

# REVOLUKIN



THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE



TIME



you are a miracle in the making

**REVOLUKIN**

ISSUE 1

# TIME



with

*Christine Nguyen*  
*Ben Prescott*  
*& Chinae Alexander*

Revolukin is a creative investigation of the human experience. The magazine publication follows a number of creatives, artists, activists and researchers who seek to share with sentiment and vulnerability, transcending curated superficials associated with fast content, social media, and the modern web. Each print issue explores a single theme of life or place, uncovering the interconnected narratives that make us smile, laugh, cry and think. The magazine serves as a global crossroads of culture, travel and thought, for those of us obsessed with the human story.

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connect@revolukin.com

www.revolukin.com

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# ISSUE 1

Revolukin.com  
@revolukin

*Creator*

*Designer*

*Editor in Chief*

Travis Zane  
@travis\_zane

## *Contributors*

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Cara Eisenstein, Editor  
Brianna Olsen, Editor - Writer  
Schuyler Fox, Proofreader  
Olga Golubkova, Proofreader  
Spencer Lee, Proofreader  
Umesh Patel, Proofreader  
Nolan Zane, Proofreader  
Travis Zane, Writer - Photographer  
Diana Elena, Writer - Photographer  
Shauna Simon, Writer  
Diane Kim, Writer  
Sarina Merely, Writer  
Olivia Johnson, Writer  
Connor Rafferty, Photographer  
Grace Calhoun, Writer  
Toa Hefitaba, Photographer  
Takoda Patterson, #revolukin Contributor  
Alexandra Strauchova, #revolukin Contributor  
Christine Nguyen, Featured Creative  
Ben Prescott, Featured Creative  
Chinae Alexander, Featured Creative  
Krista Kim, Featured Artist  
Razan Al Sarraf, Featured Artist  
Edafe Okporo, Featured Activist

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## ISSUE 1: TIME

As we build our own lives, we often plan them in days, weeks, months or years. But it seems like the most meaningful moments aren't marked by dates, but rather, experiences. The time we backpacked the Pacific Crest Trail. When we were in college. Who we were when we first moved to New York. As time passes us, usually quicker than we notice, we grow and learn new things. Our world changes, the cultures and societies we find ourselves in. Our perspectives change, from 12 to 24, 24 to 35, 40 to 80. Seasons come and go, people enter our lives and leave, realizations are discovered and old wounds heal. Time is a tool we use to navigate, perceive, and understand the world, as much as the passing of time itself gives us a better navigation, perception, and understanding of the world. This issue of Revolukin Magazine aims to explore the human experience in relation to time.

# ( r e v o l u t i o n a r y ) ( k i n )

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

When I was a little boy, I used to collect rocks. The ridges and colors of each tangible fragment fascinated me. The complexities and variations in shimmer told me that, indeed, by the way our weather curates the earth into beautiful specks of gold, green, white-sprayed-with-silver and deep reds and blues, magic exists. When I pick up a stone from the shore of a beach, I often think about how long it might have been sitting there. I think about the minerals that formed it or the mountain it came from, the history behind its placement between my toes and the time it took to reach the sand. When I look at a child running around a classroom in New York, bouncing up and down with the melody of a song or describing the newest updates to their paper airplane, I consider the person they are growing to become. When I speak with someone who has lived through a generation of life, traces of realized optimism and persevered loss visible in the fragile etches on their skin, I wonder who they were in previous years, the precious and meaningless things they lived through.

There is a feeling of uncertainty and boundless possibility that overtakes my body when I think about these things, how the world weathers us, from jagged rock to polished stone, young to old, lost to a little bit wiser. When I first moved to New York in 2017, I began to feel time fly by faster than it ever had before. Several changes took place in a matter of months. Strangers became close friends, the insecurity of unemployment transformed into the pursuit of an independent career, exploring sexual identity strengthened into a pride of being queer and steadfast in the self I had always known. Previous memories of past selves began to feel close and far away at the same time. I began to wonder what magic existed behind the phrase we all repeat as we put pen to paper, writing the wrong year in late January: “Time flies”. And it does, doesn’t it? No matter how many instances we mouth those words, they feel real, a bit mystical, hinting at the obscurity and intangibility of how millions of moments exist and then cease, and somewhere along the cascading of events we find ourselves.

As I write this letter, I have been attempting to recall how this all started. Why I spent so many hours, nights, and weekends alone researching how to create a magazine. Why my friends entertained the idea or followed through with their own contributions. Why I rose from the floor of my tiny apartment in Brooklyn after lying horizontally, pondering the question “Why am I doing this?”, to continue doing this. Why all those who have supported “doing this” chose to do so. I believe that our world is beautiful and connected, that the human experience is capable of fervent joy and generosity, though our modern lives may not necessarily make this obvious. My goal with all of this is to put something out into the world that reminds us we are human—beautiful, breathing, living beings. To give us something to sit down with, meditate on, and feel a little better about the world afterwards.

In the summer of 2017, my dear friend and I decided to embark on an impromptu road trip up the Pacific Northwest coast. At the Seattle Fish Market, I came across a rotating book rack neatly arranged with cards and publications. I pulled out a magazine with a weight I had never felt before, titled after our favorite snack. Flipping through the pages of empty space intertwined with stories and images, I fell under a spell. I had never seen anything like it. “I want to make this,” I whispered in between breaths of sunshine and sea salt. Perhaps that was the beginning of this cascade, perhaps it was another moment. Attempting to pin the beginnings of this project feels like dancing with the reflection of a disco ball, illusory and scattered across an expansive white wall.

Maybe the best we can do when attempting to understand time is to notice its passing, to soak in the beauty of those silver flashes on white, to dance under the disco lights and savor whatever was, whatever is, and whatever might be. My hope for this magazine you are holding in your hands is that its stories and images, the people and feelings behind them, remind you to dance. May we explore the world under an emotional, creative, and inquisitive lens. Together.

With love,

**Travis Zane**  
**Creator & Editor in Chief**

*traviszane.com*  
*@travis\_zane*

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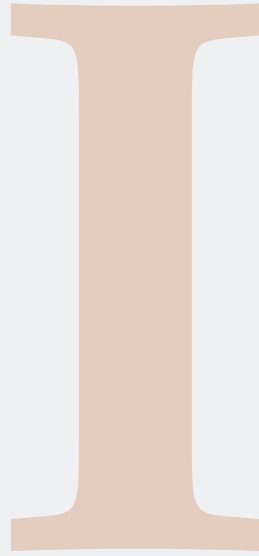
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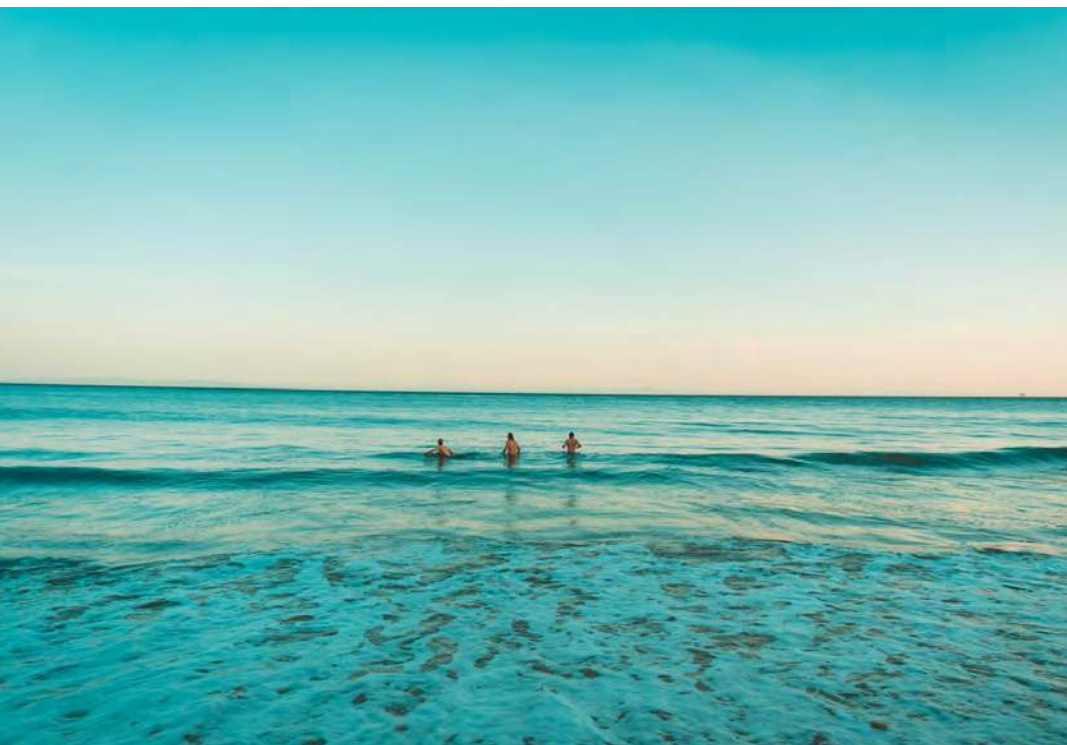
This is where an ad for a meditation app, trendy luggage brand, or alternative milk manufacturer would go...  
Instead, we have photographs of the editor's friends.





# INTROSPECTION

Personal essays,  
autobiographical accounts,  
and  
intimate editorials  
exploring human relationships with  
and observations on time.



# *70 Year Old Millennial + Thoughts from the Couch at 6 P.M.*

Words + Photos by Travis Zane

I picture every minute of our lives passing by like floating bubbles, vibrant bulbs of experience I wish to reach out and catch before they fly beyond our reach, balancing them on our fingertips just long enough to see their glossy depths of color before they burst and pop, their profoundly perfect particles disappearing from eyes that avoided waiting just a moment too long.

Sometimes I feel like an old man looking back at my life. I can already feel the thoughts I will be thinking with greyed brows when I am seventy years old. There is a flicker of anxiety that arises in my chest when considering how beautifully wicked this all is—the wicked nature of life's fleeting quality, how everything comes and goes, how every moment we live is the last of its kind. Though I am only in my twenties at times I feel a bit solemn as if I have already aged, as if my knees are aching and unable to pick themselves up. I recall when I could run free, climb mountains, and dance at four in the morning...as if I can't anymore. I feel it the most when I am sitting stagnant on the couch or when I look out the window only to realize that the sun has already fallen. Something feels so terribly wasted. I am not sure exactly what it is, but it is something precious. I feel it when I hike outdoors and find a view above the clouds. When someone holds me and I hold onto them. When I drive on open roads and the wind echoes the tune of a song I grew up with. Perhaps it is that very feeling, the feeling we get when we listen to songs we grew up listening to, recalling whatever it was we were doing and whoever it was we were being, wherever we were and whichever stories of ourselves we were concerned with at the time. Hoping, a bit desperately, that we were not too concerned, and making a promise to ourselves that we will be less concerned now.

