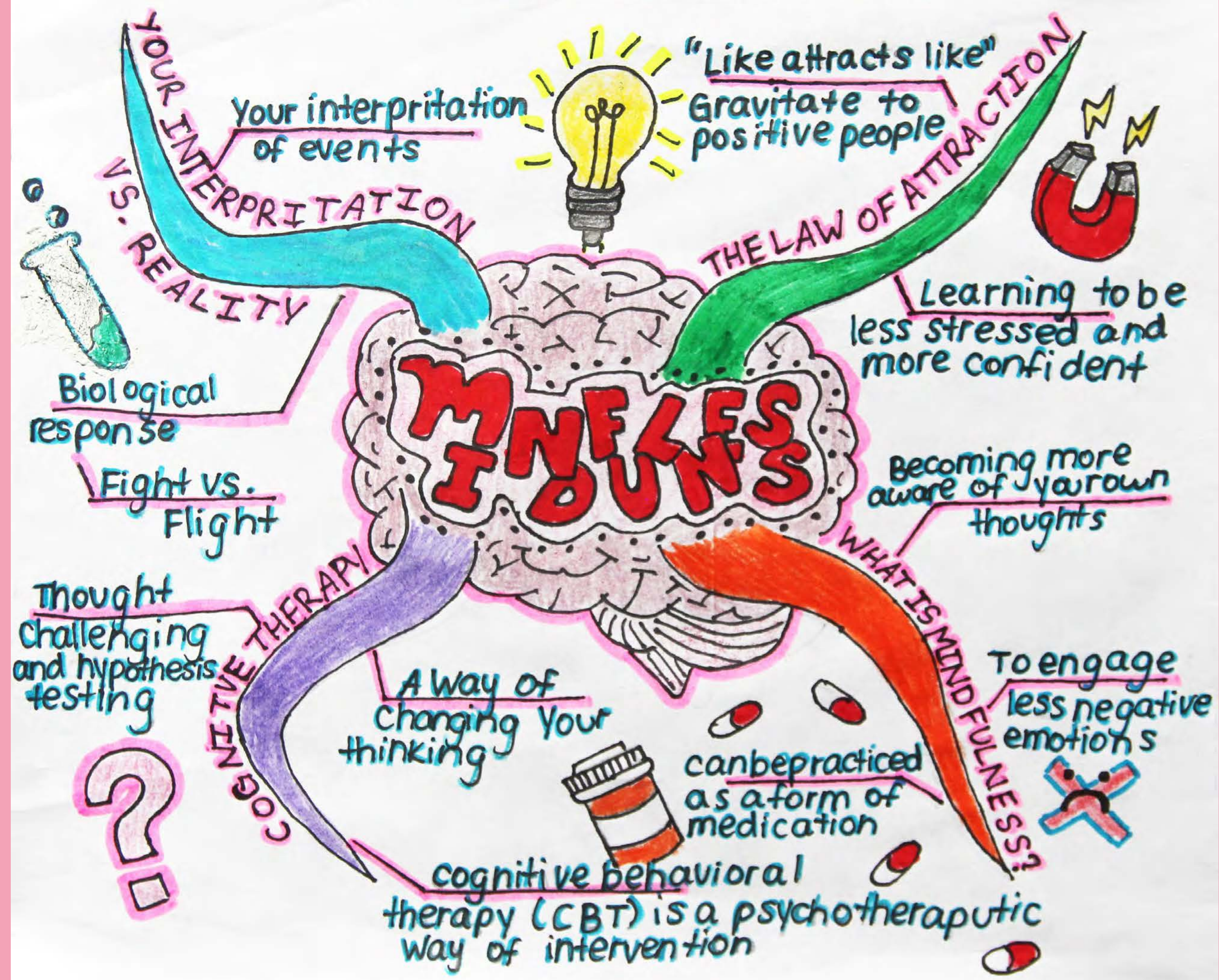
i have a candle.
it's not very big, and it's made out of wax.
it's white and round and has a little string wick, and i carry it
around wherever i go.
the light it gives is dim, but it's warm in my hands and on my nose.
my candle is good.
but, my candle is delicate.
my candle has been close to blowing out too many times before.
the rain sprinkles water on it, the wind tries to run away with its
smoke, or the sun tries to steal its wax.
the adventure I'm on has a lot of rain, wind, and sun.
sometimes i worry about my candle.
i am careful, being careful can only protect it so much.
if I cover it, i also cover its warmth and glow.
if i leave it behind, we'll both get lonely.
it is not easy to keep my candle burning.
sometimes it takes more than one set of hands to shield it from the
howling storms, the ferocious creatures that snap at it from around
my bruised fingers.
but i know that it's okay.
i am strong, and i can care for it.
and it's not only me.
there are people who will give me help, offer their own hands to
protect the little flame.
i am not alone in my journey.
where my candle goes, i go.
and i will keep my candle safe.