When I feel seventy years old, I think about what we will recount on with longing—our youth, our health, our naivety and innocence—and I think about what we might wish we could recount on—parts of us that were left behind in a passed chance or unpursued opportunity. Considering the past twenty something years, I don't have many regrets, if any at all. But the feeling of regret still hangs around idly. It is the concept that I could have done more, that we all could have done more. We could have spoken a bit louder, loved a little more freely, been more unapologetically brilliant and brazen to have simply been a bit more of ourselves. A little more authentic. A little more honest. Less structured, calculated, or concerned with the seriousness of life.

A popular line of dialogue comes to mind, the one we hear or say when we or someone we know experiences a chance encounter with death, a car crash or a confirmation of cancerous cells, a tragedy seen on screen or heard about through the news. When we are reminded of our mortality, we rush to reassure the things we are grateful for that we are, indeed, grateful for them: our friends, our family, another day together. We tell these people, first: "I love you," and then: "We never know what could happen...we never know if we'll wake up in the morning...we're lucky to be alive, every moment is a blessing." The reality of our impermanence prevails. And suddenly all those little things, our anxieties and pretenses around how to behave in a certain way or become a particular person, dissolves into a space as clear and luminescent as ice, in which a reflection of ourselves shimmers. In that clarity we are able to smile, happy with what is, eager to repeat the words "I love you" to others around us, and perhaps—most importantly—even to ourselves.

I would like us all to love more fervently, not just with our romantic flings but with our friends and family too. I would like us all to initiate the bond of conversation and the embrace of arms more frequently and generously, to walk around with an awareness of the fact that, indeed, we are all the same, and to act off of that fact by asking secondary questions of substance beyond "How was your day?" I would like us all to think less about ourselves and more about each other. To know the names of the receptionists at our gyms and baristas in our coffee shops, the dreams of other people and the things they plan to do. To learn about the stories of our friends and the histories of their families, the time they learned how to brew wine out of mangoes or the farms in Latvia their great grandparents grew up on, simply because we all feel most alive when we are seen by someone we can see ourselves.

I think we should all just say "fuck it!" more. Fuck it. We ought to attempt things that we are afraid of, things that test our nerves and force us to find confidence in spaces we might otherwise feel meek. Start writing that book. Initiate that tough conversation. Meet the stranger on the subway and laugh out loud in public. We ought to tell the people we love that we love them, or perhaps, allow ourselves to fall in love in the first place. Life begins to unravel its boundless dimensions of joy when we permit ourselves to love non-judgmentally, beyond man or woman, gay or straight, right or wrong or perfect or imperfect.

I want us to champion the things that resonate impartial love, joy, and presence in every chord of our beings, every major and minor moment of our lives, so that regardless of how many years we've lived, 22, 30, 50 or 70, the number of candles on the birthday cake do not determine the warmth we feel. I simply do not want us to be seventy years old and think, "what if?" when the "if" could be "life" and the question mark an exclamation point, enthusiastically dictated. ☺☺

thoughts

from

the couch

at 6 p.m.

*Sometimes I feel so sad and empty after feeling so joyous and grand that I wonder: "How long can this keep going on!" Is this life? Just moments of profound sadness in between lengths of joy...emptiness in the absence of people, even when you know those people are all there. In brief moments of solitude I can sense something creeping up on me, dark and subtle and deadly, like the quiet hum of a trail of lava slowly sifting through piles of rock. And even though I know it is not real, it is not true, I feel it...I feel alone even though I know I am far from it. If there were a master list that kept tabs of the people most abundant with close and meaningful relationships, blessed with friends and family who would be there for them at any time of the day, I would be damn far up on that list. Yet at times I still find myself lost. Sometimes I feel like a ghost and I look into the mirror just to see my own eyes to know I'm there. I am okay. I am. Today I just ended up feeling extremely down after spending an otherwise beautiful afternoon in the sunshine, working around New York coffee shops with a dear friend. It was a generally joyful day. And then I got home and I just felt empty. Sad. Sometimes it feels like my body is expiring. I fart like crazy and need to pee all the time, I feel cold and confused and uncomfortable. I was sitting in this sadness, that feeling where your heart kind of clenches up and your stomach swells...I kept opening my social media apps and mail app...I started reaching out to people on text, making sporadic plans regardless of my original intention at the start of the week to take time for myself...I thought: "Every Sunday I ought to map out my hours, fill my calendar with events and parties and dinners and drinks to avoid these lonely pitfalls"...And then I suddenly thought about what I wanted. I just wanted my friends, someone with me to look at me and smile at me so I could know that none of this loneliness, sadness, or darkness had to be real. Their smile could be real, the joy. I wanted my parents or my family, maybe a lover, to simply look me in the eyes and say "Hey!!! Don't be sad!" And then I know I would immediately not be, I would smile and laugh because I know. I know deep down inside that this life is abundant with joy and company and love and fortune. And then I thought, well, you know what, I want to be that person for myself! I want to be that very person I wish I had in these moments, telling myself "Hey!!! Don't be sad!" Smiling at myself and offering me a hand to dance with, twirling myself around, helping me up from the couch, giving me a reason to laugh and yelp and scream "I love you!" like I normally do with and for everyone else. That's what I want. I want to be the love of my own life. I think a person who can do that, be the love of their own life, is able to be the love of someone else's life more wholly and holistically. They are able to be the love of their friends, the world, more fully and sustainably. They are able to be there for everyone and everything, present and joyful and abundant, because they already know how to be there for themselves. That is what I want. And that is what I'll do. ☺☺*

*Do not be tricked by the illusion  
of despair  
You are in a beautiful and  
incredible part of your life  
Enjoy this chapter  
The ending will astound you ☰☷☰*



*Say YES to New Friends*

Words + Photos by Diana Elena

If I were to ask Alexa what the most overused cliché was, I bet you “quality over quantity” would ring loud in monotone. We often hear this phrase when it comes to friendships, the social circles they constitute and the fulfillment brought on by inside jokes. When I graduated from university and entered the working world, I quickly realized this cliché goes beyond numbers. It applies to the longevity of our friendships in addition to the size of our circles. The length of time we’ve known our friends may be less important than we realize. We tell some of the people we love most “It feels like I’ve known you forever” not because we’re misled to think we met them 10 years ago but because the thought of them means more to us than we can calculate.

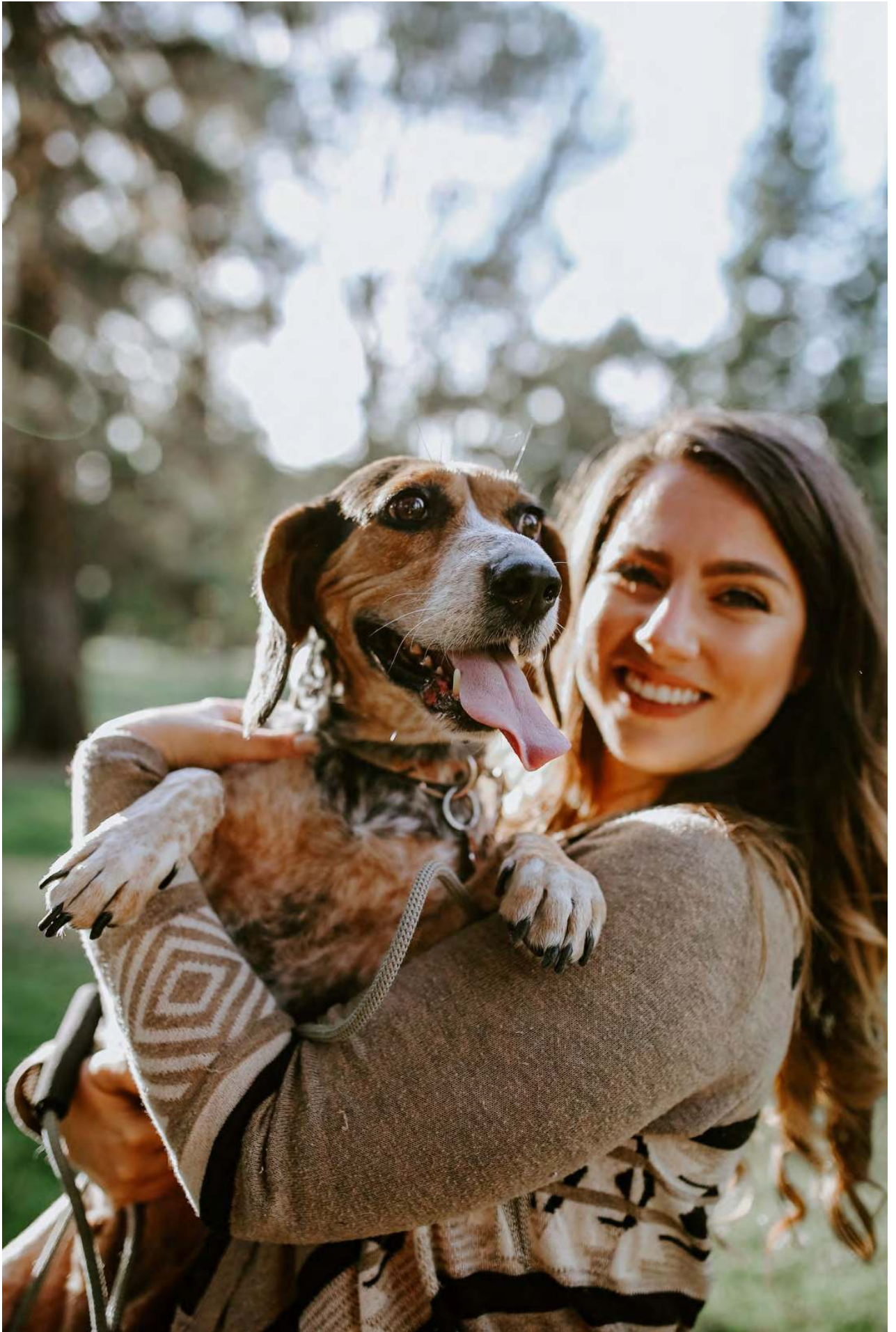
As our hobbies, homes and careers continue to change, we might find ourselves surprised when we celebrate a close friend’s birthday and realize it’s the first birthday we’ve been there for. Not even a year has passed since we first met them.

With jobs, spouses, and for some, children, things get more challenging with old friends too. Balancing new and old friendships almost feels like a challenge of the natural world: survival of the most meaningful. Old friendships that disintegrate may make you think “Was it ever real?”—It’s important to remember that it was. Nothing can change the people or memories that provide us with nostalgia. Things simply change. They always do. A flurry of new friends will descend into your life, people you may have known for barely any time. They’ll begin to feel like family, you’ll bond over shared ambitions, talk about your fears and tackle your goals.