—A.Y.



G.C.

• THE ART OF MINDFULNESS •



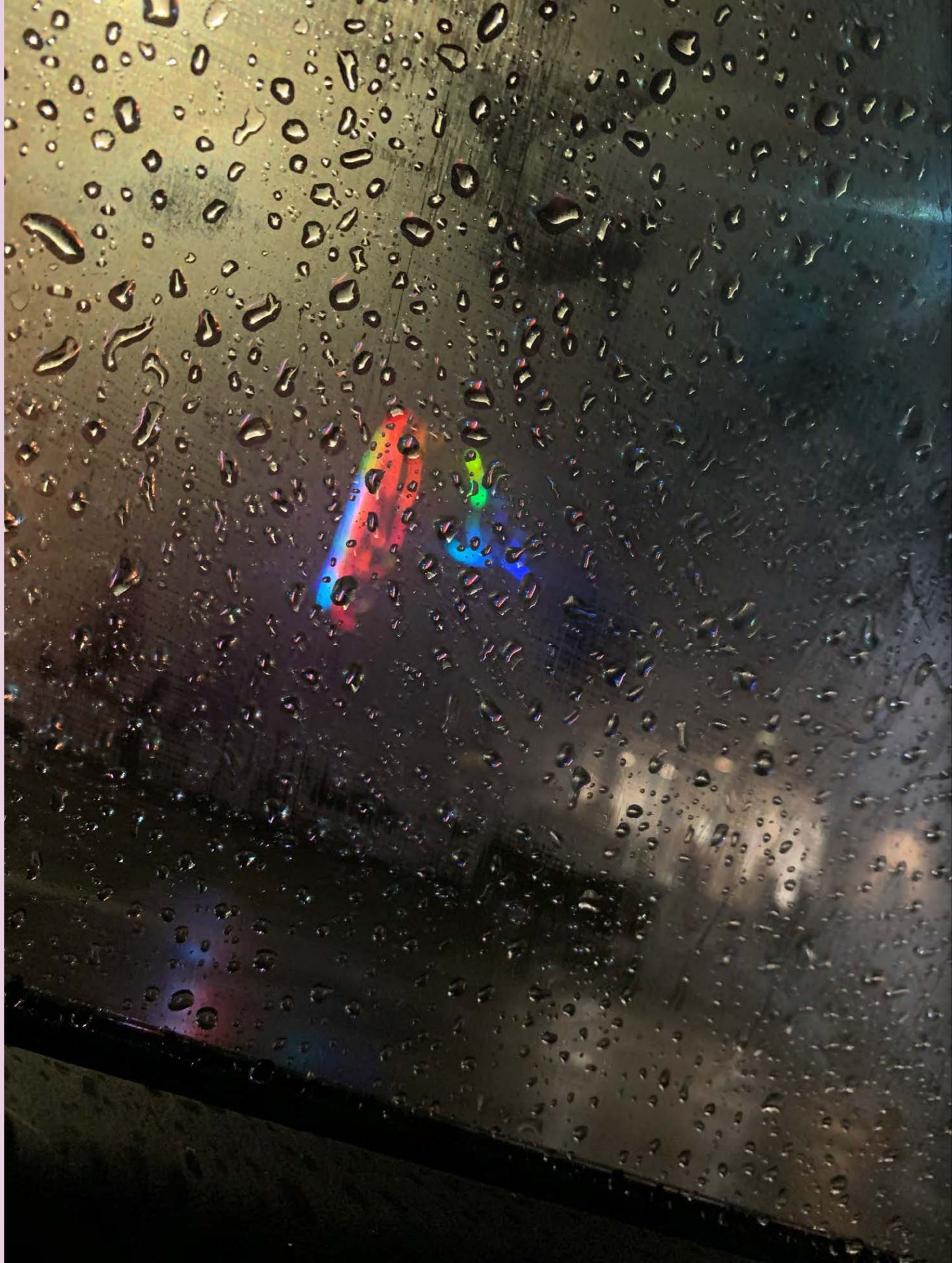
S.P.



S.M.

Sometimes the most
colourful things can burn
into dust,
But still I stand
Rising from the ashes
A rainbow at sunset
Proving with strength that
I can hold many truths

—L.B.