At first, this can all feel like a nuisance, the friendship hurdles of adulthood, a reality we don’t want to fully adapt to alongside buying expensive wedding gifts and having to learn what a 401K is. Over time, though, it almost becomes a miracle, the scheduled time together and genuine effort required to keep in touch. It redefines the true elements of friendship. And quite honestly, longevity has nothing to do with it. Not to discredit those who have been by our sides since the dark days of middle school fashion, but some of the closest friends I have now I’ve only known for a year or two. And yet, it feels like we’ve co-written our autobiographies together in between broken hearts, empty wine bottles, and unattractive snorts of laughter. Friendship’s disregard for time can be a liberating and powerful thing if we open ourselves up to the people around us, even those we just met.

The following photographs are here to honor the intimacy of new friendships as well as the nostalgia of old ones, reminiscing on the good times and all the things that brought us so close together that it’s difficult to recall when we actually met. Whether you’ve known them for a month, a year, or a millennium: Cherish the people around you. Be willing to invest your own love and loyalty into the relationships you hold dear. Keep your heart open and remember: all best friends were once new friends. ☺☺











*LOVE*

Words by Shauna Simon  
Photos by Toa Heftiba



### *The time we first met...*

It's noon on a Friday. I drive six hours into a setting sun, to a barely snow-blanketed mountain range, to a man I barely know. I pull up to the green little church, where I wait until you nervously greet me with an awkward hug and a hurried kiss. I'm not afraid, but I'm not unafraid either. We're in your truck trying to beat the moon as we race to a hot spring, for the sun already ran away from us. We jump from hot spring to hot spring, meeting bike-riding travelers who only dip into the sulfur baths nude. Kind people, different people, earth people. We don't know them, but for some reason, we trust them enough to share our night. Night-blanketed naked bodies in one small space, all huddled under the same full moon, sharing a heated tub and unfiltered words through the snow prime air.

### *The time you asked me to be yours...*

I throw caution to the wind, partially letting you in, but never fully letting you take me. I have an open mind but a closed heart, you quickly realize. Men before you took a long time to call me out on my locked gates. Probably because they mistook hour-long conversations and spontaneous days for trust. I'm not afraid, I'm just subconsciously defensive. I try hard this time, I try to let you in. I tell myself that if I ever let any man tear down these gates so soon, it should be you. But somewhere between fumbling for the keys to let you in and excitedly skipping down the narrow hallway, my heart freezes, leaving you armorless, stuck behind my walls. You stare me down through the window as I shrug my shoulders and look down at my feet.







***The time I stopped following clock-time and started following our time...***

Tears run down your face and the words “I’m in love with you” slip from between your lips. It’s been two months with you, one hour into a new year, and five years since I’ve let myself tell someone I love them. It just doesn’t add up. I think over the numbers in my head. Then, I just stop thinking altogether, just long enough to realize that I’m happy. Just long enough to admit that I love you too.

***The time I spent three weeks without you...***

I’m trying to do schoolwork in a coffee shop, but I can’t focus on mean successive squared differences or residual errors because my thoughts just keep going back to you. You’re on a plane, thousands of miles away from me in every direction. I’ve never experienced missing a living person like this, but I miss you. I really miss you. And I really, really don’t like it. It’s distracting. It’s uncontrollable. It’s painful. Not a sharp, stringent pain—more of a slow, throbbing soreness. It’s heartache. Almost to the degree of hurt that follows heartbreak, yet the feeling couldn’t be any more opposite. When your heart breaks, it leaves you empty, devoid of comprehensible emotion. Imagine your heart as a dying cactus, losing water, feeling more and more hollow until it finally dehydrates to the point of breaking. That’s the heartache of heartbreak. This heartache is different, far from empty but still incomprehensible. To be quite honest, the thought of hollowness is teasing me. With all the emotions I’m feeling right now, numbness sounds like a vacation.



### ***The time I questioned it...***

How do you know when you are in love? They say it's a feeling, but if it's a feeling, then why do I keep thinking? Analyzing how he feels. How I feel. And how these feelings might develop. Might possibly, probably, change over time. They say it's a feeling. But it isn't a good feeling to wonder if I am feeling what I think I'm feeling. The psychologist Philip Zimbardo once said life is all about temptations. As time goes on, temptations increase. The longer the delay of satisfaction, the greater the temptation. I want what I want when I want it. And when I don't get it, I want it even more. Long distance relationships are the Mount Everest of temptation, the zenith of delayed satisfaction. Do I really love him? Or do I just so badly want what I can't have?

### ***The time we celebrated clock-time...***

It's been one year with you. Relatives passed away, loved ones got into accidents, friends became strangers, and mass shootings continued to occur within our warped country. We stopped dealing with life's shit alone and started staying afloat together. The unspoken promise of teamwork changed everything. The first time my migraine took over our Sunday, you ran your fingers through my hair and told me you wished you could take my pain away. You said that seeing me in pain was painful for you, it would hurt less if I hurt less, even if you still hurt more. I laughed and called you crazy, but you were right. When you kept me on the phone before and after hospital visits, I felt your anxiety, your fear... Everything. For a year, we endured, we lived, we loved, and now we celebrate.



*The time I tried to put this feeling into a poem,  
but couldn't find an adequate metaphor...*

This is not poetry  
This is not a complex combination of convoluted  
phrases filled with big words  
This is not a flowery compilation of beautiful  
literary prose that leaves you to decipher meaning  
through analogies and metaphors  
This is plain  
This is simple  
It's getting drunk off of tequila and forgetting  
everything else besides each other  
Forgetting to check our phones  
Forgetting the responsibilities of tomorrow  
Forgetting the guard that you so politely call my fear  
of commitment  
It's that moment when everyone else in the room  
disappears  
And it's just you and me  
I still don't know what love means  
but I know how this feels  
You and me  
And fuck, is it lovely  
It is simplicity  
It is a Sunday morning  
Ruffled blankets, your hands in mine, and our heads  
at the end of the bed  
looking through the skylight at the leaves dancing  
on that invasive tree that covers your roof  
Sun-shy, hiding from anything that would take us  
away from a Sunday morning, from the single  
obligation of being you and me  
Simplicity  
Hands through my hair and eyes fixed on mine, you  
ask what I'm thinking  
"Nothing"  
You claim dishonesty  
But honestly, it's the most truthful answer I could  
ever give you  
Because I'm not thinking of anything  
I don't need to think with you  
Because I already know

*The time we first met...*

We lift our pruned bodies from the hot spring and  
fumble to throw on towels before sprinting to your  
truck. You start the car and I make another joke  
about your camouflage seat covers. We talk about  
the people we just met, the people they remind us  
of, and the memories that this night brings back. By  
the time we get to the AirBnB, our stomachs start  
grumbling. We laugh, realizing our bodies are the  
only ones keeping track of the hour. After filling our  
hungry bellies with pizza, we slump to the couch  
and stay there until morning. We exchange stories,  
fears, aspirations. I ask you a hard question, you  
answer bravely with a response that you've never  
told anyone before. I meet your vulnerability and  
tell you a secret. It's our first date, but I swear I've  
known you for years. ☺☺





## *When I Got High From a Plastic Arrowhead Carton*

Words by Diane Kim

It's 10:30 p.m. and I can't move my body.

Within minutes, I went from wondering if I had some kind of magical immunity against weed to slumping into a human gargoyle—rock solid with a pained expression frozen on my face. I feel like I should be panicking... Did I just fall into the sunken place... But instead, I'm weirdly at peace. It kind of feels nice to not feel responsible for anything. Like, don't mind me, I'll just be lying here comfortably in the corner. Carry on with your social activity.

We had just come to one of our first college parties and I knew I was going to be anxious. There's always so much weight around a first impression. So many fine lines to balance. So many judgmental thoughts ready to tear you up. For instance, take the situation I'm in right now. A random girl in a pink beanie has popped into my field of vision. She's rapidly waving her hand in front of my face to see if I'm okay. I struggle with what to do. Do I smile and shrug it off? Should I say something? Decisions, decisions.

And then I remember that I can't do any of those things because I'm too high to move. Phew! She passes, my anxiety passes. And I continue to stare blankly at the tiny, dying plant on the windowsill.

Poor thing. In some ways, we are the same, just two pieces of immobile life.

You know what this feels like? It's kind of like you're watching a movie, except it's of your own life. My eyes have become tiny windows for me to peer out of, my consciousness going to go grab popcorn before settling into the backseat. The lights in this dingy college dorm room get brighter as if the show is about to start.

Of course, it's your typical coming-of-age movie, with boys and girls who have no idea what they're doing. That naivete causes the audience to sigh with nostalgia...and causes me to have panic attacks on the daily.



Am I doing anything right? Ugh. I can hear the chatter of people around me, talking about how “gone” someone in the group is. I wonder who they’re referring to, and then realize that I don’t know anyone in this room aside from the friend I came with.

Who even is this guy sitting next to me? Did we say hello? Peering out of the corner of my eye, I see that his head is also slumped over and that he’s probably also somewhere far away.

“Do you think she’s okay?”

Oh wait, they’re definitely talking about me. Goddammit. Again, I start to debate what to do. If only I could just lift my head up a little... But as I try to do something, the fog in my brain gets thicker and thicker. Stop resisting. Just go with the flow Diane, you don’t have to do anything.

When I finally release, my world starts spinning faster and faster. I become a human laundry machine, my brain swirling through sensory experiences inside of my still, physical body. Centuries pass. Pyramids are built. The galaxy is all around me. The rush is both exhilarating and nauseating. I oscillate between completely losing control to snapping back into reality.

I got this. I got this.

The people in this room feel more present than ever. Why are we so harsh to each other anyways? At the end of the day, we’re all the same person. College freshman away from their hometowns, trying to find a connection in a sea of people. First impressions wouldn’t matter so much if we just trusted that we were all good people inside. All of this doesn’t matter.

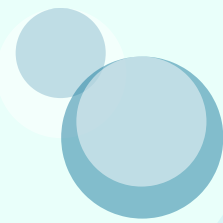
I smile like I have one of those Korean sheet masks on and I’m trying really hard not to move my face. Like, I want to laugh so hard right now, but the little hole for my mouth is way too small. And then thinking about how I must look makes me want to laugh more.

The things we do for skincare.

When I finally lift my head up and look around, everything feels completely normal. People are quietly conversing, minding their own business. It turns out no one was ever talking about me, huh. My friend walks over to me with her eyes glued to her phone. The Uber is minutes away.

At 10:35 p.m., we’re off to our next destination. ☰

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Words by Sarina Merely  
Photo by Travis Zane

At the end of a three week trip throughout Europe with my best friend, I received a phone call from my mother. I snuck into the neighboring hostel room and returned her call when she informed me that my friend's father had died in a car crash. Just moments before, I had been trying to convince my friend that she couldn't possibly hate her father. I called my friend's sister, holding back tears. I felt like I couldn't breathe. I was asked me to bring my friend back to California without telling her what had happened.

When we arrived at the front door of her house, I felt as if drool was spilling out of the sides of my mouth and my insides wanted to empty completely. I cannot accurately communicate the type of screaming I heard once my friend was told about her father's death. I sat to the side sobbing and it took four people to hold her down.