A.Y.

FOOD for THOUGHT

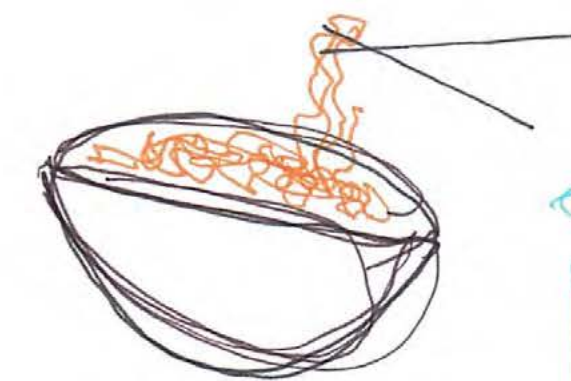
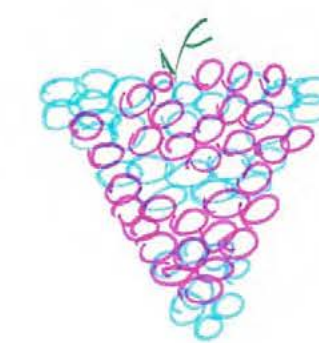
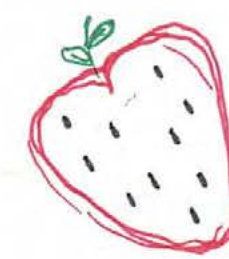
- if you are struggling with eating, here are
some ideas that are easier to swallow -

• drink water! hydration is good for you inside and
out, and will keep you feeling refreshed.

• eat a small snack of fruit, nuts or granola
- small, but raw nutrients helps

• make tea or coffee, having something warm to sip on
helps to soothe or energize you.

• plan and make a meal for yourself. Having food
that you put time and effort to create is more
rewarding to eat and enjoy.



G.C.



S.P.



M.N.

Don't be a shadow of
someone else, be yourself.

—N.A.



*Be gentle with yourself—
it's OK to not be OK*

IN THREE WORDS I CAN
SUM UP EVERYTHING I'VE
LEARNED ABOUT LIFE:
IT GOES ON.

— ROBERT FROST

You don't have to pretend to be happy when you're not.

Treat yourself with kindness.

Accept your ups and downs.

Find out what kind of self-care works for you.

Don't be too hard on yourself—embrace the bad days.

“things i tell myself in the morning”

things i tell myself in the morning;
need the rain to see the beauty
have as many dreams as you like
fill up empty space
look up at the night sky.

—C.S.



M.E.



N.A.

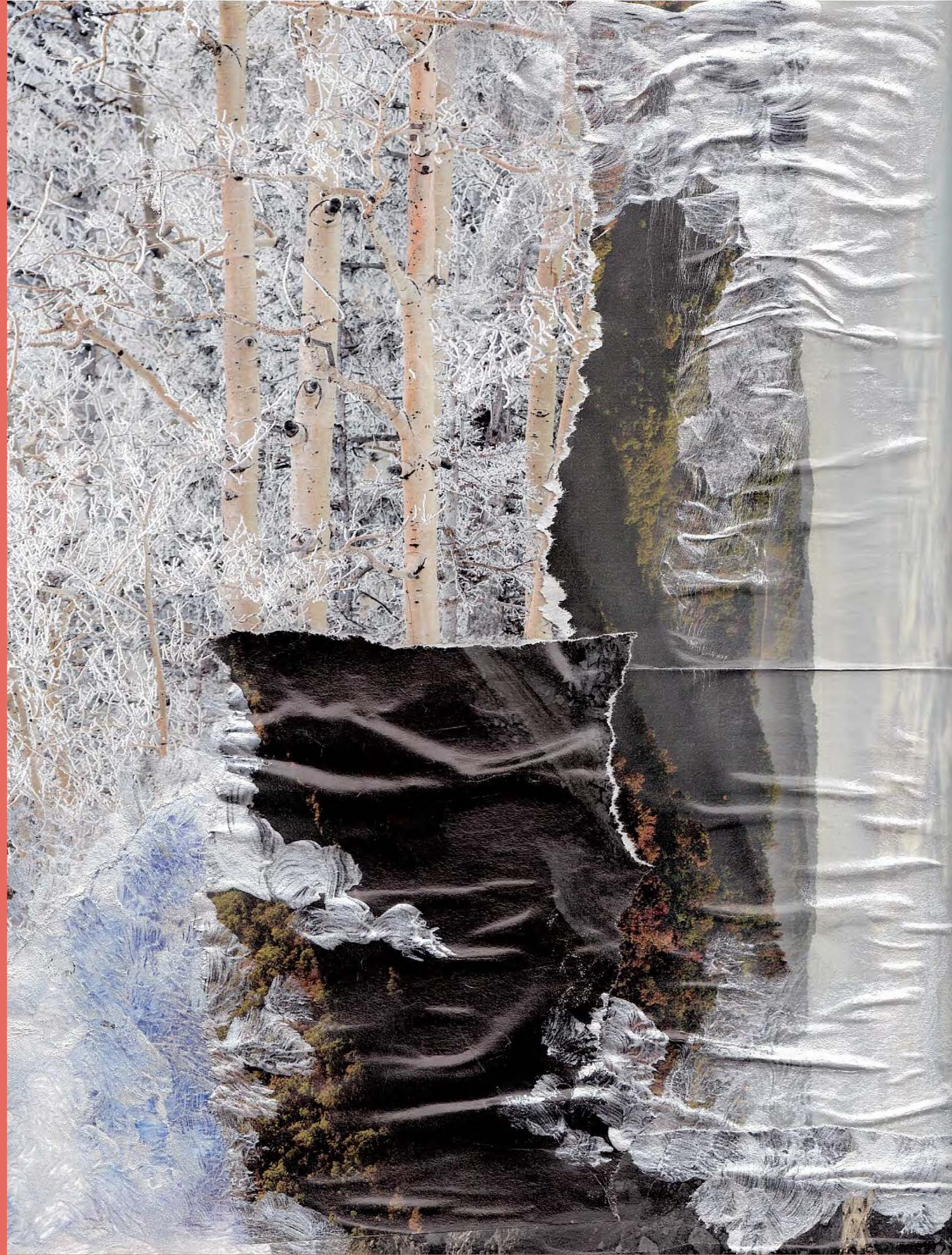
The storm will pass,
be hopeful and faithful

—N.A.

i exploded
a storm of rich wisdom
sea of emotions
light reflections
twilight sky of purple
clear and complex
darkness will pass
night turns to day

—G.C.

G.C.