After many torrents of feelings, actions, and emotions over the past few years, when I think back to any of them it seems that I'm still processing all of them. I'm still in the middle of it, the emotional space of the unknown—fear, grief, love, loss—as I suspect many of us are. It's helpful that the Gregorian calendar can split my time by weeks and years and American culture has its own Anglo holidays and traditions by which I might keep track of it. Yet, I'm still losing track. There exist faults in space and time wherein I will never be able to recreate things as they were. And most recently, wishing I didn't know the things I know now.

Dana Leibsohn remarks on postcolonial historiography: the “interpretive goal is not to ‘recreate a docile past the way it really was but to build a past that resists our intellectual attempts to occupy it even while it takes its shape from us”. While this refers to our material culture that has developed over centuries, I find it helpful when trying to decipher what has happened this past year; the contemporary moment ill-at-ease with what's transpired. Knowing what we know, and allowing that which will never be explained (Why do we lose the ones we love?) to be exactly that—unexplained—how do we move forward?

Recently, I confessed to my friend that I don't think I will be able to survive another heartbreak whether it occurs with my own love affairs or by witnessing someone's world break in two. I just don't think I can do it. She squeezed my hand and reassured me that the human heart is much more resilient than I know. I suppose this is just the beginning.

It's become increasingly apparent that I am more equipped to handle today more than yesterday, but sometimes feel much less inclined to. The people that we were yesterday have mutated and been weathered by everyone and everything before, the conditions, joys, life tests we've met. I know that I'll keep changing, with every moment and every person and every place. At the end of contemplation, what reassures me most in the healing process of love and loss is knowing that I am not entirely alone. Even if I may find myself crying alone most nights, this year I knocked on my roommate's door and found that she was crying in her bed too. ☹☹☹

# Ski Lifts

Words by Olivia Johnson



Photos by Diana Elena & Travis Zane



I was sitting on a ski lift with my dad, something I'd done countless times. The mountains had become a safe space for the two of us to talk, daughter and father. Away from the constraints of daily life and busy schedules, we always found a way to connect on a level that simply didn't feel possible in the suburbs where we lived. We didn't always talk about deep things like our emotions or politics, although we certainly did touch on them. Mostly we just talked about whether our snowboard bindings needed to be tightened. What we were talking about didn't matter. It was the heart behind the words that I cherished the most.



On that particular day, we were discussing my plans to travel home for my youngest brother's high school graduation. He was about to become the last member of our family to wear black and walk amongst his peers, pomp and circumstance filling the air around them. I was in the middle of thinking aloud whether I would drive or fly home when my dad suddenly spoke, cutting straight through the muck of my verbal meditation.

"Yeah, I'm really excited that this is happening. When I was diagnosed, there were a lot of times where your mom and I just stood in front of the open refrigerator crying. My only goal was to live long enough to see all of you guys graduate high school. And now it looks like I'm going to be around a lot longer than that."

My mouth snapped shut as I let his words hang in the frozen sky before us. Tears sprang to my eyes and fogged up my goggles as I turned to face my father, his stature nonchalant. I struggled to respond. What could I possibly say to equal the weight of his words? In a few short sentences, my dad had summed up a 13 year ordeal and turned our breezy conversation about travel plans into a deep reflection on life, all while we were suspended two hundred feet above the snow.

In 2005, my dad was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. It was bad. Really, really bad. His stomach held a tumor the size of a football, and smaller growths plagued the rest of his body. He was 40. He had three children under the age of 12. And he was the family breadwinner. Even as the oldest I was too young to truly understand the gravity of the situation. My dad is sick, but there's medicine, right? No, I was told. He's not sick the way you are when you stay home from school. It's going to take a long time for him to get better.

He might not get better.

Might not get better? My juvenile mind could not wrap itself around this straightforward fact. Might not get better, ever? It didn't seem possible. My dad was my superhero. He could do things I'd never seen other dads do. He could ski at the speed of light, solve all of my math problems, do crazy card tricks, play the piano – the list was endless. I'd barely ever seen my dad take a break, let alone come home from work, wrap himself in a blanket, and lay on the couch in darkness. For the first time in my life, when I asked him to play with me I'd received a tired "no" in response.



I became angry. Why was my dad acting this way? Who did he think he was, sitting on the couch and ignoring us, his kids, who wanted to spend our weekends with him, outside or playing board games? When my little brother asked me what would happen if the medicine didn't work, I told him what I understood to be the blunt truth—Dad would die. I said the words aloud, not considering them as a real prospect. My mother, overhearing this exchange from the kitchen, flew towards me with a fit of anger in her eyes that I'd not seen before, wielding a spatula in her hand. I was NEVER to say that again. I was never to THINK that again. Shame flooded my young body as I considered the reality of my statement. At 11 years old, death was still abstract to me. I'd never lost anyone in my life. My dad was the last person I'd expect to succumb to such a fate. He was a rock, and always had been. Our family was happy, solid, and it seemed unthinkable that anything could upset our balance.

How strange it feels, looking at our healthy family now, thinking back on those dark times. As a young adult, I can now finally appreciate the horror my parents must have experienced upon receiving the diagnosis, the pressure they felt to condense all that they wanted to do within my father's newly shortened life expectancy. The last 13 years of our lives have been filled with more memories and joy than I could ever recount on a ski lift. I really don't know how they did it. I am in awe of the two of them, navigating their way through uncharted waters while keeping their three children afloat. Things tend to happen in periods of 13 years, big things. There, on the ski lift overlooking Lake Tahoe, I thought about them.

I started middle school. All three of us kids started middle school. We were allowed to walk to and from home, unsupervised. On some days, we were allowed to stop at Starbucks on the way. For some reason, to me, middle school has always been associated with braces. And guess what? We all had those too. We walked to middle school together, had braces, and also had horrible haircuts. It didn't seem significant—walking to school or wearing our braces—but consider how a parent looks forward to these prosaic activities. The pride of watching your sixth grader read a poem in front of other fidgety 11-year olds. The hilarity of seeing your little darlings with metal train tracks across their teeth. The laughs you suppress as your daughter leaves Supercuts with a short bob and tears in her eyes. None of these are momentous in the grand scheme of life, but I shudder to think of a life without them.

We went to Costa Rica together, spending 5 weeks in a rented Honda CRV filled to the brim with cargo pants and snorkel equipment. My mom, brothers and I prepared for the trip by getting scuba-certified. We spent hours in a swimming pool near our house practicing hand signals and maneuvers with tanks strapped to our backs. Then, we dragged all of our equipment to Central America, where we proceeded to use it a total of 3 times. The weeks we spent in close quarters were among the happiest of my life, as we moved from town to town, staying in luxurious bungalows as well as seedy motels. There were meltdowns. There were squeals of joy. There were screams of terror—a frog making a nest in my mother's hair—and screams of anger—my dad confiscating our Gameboys. There was laughter. More than anything, there was laughter. I still remember what I said to my brother Sven on the way to the airport. "Trip of a lifetime, right?" Exactly right. It was.

My mom started teaching again. She had been out of the classroom since the most important day of her life - the day I was born, of course. But after nearly two decades she went back, first as a jack-of-all-trades substitute, and then as the best Spanish teacher in the whole world. Miraculously, no one else in our family learned any Spanish, but she had an undying enthusiasm for the language, a superpower she used to reach even the most difficult student. She is a saint on Earth for taking hormonal, angsty teens under her wing and teaching them verb tenses. I really don't know how she did it.

My youngest brother, Bjorn, began a karate journey that culminated with a black belt. He worked incredibly hard for over 10 years, suffering kicks to the head and foregoing other activities to attend practice several times a week. He never complained, never tried to blow it off or take shortcuts, he just buckled down and committed. The black belt alone was impressive enough, but the kid also managed to lead a robotics team, get a near-perfect SAT score, become the sole member of his high school diving team, and ski almost every weekend. I need another coffee just from writing that sentence. I really don't know how he did it.

Sven went to South America. He started in Peru, on a field study with fellow students, and then branched off to travel anywhere with either beautiful nature or absurd nightlife. He stayed at remote research stations in the Amazon rainforest, swam in caiman-infested rivers, battled botflies, took dirt samples, went out until 5am in Peruvian nightclubs, and turned these experiences into great stories over the family dinner table. He lost his debit card and broke his phone within the first week of his trip. I panicked for him, but he didn't worry once. As a 20 year old millennial, he went completely off the grid and managed to somehow have the trip of a lifetime without Instagram, Snapchat, or, most importantly, Google Maps. I really don't know how he did it.

My dad did... everything. He became really into triathlons—first, an Olympic, then a half- Ironman (1.2 mile swim, 56 mile bike ride, 13.1 mile run, a.k.a unspeakable agony). He took up kiteboarding. He got back into motorcycles. He took online coding classes, wrote articles, and traveled. He also relapsed. He continued radiation and got a stem cell transplant. He was never allowed a break from thinking about his health. I really don't know how he did it.

And, I guess I did things too. I graduated from high school, went to college, entered the workforce. I traveled. That's the bare bones way of describing the last 13 years of my life, the most minimal outlining of the journey that I'm still on today. It sounds so simple, so neat. I went from point A to point B, then to point C, and so on and so forth. Having concrete achievements like graduating from college or getting a job offer give structure to the messy, chaotic mayhem that is life. When you tell someone; "I went to college there. Now I work here.", you give them a metric, a substantive bar upon which to judge your progress. It makes conversations easier.





But what about all of the things which don't fall within those metrics? What about the bad haircuts and the braces? The missed trains and the incomplete assignments? These are what mold and give shape to our lives, our personalities, our families. The things that you think about when you're having an emotional moment on a ski lift.

I graduated from college. Bjorn got a black belt. My mom taught Spanish. Sven did a field study in Peru. My dad beat cancer. These are our metrics. But are these the most important things about us? When I look at my family, I see so much more, so much that these metrics can't measure. I look at Sven and see, through his long hair and beard, the little brother I have spent my entire life trying to protect. Although his bowl cuts and his baby fat now lie beneath his adult face, I can see them so clearly. I remember the day Bjorn was born when Sven and I went to the hospital wearing shirts that said "big brother" and "big sister." I look at him, and I see the baby I picked up and carried around the house until he made eye contact with me, and calmly but firmly told me to knock it off. I look at my mom and see utter beauty. As a child, I thought there was no one more beautiful than my mother, no one with a lovelier singing voice or better handwriting. I look at my dad and I see an outdoorsy dork, someone who took me on camping trips and once performed a magic trick that involved pulling a scooter out of our car's glove compartment.



I don't see my dad as a cancer survivor. To judge him by that metric when he is so many other things is ludicrous. I don't see my mom as a cancer patient's wife. I don't see myself or either of my brothers as the child of a cancer survivor. How could I limit us to this singular characterization? Time has a funny way of obscuring these metrics into the background and bringing memories to the forefront which would seem insignificant to anyone else. Thirteen years is a long time. It's an unthinkable long time to live with a life-threatening diagnosis. If we had defined ourselves by that metric, we would have been too exhausted to do anything but mope. Instead, we pushed forward, doing what we cared about with people we loved. Although we appreciated the sympathy, we certainly never demanded it. We were too busy making memories that brought light into the darkness.