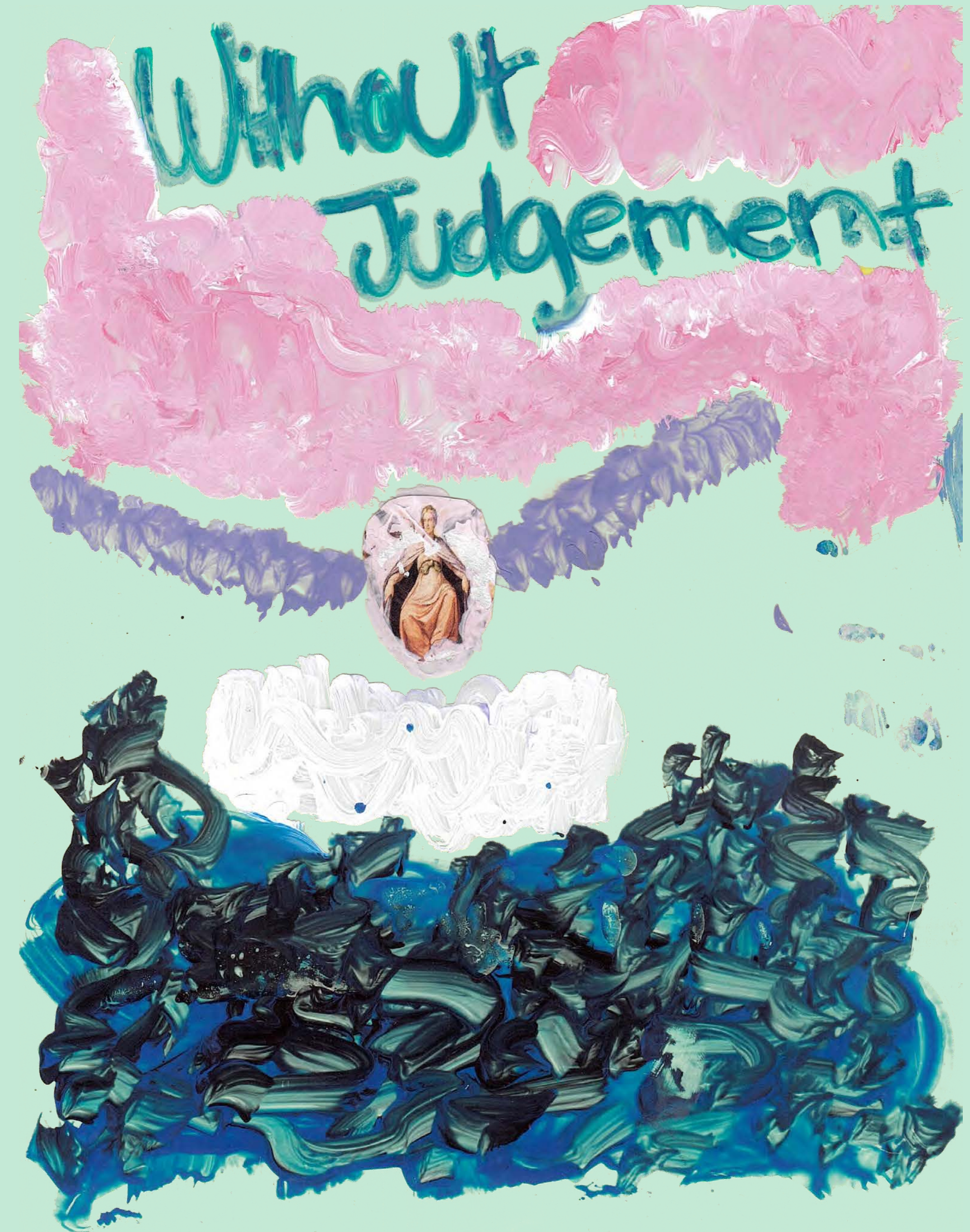


G.C.



A shattered porcelain: broken at peace. The human soul swallowed by the night searching for the missing pieces. Travelling back to Earth's raw form. One with nature; *"life is messy but that is what makes it beautiful"* she thinks

—M.N.



S.M.



M.E.

Recipe for Self-Care

- Get sleep—7 or more hours (have lavender eye masks, diffuser with lavender scent spray). Sleep helps to heal, rejuvenate, and re-energize your body and mind.
- Stretch upon awakening to loosen your muscles and move your joints, taking deep breaths to oxygenate your body and brain. Start your day with positive thoughts.
- During the day whenever you feel stressed, try to clear your mind by taking three deep breaths in a row. It helps to calm and oxygenate your brain, thereby helping to handle stress.
- Make time for yourself to do enjoyable and relaxing things.
FOR EXAMPLE: hobbies, exercise, or relaxation techniques.
- Listen to music that calms you or make you feel happy.
- Enjoy food by trying to cook your own healthy meals. By cooking flavourful, healthy meals that are different and not bland, you will connect to and take control of your eating and health. Every so often, treat yourself to dessert: but don't eat too much junk food.
- Try to keep up with work commitments like homework, so that you do not get behind and feel out of control with the amount of work that remains. Just try your best, take things step-by-step and then move on to the next task.
- See your family doctor for health-care maintenance.

—M.E.

Tools for Grounding

METHOD 1:

Things you See, Hear, Smell, Feel and Taste

This first method helps you get in tune with your senses. If you ever find yourself feeling overwhelmingly anxious, whether that be before a test or presentation, take the time to recognize your surroundings & calm your senses.

STEP 1: Find something that you can see around you and describe it in detail. EXAMPLE: The clock is circular with a white background and a thin black border.

STEP 2: Try to notice a sound that no one else would think of. EXAMPLE: The air ventilation system in the classroom.

STEP 3: Describe something that you can feel physically & describe its texture. EXAMPLE: The pencil is smooth.

STEP 4: Describe a smell that you notice. EXAMPLE: I can smell perfume.

STEP 5: This one is optional: Eat some food and try to describe what exactly you are tasting. Try to be more detailed than “sandwich” or “apple”. Describe all the different flavours you notice. EXAMPLE: I can taste the lettuce, tomato, etc. in this sandwich.

METHOD 2:

Dissecting Music Sounds

This method is my personal favourite because it has to do with music. We often take music for granted because we don't really pay attention to it like we should.

STEP 1: Pick any song that you like.

STEP 2: Listen to the lyrics of the song. What is the artist saying? What is their meaning?

STEP 3: Try to identify the individual layers of the song. You have to really pay attention to this step!

METHOD 3:

Free Association Journal Writing

STEP 1: Grab a piece of lined paper and a pen

STEP 2: Start writing whatever comes into your head. These do not need to be full sentences but rather random words and thoughts.

STEP 3: Read over your writing and try to find the patterns in your thinking. Do the same words follow each other? If so, try to think of a reason why they might be connected.