So there I was, sitting on a ski lift in Tahoe, thinking in depth about the profound love I feel for my family and our resilience. Overwhelmed with emotion, I looked up from the white, powdery ground below me and attempted to meet my dad's gaze. Choked up, I cleared my throat and did my damndest to make light of this heavy moment.

"Yeah, would have been a real bummer not to have you around anymore."

There were tears in my eyes. He knew what I meant. ☹️

*P*

*C*

*The Pacific Crest Trail*

Photos + Words by Connor Rafferty





*Cascade Locks*





*Mt. Jefferson, Oregon*

The best day of Oregon started out miserably. After days of sunshine, we woke up to strong winds, rain, and the coldest temperatures yet. My fingers were too cold to move so I packed up using my wrists and teeth. It all instantly changed as I walked out of the clouds, turned a corner, and saw Mount Jefferson. I was caught off guard because I had no idea that massive mountain was even there. The rest of the day was clear skies and fresh air, circling the mountain all day, camping on the northern side of a ridge looking at Jefferson behind us, Rainier ahead of us. Every day is different, some good some bad, but one view of something beautiful can change everything. Many times I'll find a bad day eradicated by joy stemmed from the natural beauty around us.



A day filled with wildlife, waterfall crossings, mountain passes, and glaciers. The Knife's Edge is described as the most dangerous section of Oregon and Washington. Above the timberline, it traverses steep scree slopes, some snow covered, with no shelter for miles in either direction. Starting at the top, one mile took over an hour. Hiking into the night and not making it to a shelter, we ended up having to camp on the ridge, the quietest night we had. Nothing was around us, no sound from trees in the wind, no running water, no crickets chirping. Too quiet to sleep, even.

*Knife's Edge, Goat Rocks Wilderness, Washington*



*Hiker Paul Mohr*

Life becomes pretty simple when all you have to do is follow a trail to Canada. Wake up, eat, walk, sleep. A summary of every day these past three months on the Pacific Crest Trail. Sometimes you find yourself in a trance, looking at your surroundings and evaluating what you're doing, where you are, what might really matter.



*Mt. Rainier, Washington*

The sun rises with Rainier in the distance. The mountain gets closer and bigger every day.





I love being able to see the trail in the distance. You can pick out a spot ahead, and when you get there you can look back at where you were, hours or minutes before. It always seems longer or shorter, farther or closer than it really was. ☺☺

*Cream Cheese Crepes*

*or*

*Letters Between Two Best Friends*



Words by Grace Calhoun & Travis Zane

Photos by Travis Zane

Hi Trav,

I am in my living room sipping on red wine, and I am thinking about how to start this whole thing off. I am also wondering if I just created a crotch hole in my elephant pants or if this was actually from five seconds ago, when I decided to sit spread-eagle on my couch. Actions always have consequences, I suppose.

When I think of our memories together, my brain wishes to start at the very beginning. Though sweet and deeply entrenched in my heart, our friendship began more as a formality than a necessity. We were going to be friends, and we both knew it. I remember my excitement the first time I realized I was going to meet you in person, knowing it was just a preview for what was to come.

As kids in Davis did, we had signed up for a 3-week opportunity to travel to Central America, meet new people, and spice up our college applications under the facade of providing humanitarian service abroad. We met at the kickoff meeting to prepare for the trip, and when the icebreakers started, you were my first partner. After an immediate bear hug, we started pretending like we were old friends catching up on a lifetime of events. Funny to think that is what we actually do now. Though, looking back I am not totally sure we were pretending; meeting each other felt like the reunion of two deceased people who shared a beautiful, lifelong friendship, their spirits taking over the bodies of high-school-me and high-school-you to resume the riveting conversation they were probably having on their deathbeds.

After that, things never seemed to get any less weird. Every strange crevice or shadowed corner of our minds and bodies, the ones we were perfectly happy acknowledging but not announcing, came alive. When we were together, nothing was unacceptable. We had no sieve to filter our personalities, no mechanism in place to ask ourselves if what we were doing was normal. The memories I have with you, Trav, are some of the very best because none of them came from anything other than the same magically strange, unapologetic place we both share in our hearts and minds. Cheers to the memories we still have yet to discover. And I do mean cheers—I still have half a glass of wine left.

All the love,  
GC

Hey Gracie,

When I conceptualize some of the most important friendships in my life, I rarely think in temporal terms. Friendships like these seem timeless to me because one event does not seem to precede another; no single moment is less vivid or memorable than the ones that came before or after it. Perhaps it is because the feeling is the same, choking on the miniscule rations of air we give ourselves whenever we cackle over something unarguably stupid (though genius in our shared world). I laughed with you like that when we first met in Nicaragua—when we were teenagers and I knew nothing about grooming or clothes or appearance and let my unibrow accentuate the crazy eyes that would ensue whenever our anything-but-subtle notes of humor struck a shared chord.

We often used the word “troll” to describe one another, our coined word for our one-of-a-kind, mint condition friendship. It seems that every special friendship has a handful of words that define it, words you share with another person more than anyone else. I think, out of that endless and growing dictionary, “troll” was the perfect word to return to, again and again and again. We were and are little trolls in a big, over-stimulating, sometimes delightfully-confusing world, stumbling around making intermittently insightful remarks while remaining humble to our true selves, a bit disoriented and dismantled. “Life is weird,” “We’re all interconnected,” “Anyone could be anyone else” in between “Let’s take another shot!” or “If you order the burrito, I’ll order the nachos.” Whenever we are together I laugh like a troll sitting in the middle of a swamp, staring at his own reflection for the first time, stupified by the simple delight of being, and I know I always will.





However, it is not one of those stories because we are best friends, and I suppose I always found McDreamy and McSteamy to be the most entertaining aspect of "Grey's Anatomy". Though I think the fact that any of our stories could potentially sound romantic is a testimony to our unique friendship. We stayed up all night, listening to old records and talking about everything that came to our minds. At points we would just lay there, speechless, listening. We did this a handful of times, actually, now that I think about it. Music was and is a passion we both share. Sure, it's universal—everyone loves music—but we L-O-V-E music. Love. And we did not mind sitting in silence listening to it, clueless as to what hour of the day or night it was.

I remember at one point we talked about Kansas. We talked about how many people in the world live in places we never think about. The ones on the outskirts, in other countries, in rural areas or states that never cross our minds (like Kansas). I do not really remember what it was about Kansas that struck you or me, but I remember the wholehearted feeling of being with a friend who thought about these things. Really thought, about people and their lives, dreams, problems and everything else those words fail to cover. Of all the most important friends I have met these past 23 years, you all share one boundless, similar trait: You are thoughtful.

Anyway, back to the story; at some hour, who knows what hour, we got hungry. So we shuffled downstairs into your kitchen, where scrumptious treats and healthy bites existed in just the right proportions. I knew I would be satisfied but also not end up eating all of the flaxseed muffins or packs of low-moisture string cheese because there was a difference between my fridge and yours. In between surveying our options of snacks and ready-bake mixes, we decided to make crepes.

We cooked everything family style, the default dining mode with any dear friend. What you made, I ate; what I made, you ate—including the brilliant knock-off of the traditional jam, peanut butter, or Nutella crepe, \*drumroll\*: the cream cheese crepe. I made it, and you surely did eat it, as the protocol intended. But then your face puckered up into that of a Japanese blowfish, and upon me rained down an incomprehensible shame, shame for creating such a thing that would cause such a reaction. Shame, I soon argued, that actually should have been praise.

In a Shakespearean play, we may have fought to the death over the validity of the cream cheese crepe. Perhaps I would have stuffed enough of them down your throat until you reached capacity and popped like an actual blowfish. But, consistent in the setting of our friendship, opposition was just another disguise for comedy. We could not stop laughing. I was aware that it lacked sophistication in taste. But I fought for my creation and refused to accept the fate of it as a mistaken idea to such an extent that, to this day, I am unsure if I came upon a stroke of genius or if cream cheese is surely meant to be left out of the culinary conversation concerning all crepes.

After the giggles died down we hurriedly decided to watch the sunrise, for by then it was already 5 a.m. I am unsure if we wanted to catch the emergence of dusk to dawn or if we had accidentally caused enough ruckus to awaken the rest of your house, inciting a need to flee the scene. Regardless, we drove to one of the backroads in our town. I know exactly which backroad it was. It was the one I took to drive to Kevin's house, your house, Michael's, Maya's, Kian's...I don't actually remember the name, though. We drove there and sat on the hood of my car.

As the sun rose, we discovered another way to identify our friendship: one of those identities you create when you share an experience that you recognize as special, though in the moment, as you are experiencing it, you cannot recognize its whole significance, or rather, just how much it might mean to your future self. The moments that mark our fondest friendships require time to mature, to mold from moments into memories, before we can perceive them with the fullness they deserve, feelings of appreciation and awe at having been together in that roadside diner, or on the hood of that car, living and chatting and agreeing and disagreeing as the people we once were. Meanwhile, suspended in the present when such a moment occurs, the best we can do is attempt to define it, perhaps with photos or phrases, in aims of capturing whatever it is we are experiencing. We repeat these phrases and revisit these photos and eventually, as the details fade and our memories grow into full-bodied-fondness, we begin to see how much everything meant.

We called ourselves "Team No Sleep", our phrase to capture those fourteen hours we spent together. We used a hashtag, because hashtags had just become a thing back then. And that was that. #TeamNoSleep.

The fact that so many things occurred that day and the actions we took could be reduced down to "nothing" (sat, ate, drove, talked) tells me you are precious to an extent I still do not understand. I may never understand how we come across people in this world that are to remain in our lives forever, through physical union and reunion or emotional significance and recollection. The cream cheese crepe, #TeamNoSleep, and Kansas told me at sixteen years old just how important of a person you would become to me. Though I am able to write about it now, those three phrases were the markers that spelled it out to me then: A best friend.

Stay cheesy,  
TZ



Trav,

I remember #TeamNoSleep, but I don't think you used cream cheese, babe. I think you used the curdled juices from old gym socks, which is why you strategically guilted me into having the first bite, as we both knew it would be an undesirable experience. Anyways, the past is the past. The real sparkles from that night came in its continuation, in the marbled orange and pink sunrise, and our unspoken desire to defy convention even if it meant saying "no" to sleeping. I sleep a lot now, by the way. I have moved onto #TeamProSleep. It is one of those life transitions that I hope you will accept me for. That, and becoming increasingly less competent with pretty much everything.

Actually, I have had another transition: in friendships. My friends are more calculated now. People say "no" to things if they seem stupid, unless alcohol is involved. I miss high school, back when everyone was so bored, stupid and stressed, yet spirited. We were the kind of crazy that marks only the best, and we didn't even know it.

Do you remember Breakfast Club? It seemed so trivial at the time, more of an implied part of my week than anything. I would get up 90 minutes before school started, and without fail, you or Lee would be at my door as a symbol of friendship, prevailing over sleep, homework, money, and any sense of logic. We went to such great lengths to see each other at the most difficult times, only to determine the purpose for it all later. Like the Breakfast Club at Pink Dozen Donuts (was it always called that?), where I admired what I thought was an actual ability of yours to fully hold a discussion while reading "To The Lighthouse" by Virginia Woolf. After many years of practice in attempting this myself, I have concluded you were just talking while holding a book.

I think about the time that we went to the grocery store late at night, and Lee decided to buy an apple pie. We sat around the cold copper table taking gooey cinnamon bites from the middle, gossiping like little old ladies. I muse on the time that we all "did homework" in your dad's office at UC Davis, which predictably turned into a midnight showing of "Bernie," of which my only impression is that Jack Black will act in almost any movie he's offered. Sorry, Jack.

I loved Breakfast Club, how we cleared our schedules as if we were discussing the future of humanity, and how we acted as if the meetings were imperative to some greater purpose—because they were. It showed me the depths of friendship and what you're willing to do if you're crazy enough to love someone so much. From you, I learned that when you love someone, everything is an occasion. There is no reason that is good enough to justify saying no. Things like Breakfast Club remind me that with you, friendship has always meant family.

Cheers (this time with coffee),  
GC

Hi!

I almost choked on my sencha green tea in the tiny chair I'm sitting on in a random coffee shop, recalling Breakfast Club. Now, aware of my surroundings, I realize that choking on tea whilst sitting in a tiny chair is actually a probable way for me to go—maybe while wearing an oversized sweater with a plate of dark chocolate and a bowl full of cereal. I realize that the amount of time I spend in coffee shops nowadays is astonishing. That realization makes me consider how much time I've spent in coffee shops before, in college (a lot), which makes me think about how we really don't change much. But of course that's not true, because we're both #TeamProSleep now. If I do not get 7–8 hours of shut-eye a night, there better be day drinking involved or a live screening of the world's first pig to soar through the air. I really do believe we have changed over the years, the people we are and the preferences we have. Though, I am still a hard proponent for cream cheese crepes. I guess places change too, because that donut shop was definitely called "Fluffy's Donuts" before, right? What the hell is "Pink Dozen"?

It seems like we are all more comfortable with ourselves now, focused on different things, and perhaps some of us say "no" more than we used to. You are absolutely right, about that spirit we used to sport. We should not let go of it as we age. Every moment is an occasion! I remember when I first moved to New York I would attempt to convince the new friends around me (sometimes people I had just met), at around 4:30am, after the bars closed and we found ourselves at the end of the night, that it was a grand idea to stay awake through twilight and catch the sunrise together to start the new day. Of course, no one agreed, we would all stumble home an hour or so before dusk turned to dawn. It is the people who stayed the longest though, even just an hour longer, that have become my closest friends.

I always want to watch the sunrise with strangers and friends, regardless of how cold it might be, because I know how warm it will make us feel, warm in a way that will remind us most things don't matter. Like being unproductive over the weekend, or the fact that the bus is 15 minutes late, or the to-do lists and 10 year plans many of us try to find some level of reassurance in—thinking that we're a certain type of person living a certain type of life, or one day will be a certain type of person living a certain type of life—only to lose ourselves when those 10 year plans change, as they always do. Because the only thing that matters is this.

From the surface, it appears that our entire world is driven by things like money and fame. But if we looked a bit deeper and a bit longer, I think we would see that it is driven by saucy yolks slammed between two perfectly toasted english muffins, with a side of sliced potatoes. Splitting the dish into three parts because you are in high school and do not have a dime to your name, and then letting the food go cold over raucous conversation...Breakfast Club! But I guess we never did let the food go cold. It was always four seconds of silence, our forks sparring over the last remnants of whatever it was we ordered, followed by digestion and divulgence over whatever it is high school kids talk about. Though, I do like to think we talked about more meaningful things than most other high school kids. But that's probably not the case.

Our world is run by shared beers, breakfast clubs, and late night runs. The only thing that matters is the care we have felt by and for other people. I think our time together means so much because we grew alongside each other during those formative years. Which is quite fantastic, because, well, it seems that most years of our lives are formative. Just think about how it will all feel when we are 50 years old, attempting to understand how much this all means. Or the day we see our kids take their first steps. Or whenever one of our best friends gets married. Oh wait, Kevin already covered that. Wow! Life will always mean so much as long as we spend it in good company. Now all I want to do is close my laptop and sprint around this coffee shop, wailing my hands, screaming "Spend time with each other!" as I snag every phone from the scrolling hands of the bystanders around me, forcing them to engage in a ten minute group hug followed by a family style dinner involving intimate conversations about our weeks. That is a coffee shop I would like to frequent.

I cannot wait to show your kids videos of their mom dancing around with a bottle of rum. Hell, I cannot wait to capture the next video of us dancing around with a bottle of rum. Will you be around for Thanksgiving?

Love (with a green tea buzz),  
TZ ☺☺☺



*You think you're just an individual person on a  
one-lane road  
until suddenly you're colliding with strangers  
dancing with them on the sidewalk  
carving out your own space in a new friend's  
path  
while you make room for them to come sit and  
stay a while in yours  
How lucky we are for these little chances  
spontaneous intersections where we meet another  
reason to smile  
One day you're a stranger  
and one day you're a light  
that somebody is damn glad they met ☺☺☺*

*Tears on Concrete*

*or*

*A Boy's Coming of Age in  
New York City*

Words + Photos by Travis Zane



*August 2017 - Davis, CA*

The insides of my gut purse up and coil inward like the lips on my face as I squeal a certain smile, the kind only flashed by a kid leaving to go somewhere else, into unfamiliar territory. I am with my family in the town where I grew up, headed towards the airport, en route to the big city. What's the big city? I have no idea, I've never been. I remember the poster of the Brooklyn Bridge I plastered onto my wall 14 years ago, unbeknownst to my mother who would later gasp at the cracked paint left behind. Upon her demands, I removed the tape and replaced it with push pins, swapping peeled paint for porous holes. I should have known better, but I assume my mom also knew better, since all she did was sigh and smile. As if to tell me through micro-expressions: our plans always get detoured. The poster is still up there in my room, a bit torn, maybe outdated, but the image itself burns bright and hot like scorching sunlight on asphalt playgrounds in California. Especially tonight, as I gaze over my belongings for a fourth time: wallet, headphones, a single bag. It all looks as though I am just heading out for a weekend visit, but the only slips of paper in my pocket are a one-way ticket and a friend's address. And visitors do not often sleep on the floors of their friends, only individuals with an undefined but determined plan, ready for something. The feeling of a lion's roar extends from my stomach to my heart, my head, and my eyes. I refuse to close them as drowsiness sets in, otherwise I might miss something important. The street lamp—how it looks now compared to how it might look in the future. The expression on my father's face as my brother cracks a joke. I will remember all of this as "before New York." The rest will be another boy's tale to tell.

As I sit at the airport terminal after our goodbyes, I begin to scroll through my phone contacts. Who should I call? It has become a ceremony of sorts for me to call a friend before leaving to go somewhere new. I remember my conversation with my friend Mallory prior to my flight to Sweden, where I studied for a year. Who would mark my introduction to New York? I actually do not remember now, who I called or if I called. All I really remember is watching "The Devil Wears Prada" on that petite screen in economy class. How I wondered if there was anyone else on the plane also headed to New York for the first time. Or perhaps the millionth, a potential carbon copy of me in the future. The dim glow of Meryl Streep deriding Anne Hathaway was the only other life on that flight till our arrival, all other characters in my New York movie asleep or still, glued to their own screens. As the pilot announced our approach to the city the lady beside me rose from half slumber, turning towards me as if we had been talking in her dreams, and asked me if I lived in New York.



“No, it’s my first time, but I’m moving!” I whispered. She asked me what for. “Hopefully not that!” she joked, referring to Hathaway’s dire existence, a simple girl caught and captured by a complicated world. “Kind of?” I said. I blatantly lied and told her I was taking a position as an editor’s assistant at a well known magazine. But I had no job, no plans, and no friends in the city who might help me find either. I am not sure if it was the film that persuaded me to serve falsehoods or if it was that idea of life in New York itself. The one we learn of first through the movies, the one that sticks and never seems to leave. It was already beginning to blur reality with possibility. I thought it might be true, that idea. Life in the movies wasn’t real, but if it were possible that someday we discovered life in the movies could be real, it would be discovered in a place like New York. I had no plans, but anything might pop up, expected or unexpected, dull or magnificent. Probably magnificent, though, because that is how things worked in this city, or so I thought. Something, whatever it was, was bound to take place. For if I did know anything about New York, it was that New York was not a city of nothing.



### *September 2017 - New York, NY*

I am still on my friend's floor and my spine seems straighter than ever before. I have been passing out my resumes like a madman. The offices in this city are unlike any others I've encountered. The buildings are not like the ones in California. They are large and massive here, mansions housing multiple corporations and millions of windows, always with a doorman nestled at the bottom. I made a list of fifty creative agencies in this city prior to my arrival, determined to walk in, announce myself, and pass out my 10-page resume, which I had fashioned into a magazine, to whoever was in charge. "That will get their attention," I thought, "a graduate giving them his own creative manifesto." The doormen seem to be an issue, though, since I cannot manage to actually reach any of the offices. They eye my Hawaiian shirt and shorts, ask for my name and the person I am meeting. By now I must have left twenty resumes with the doormen themselves. I honestly have no idea what I am doing, but I am doing it. I found some freelance work and an internship at an ad agency. Positive step, although I am not being paid at all. I will have to live off of my savings for a bit. Those bars and cafés look so cozy from the outside.

It is all overwhelming, but in the best way possible. I feel really inspired here, in a way I haven't been before. The people and the energy, it feels like a metropolis of expired youth, fighting to maintain the state of belief in which we tell ourselves that anything is possible. And for the first time in my life, because I'm here, I believe everything is possible. Perhaps the secret of those on top is knowing there is no difference between the two, believing and knowing. I know this will all turn out to be some fantastically difficult thing, but it is exactly what I want. I feel something I have never felt anywhere else when I walk around these gigantic buildings, buzzing brownstones, and mile-long shops listening to music, swaying in and out of crowds as if I knew my way around. I have no idea what will happen or where I might be in a year, though I cannot imagine I will be in a place other than New York.

I keep looking around at everyone, thinking to myself that we are all so connected, living our lives together even though we might appear apart, different, dispositioned to one another on the subway. Perhaps we will never know each other beyond our slouched eyes, but at this moment we are all here, shoulder to shoulder as we navigate the stops. I simply love seeing so many people. I have never felt such a strong affection for a place before. There will be a man in a coat making a business call and beside him a child running around, maneuvered by a group of friends entering a bar, across the street a couple falling in love and in the apartment above a marriage breaking apart. It feels so big. And I am just one lovely speck of it.