—A.C.

You are Enough

GOOD MORNING. YOU ARE PERFECTLY CAST IN YOUR LIFE. I CAN'T IMAGINE ANYONE BUT YOU IN THE ROLE. GO PLAY.

—LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA

Life isn't a race.

You define what perfect is.

You are unique.

Only take on what you can handle.

You don't always have to perform at your best.

Your failures don't define your value.

what does love mean to You?

Your first thought may jump to Your family, a pet, Your friends, a significant other, maybe even Your favourite jumper that Your grandparent made You.

now, open Your eyes a little wider.

do You love the tree outside Your window that fills Your room with the scent of fresh pine when it rains?

do You love the song that makes You want to sing to the sun, not caring who's listening?

do You love the taste of the food that Your parents make when You have a day in together?

do You love seeing that sparkle in the snow when it covers Your lawn, sinking the world into soft, cold, white?

think of a montage of all these small things that make a minute stretch for years, giving You time to just breathe.

mother earth loves You, and she hopes that You love her as well. she loves the impact You're leaving on the sky as another star blinks on for You.

she loves the ripple in the breeze that You leave when You run past the park to make it to class on time.

she loves the smile You leave on their face when You tell a joke to no one in particular, not expecting anyone to hear it.

she loves You the way You'd love a delicate dragonfly resting on a clover. it's okay if You don't see it yet.

we hope You like a small piece of Yourself, one that reflects the goodness You see in the world.

You are enough, and You deserve the love that You endlessly give, consciously or not.

i love You.

—A.Y.



SAFETY

Somewhere you feel comfortable being yourself; free of judgement, pressure, or fears of not living up to society's expectations.

—M.N.



C.S.

You are unique and beautiful,
never forget that.

—N.A.



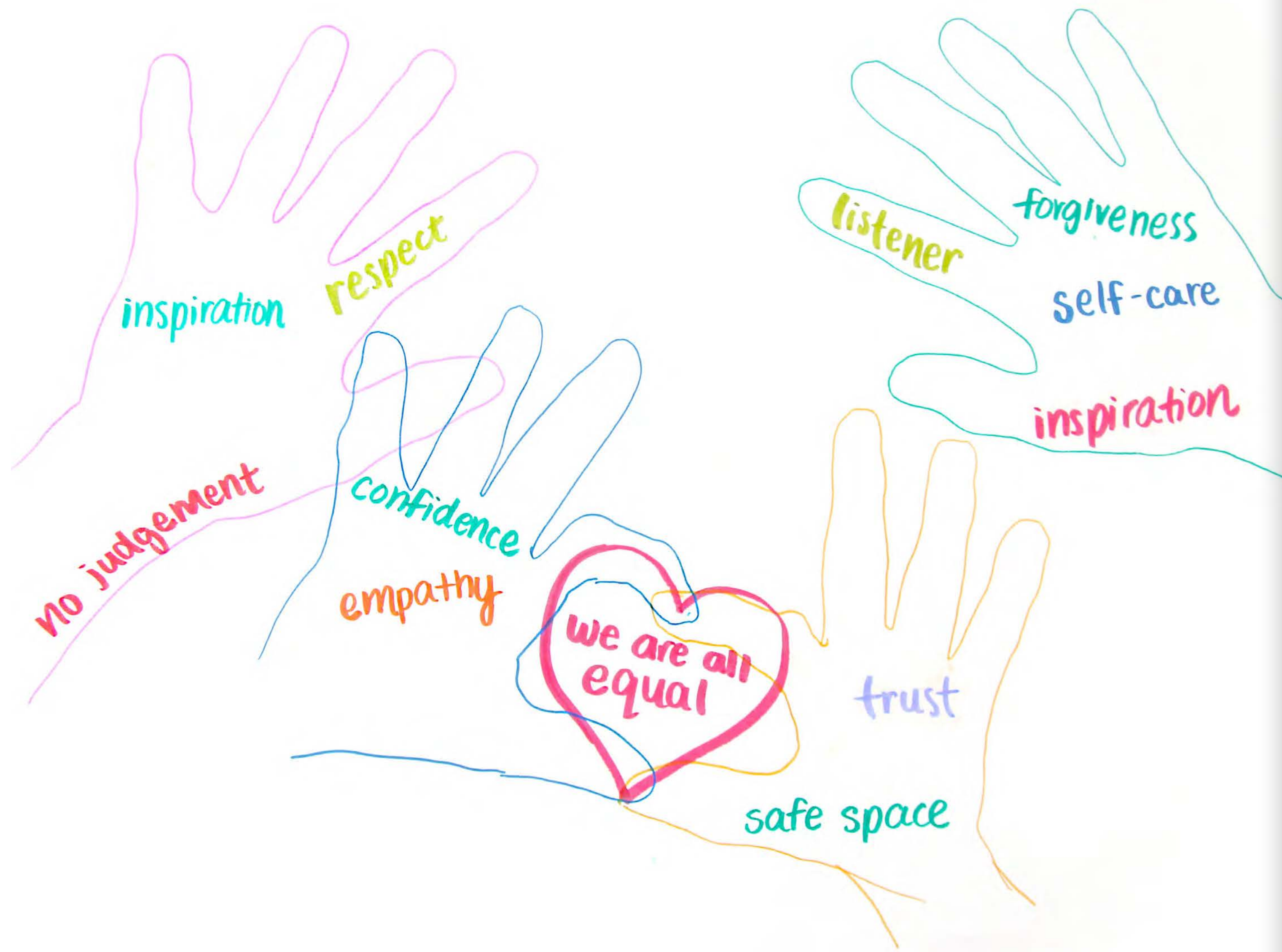
FIND THE SOURCE

As I stare out past the trees
I don't just see the boats, the mountains, the people
I envision the busy lives of each person along the docks
The past of a person I don't even know
I try to relate a part of myself to something they are struggling with
Because each and every one of them are struggling
There is a part of their life that is not the brightest
But, they are not alone in their experience
Every individual, every person, faces sadness, rejection, failure
However, as they smile away, laugh with friends
They focus on the light, the small spot of light that shines through
the clouds
Find the source through the darkness
Find the source
The source.

—N.S.

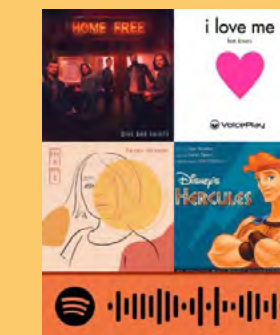


N.S.



Music Playlists

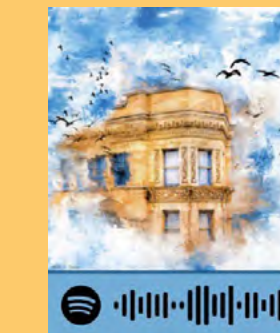
SCAN CODES TO FIND ON SPOTIFY



Here Comes A Thought + Estelle, AJ Michalka
 Winter Song + Sarah Bareilles, Ingrid Michaelson
 Eugene + Sufjan Stevens
 Call It Fate, Call It Karma + The Strokes
 ocean eyes + Billie Eilish
 Love Like Ghosts + Lord Huron
 Hideaway + Karen O, THE KIDS
 Sleepwalk + Santo & Johnny
 Rosyln + St. Vincent, Bon Iver
 Dreams + Fleetwood Mac
 Landslide + Fleetwood Mac
 Feels Like We Only Go Backwards + Tame Impala
 Circles + Post Malone
 Where Is The Love? + The Black Eyed Peas
 Breakeven + The Script
 Midnight City + M83
 Daylight + RAMP
 I'd Rather Be With You + Bootsy Collins
 Summertime in Paris + Jaden, WILLOW

I listen to music almost obsessively. If I don't have my earbuds with me, I'm not interested in leaving the house. Music has always been a massive comfort to me; it engages me and calms me down no matter the situation. If I'm ever in over my head, I plug in my earbuds and let one of my favourite playlists take over for me. In one of our sessions, YouthLAB came together to prepare two playlists; one to uplift you when you're feeling low, and another for when you feel anxious. We hope that these playlists can help you, even in a small way.

—C.S.



I Won't Say I'm In Love + Susan Egerton
 Why Not + Home Free
 I Love Me + VoicePlay ft. Emoni
 Fever Dream + mxmtoon
 Hell N Back + Bakar
 Mr. Brightside + Killers
 Don't Start Now + Dua Lipa
 Break My Stride + Matthew Wilder
 Take On Me + A-Ha
 Dancing Queen + ABBA
 Last Friday Night + Katy Perry
 Year 3000 + Jonas Brothers
 Gimme Shelter + The Rolling Stones
 Marry The Night + Lady Gaga
 Isn't She Lovely + Stevie Wonder
 Carry on Wayward Son + Kansas
 I Bet My Life + Imagine Dragons

RESOURCES

Get Support

provides a wide range of counselling services and community programs to support children, youth, adults and families.