### *December 2017 - New York, NY*

The temperature is frigid and my coat is too oversized. I cannot afford the real clothes that everyone else here seems to flaunt so flawlessly so I ordered a winter coat off Amazon that regrettably looks as if it could double as a king-sized duvet. And it's red, so I cannot help but feel self-conscious of how similar I look to an obese Teletubby. You can never really tell how small, big, stupid, or great something is until you wear it in person. Kind of like this city and the movies, the songs, and the way other people talk about it. You will never truly know its opposing evil and angelic angles till you have failed and succeeded against its skyline, perhaps finally coming to a conclusion the 500th time you have contemplated all of this as to whether or not this city is what you thought it was.

I am crying and I feel like I am not supposed to be here. Maybe I am really not. I chose to move to New York the way someone decides to go to college after a privileged high school education, or start a family, or say "yes" to Alfred as he so desperately pleads for your hand in marriage at the top of a mountain you did not want to hike up in the first place. You are up there in front of a crowd of strangers waiting, and it feels like you might be up there for the rest of your life. You scream "Yes!" and then spend the next few months longing for some worldly confirmation that your choice was the right one. What about Derek from last year? Or your high school sweetheart? You both said you would call but neither of you did. What about Seattle, L.A., Chicago... The fact that you have said "yes" to love does not mean love says "yes" to you. New York City never asks for your confirmation. It does not really need you and it refuses to beg. Yet the city shines so bright you can see it from any corner of the world. Its light draws you in, and you start to believe that it did call upon you, requested you for a reason, and that makes you feel special, fulfilled, inspired—until the day you find yourself crying on the cold streets of Flatiron.

I feel like a fraud almost everywhere I go. In the fancy buildings where I work for pay that must be illegal; in the unpaid internship that I spent three months trekking around the city for; in the awkward self-introductions made whilst passing out resumes and sending cold emails; and in the conversations with management in which I'm reminded I am indeed an outsider. An intern, not an employee. A boy who wears Hawaiian shirts, not fancy coats. Another unread LinkedIn message—I am not someone worth knowing. I am crying because I was scolded for being in the communal room of the company at which I intern three days a week, a room only for full time employees. God forbid someone sees an intern doing part-time work in the prestigious room full of plastic tables and felt chairs. I thought about reciting the definition of "communal" to the man in the black coat, the one who knows nothing about me, and I nothing of him, aside from the fact that he demands and I deliver. But I remained silent, in shame of this New York City crime. Take a picture of my face and remember it folks, I present you the profile of a true part-time villain.



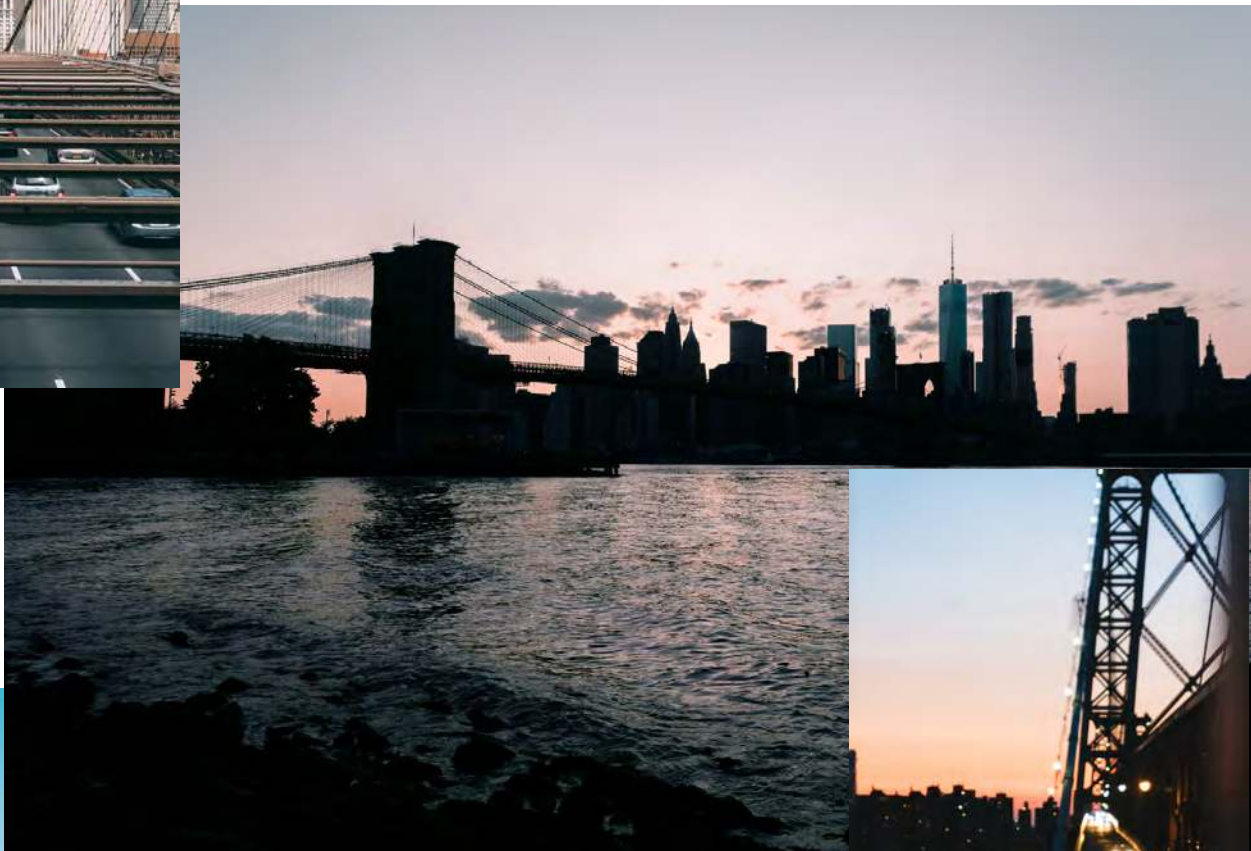
It is a stupid thing to cry about, being yelled at by your boss. Though I am no longer sure if these tears are from that incident or from my subsequent self-inflicted anger for crying in the first place. But sometimes the stupid things are slivers just small enough to tip over the entire pot of bullshit. Is it so tough to understand that we can't all afford coffee shops? All I want to do is sit down and read, write a little, and maybe drink a cup of coffee in that so-called communal room. I am fucking tired. Just tired. And this office is the closest thing to home I have right now. I never thought I would be the guy crying on the street, but low and behold, here I am. I chose this, I did. And I will make it work. I will do New York better than anyone else.

I am beginning to think that this might be good, to be the boy crying on the street. Because the day that I am not, when I can afford a meal in the restaurants I walk by, or breathe an easy exhale in the good knowledge that I am secure like the bridges suspended between Brooklyn and Manhattan, I will see another boy crying on the street and I will offer to buy him coffee. Or, better yet, I will meet the girl about to cry and help her before she does.

Sometimes it feels like I am waiting for my life in New York to start, and I am not sure when that feeling will change. But then the thought passes, and I think about how so much has changed in the past three months. How everything that has happened here means so much to me. Even tears on concrete hold gravity in the heart.

It seems that all of my friends are going through similar bouts of doubt, that we are all in a confusing stage of life, suspended between youth and adulthood. Though perhaps every stage of life is confusing. I keep telling myself and them that it is these exact times, where we are floating in uncertainty, that we will look back on and cherish because it is the questioning and wondering and wailing that brings us to brighter places. But still, sometimes I wish it would stop. Turn the lights off, draw the curtains, give it all a rest.

And, well, what if things don't work out? What if what I came here for never happens? The job or the life or whatever this dream is. Whatever this city means to me. What if it is simply not true? That thought scares me more than anything. I can not get too attached to it. Does New York love me? Does New York hate me? I wonder how long I will be asking myself these questions. The setting sun spews specks of light around towering buildings on Spring Street. I nestle my earphones in halfway, just enough to hear the music and the city at the same time, and begin to pick up my feet. No longer crying, I think to myself, "Not long, not long."



### *January 2018 - New York, NY*

I turned 23 yesterday, though somehow a part of me still feels in the single digits. My friends organized a surprise brunch in the basement of our apartment in Brooklyn, and the next night we managed to fit twenty people into a tiny Italian restaurant on the Lower East Side for dinner. I forget exactly how I envisioned my life might be in New York, but I must say I am very happy with it at the moment. The words “right now” are important here. One day you are Pippi Longstockings prancing through the yellow-cab-dotted streets of SOHO and the next day you are goth Billy from the eighth grade, a walking funeral procession from the crowded subways to the floor of your box-sized apartment.

When I look at the strings of bright bulbs hung in front of cozy establishments and catch the sheen of glasses of red wine and swirls of steam off plates of hot stew, I feel like a kid at Christmas. When I exit the station at Columbus Circle in an oversized sweater, the cold wind blowing around my blanketed hands and exposed neck, I feel like a phoenix rising from the ashes. Most of the time I feel bright and alive or completely worn down, then bright and alive again.

I am starting to think that New York is the toughest for those of us with stubborn youth, undying enthusiasm, and fortified optimism, but all the while this city was designed with us in mind. This youth has nothing to do with age but with soul. We walk around wrapped in our large ambitions and wild beliefs, eyes searching for serendipity and thoughts tossed with stars. It is easy for us to fall in whichever direction the city sways, sometimes battering our sides and taking a blow at our hearts. But at the end of the day we are the ones who get back up. Bright-eyed, determined to find brilliance wherever it might be hiding. I believe in us.

### *February 2018 - New York, NY*

I should probably apologize to my neighbors for crying so loudly last night. Or assure them that an elephant seal was not having an asthma attack. Just a heartbroken kid spilled and split over problems he is quite lucky to lament. Get it together! But no one in New York knows their neighbors.

### *August 2018 - New York, NY*

I walk out of my shoebox apartment in Williamsburg and trot by a group of friends throwing each other sass. Two of them stare at the others taking pictures by a colorful mural, next to a restaurant full of young people making a marathon out of brunch. They snap an astounding number of selfies.