PHONE NUMBER: 604-988-5281

WEBSITE:

The provides 24-hour multilingual, confidential support. They can help when you are feeling upset, worried, confused or just need to talk to someone.

PHONE NUMBER: 604-872-3311

SUICIDE SUPPORT: 1-800-784-2433 (1-800-SUICIDE)

At professional counsellors provide free and confidential support to young people ages 5-20.

Check out their "Always There" app

PHONE NUMBER: 1-800-668-6868

LIVE CHAT AT (24/7)

TEXT LINE: Text CONNECT at 686868

operates a 24-hour provincial line for aboriginal children and youth.

PHONE NUMBER: 250-723-2040

provides multilingual, confidential, 24-hour support for those concerned about their safety or the safety of others, ages 10-24. They can help with issues of bullying, intimidation, harassment, gang activity & more.

PHONE NUMBER: 1-800-680-4264

EMAIL: info@youthagainstviolenceline.com

Free drop-in child and youth legal clinic. Know your rights! And get your questions answered.

PHONE NUMBER: 778-657-5544

EMAIL: cylc@scyofbc.org

WEBSITE:

is an education and support program for youth who have a family member with a mental illness. Youth 14+ can self-refer.

PHONE NUMBER: 778-903-2752

EMAIL: kidsincontrol@bccs.org

WEBSITE:

, BC's Queer Resource Center

PHONE NUMBER: 604-684-5307 ext. 100

YOUTH SUPPORT: ext. 107

WEBSITE:

provides counselling and mental health services for youth 12-24 yrs.

PHONE NUMBER: 604-984-5060

WEBSITE:

, for child protection concerns.

PHONE NUMBER: 1-800-663-9122

offers confidential drop-in services for youth ages 13-19. Talk about health issues important to you with a health care provider. Available on Thursdays between 2:30 & 4:30.

PHONE NUMBER: 604-983-6700

ADDRESS: 3625 Banff Court, 2nd Floor, North Vancouver

Free STI/HIV testing & treatment

Get Informed

Provides Information, tools and resources to learn about and deal with mental health concerns and substance use.

Provides tools and resources to learn about and deal with anxiety.

Offers a large database of local services available to youth.

Learn more about mental health issues, read stories and interviews, find resources and learn new tools and skills.

Provides support and information to survivors of crime such as relationship violence, family violence, sexualized assault (recent or historic) and criminal harassment.

leave a message, they will call you back

DIRECT LINE: 778-855-4566

Provides information and handouts for youth about consent, rights, sexual harassment and more, including a directory of resources available for youth in Vancouver.

Offers information and resources for gender diverse children and youth.

Jessie's Legacy is a Family Services North Shore program that provides education and resources on eating disorders, emphasizing on prevention and awareness of disordered eating.

Ask any questions you have about the topic at jessieslegacy@familyservices.bc.ca

CONTRIBUTORS

YouthLAB 2019/2020

We live in a diverse world with people from all walks of life, and it is the experiences that we have in our lifetime that shape us. Each one of us is an individual who needs to be included, accepted and valued for who we are. The time we spent together was filled with many heart-felt hours of listening, reflecting and discussing. It was very important to us to create this book for you, and we hope you enjoy it and know that you're a valuable part of this community.

YouthLAB Coordinators: JENNIFER HAMMAN & SUSAN SALAZAR

BOOK DESIGN BY BRITTANY GARUK



Family Services of the North Shore is located on the unceded and traditional territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səlilwətaʔt (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

Andra Chitan 17

Ashton Ying 16

Chloë Sykes 16

Georgia Chow 15

Leah Burbidge 16

Mary England 16

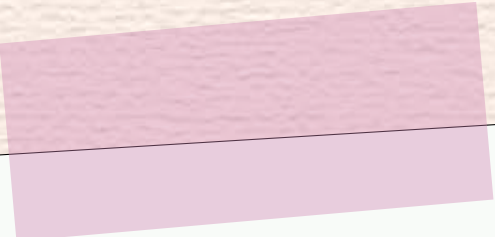
Mya Nevin 16

Nikita Amini 15

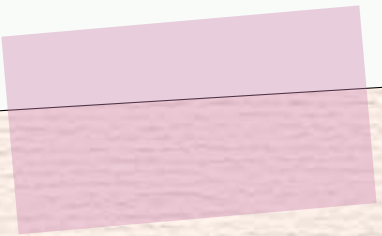
Natalie South 17

Sarah Pollard 17

Shadi Madani 18



N.A.



A.Y.



Family
Services
NORTH SHORE
Changing lives together