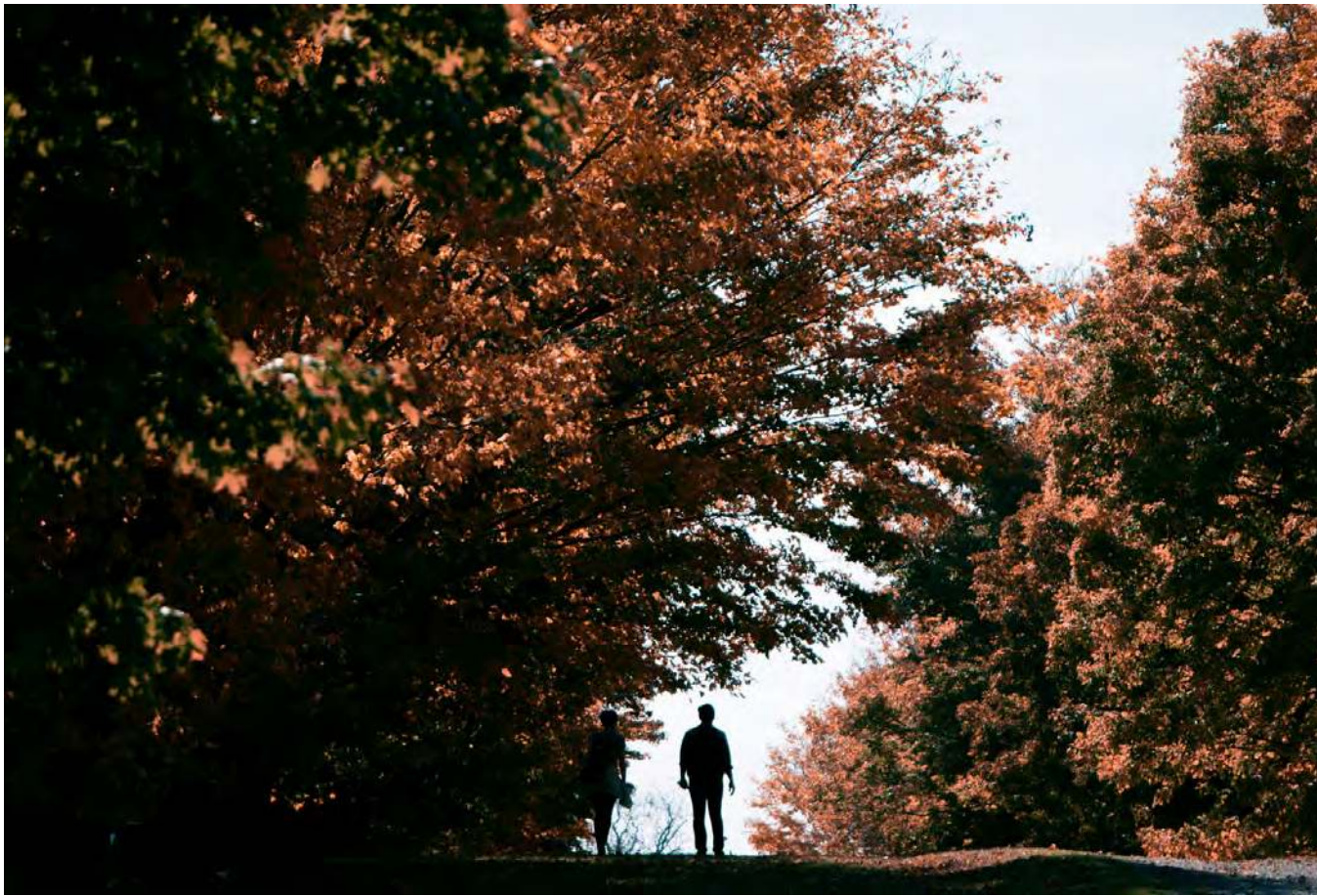
“These bitches have been doing this since we got here...” one says.

I laugh, she laughs, and her friend laughs even harder. I look at the other two, mid-photoshoot, and laugh again. We all laugh and it seems like the world is singing together.

“He’s laughing at us!” one yelps. They all join closer together.

“He heard me calling you bitches out!” the first pair says.

We continue to explode into laughter and my step becomes a bounce. We are all the same, all friends here. None of us strangers.



The other day my friend asked me if it was all worth it, moving here without a plan. I had never even visited before. People are always surprised by that. I think, today, I can finally say that it was. I would scream it from the top of the Empire State building if I had the patience for tourists or long lines. It might be a lifelong journey, expressing the gratitude one has for everything that has taken place in and out of this city and for everything that will continue to.

I am finally able to live comfortably now. I can dine at nice restaurants and drink at bars with my friends. I have been traveling more again, leaving the city and returning with excitement. I know the little communities between Brooklyn and Manhattan, some to which I now belong. When I gaze at the tops of the buildings above, I no longer feel an emotional distance between New York and myself. I feel held, supported, and celebrated, knowing I stayed, still just a boy but one who now has some language to better understand this complicated world. Or at least a corner of it.

I remember everyone telling me that it would take a year to feel like I actually lived here. At first I never really believed them. I thought it always felt like I lived in New York from the day I moved. But then a year passes and you know that you live in New York in a way you did not expect. You understand it now and everything—from the way you walk on the streets to the way your skin senses a chill as the seasons start to change—feels different and more lovely than before. The way you know yourself now seems more whole, and more detailed, refined by moments in your favorite cocktail bar and memories on 59th Street.

I feel as though I know the city, and the city knows me. I am grown up now, a bit wiser, no less fascinated, but a lot more stable. If my first year in New York were a novel carved into three chapters, the first would be “infatuation,” the second “instability,” and the third “in love.” At first it was all lust, what this city might offer me and what it could all mean. Then the lust became unstable, chasing dreams and feelings and forgetting to look down. And then somewhere along the line lust became love, the kind that requires investments of time and understanding from both ends. The love I have for New York finally feels mutual. People talk about becoming jaded over time, eager to offer newcomers adamant warnings that the buildings lose their monumentality and the energy wears you down. There is no saying that will not happen in years to come. But right now, right now I am still quite naive. I am still quite myself, but altered in the way that finding calm amidst crowds and crazy dreams changes the way you approach your daily life.

I think about how bright, possible, and uplifted I felt during that first year. How dark, beaten down, and lonely too. I think it is all there still, the ingredients for doubt and depression, mania and craze, but I no longer tussle with it as if it would ever truly leave. It has become something beautiful that plays its own part in the stories I have just begun to write. It is a part of the city and it is a part of us, New Yorkers, that I now understand and appreciate.

I think the craziest thing is that none of this had a turning point. There was no climax or graduation into belonging to New York. I think the moment you move and decide to tough it out, you belong. Every little detour and opportunity I stumbled upon eventually opened themselves up, like oysters revealing new pearls. Miracles. Most of the things I am grateful for now made no sense in the beginning. I think I just thought about it in the wrong way, the story of New York and I. I came to the city thinking I would find something. But you go to New York to build a life, not to find one waiting for you.

This past year was a lot of building. I think the first twelve months you live here, you are building a foundation. It is messy, and no matter how hard you look, you will never find a proper guidebook or “how-to” plan. But before you know it you will have built something, and whatever it is, building that something is important. The space in this city is so slim that it does not really matter what you build. You can climb onto other rooftops and check out other views, but you have to build something in order to stand with everyone else, amidst the tall structures, a part of the city, instead of looking at it from the outside.

I think I am finally getting to a point where I can see above the skyline, traced with curves and shapes I now recognize as well as the pores on my face, with a full view of the city, its people, and the moments that make

New

York,

New

York. ≡

This is where an ad for a sustainability-forward clothing brand would go... Instead we have a photo of the editor's right torso, plus his favorite sweater that was stolen (or rather, lost) in 2017 (sob, sob).



# II

## I N V E N T I O N

Interviews with  
independent creatives  
sharing ideas and insights,  
bona fide experiences,  
and selected works  
expressive in thought.

**C H R  
I S T I  
N E**

*@chrisssttiine*

**N G U  
Y E N**

*on content  
creation,*

*growing up,*

*and inviting  
change*



7/15/18, 6:00PM

Hearing about Christine through a friend.

“She makes videos on YouTube and playlists on Spotify and takes a bunch of photographs, a lot of fun stuff about her life and her friends, and beauty and skincare. She works for brands like Glossier. It’s definitely the type of content you like a lot.”

Following @chrisstttiiiiinne.

“She spins vinyls!”

“I know!”

9/27/18, 4:44PM & 11:33PM

Sending Christine a DM about the magazine.

Receiving a response with a \*hugging face emoji\*.

10/6/18, 1:00PM

Calling Christine in the middle of a loud mall in between work meetings.

Looking over an archive of poems she sent over, a diary on her Tumblr site, thinking about how much they remind me of someone I know. My friends, myself, everyone.

10/7 - 11/20/18

Many emails.

More calls.

11/20/18, 2:00PM

Meeting Christine at her apartment in Los Angeles.

Chatting in a bedroom with a colorful carpet and a kitchen flooded with natural light. Feeling a sense of warm familiarity, the kind of charisma a friend brings to the day.

Asking questions, smiling, concurring. Parting with a photo book and a bottle of water.

11/20/18, 4:00PM

Writing a note in my phone:

*Though our internet personas may tend to reflect inflated virtues of ourselves, Christine’s humor, intellect, and warm heartedness seem to glow brighter in person than the light in her photographs. ☹️*

## INTRODUCING CHRISTINE NGUYEN



## an interview with Christine Nguyen

+  
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### What launched you into videography and content creation?

I was in college and I didn't have a major. I took a film class, and the professor was so excited about it, he wrote a whole textbook and everything. His enthusiasm inspired me a lot, so I chose to be a film major soon after. At the time I was really into editing, and YouTube was a new thing. I started uploading my projects after noticing people were sharing what they were interested in. I was really into makeup, always been into makeup. I'd watch makeup videos and realize there were a lot of things that were missing, so I started making videos of my own. I made my name really hard to find because I didn't want anyone to watch them, that's why my name is spelled so crazy (chrisssttiine). I never changed it!

### How did you get interested in makeup?

I grew up in a family of all girls. Three sisters, raised by all women; everyone liked makeup. But I think I've always been interested in makeup because it's almost like art supplies.

## things are

the way

*I wish I could meet you again  
for the first time.*

*I'd do my best to not fall in  
love cause we're so different*

*now and would have nothing  
to talk about and*

*everything else to look forward to.*

*The way things were. ☹*





kissed the girls and  
made them cry

*My first kiss was at the age of 8 when Jacob Eminger and I ran out to the fields during recess to wish upon dandelions.*

*"It'll only come true if your eyes are closed and you don't share your wishes," he convinced me as we approached a lush patch.*

*And so I closed my eyes and made a wish, only to be disrupted by his lifeless lips. I immediately opened my eyes and looked him directly in the eyes for what seemed like hours until it finally hit.*

*My mom once told me that girls get pregnant from kissing boys.*

*Scared shitless, I ran and told my teacher. ☹️*

### **How has social media and the rise of new content platforms affected your life?**

It's completely changed my life. I never thought I'd be able to monetize or have a career through my hobby, things I'd be doing whether or not I get paid. I always tell people when they're stuck in a rut, especially my friends who are content creators, that you have to do what you do for yourself. Do it because it's fun, because when you first started out you weren't making any money.

**Do you have any thoughts on how our media landscape is changing? With so much more content being produced, so much more for us to engage with and consume, how is it affecting people?**

Speaking from my own experience, I think our attention spans have gotten much worse. All the content can be a good thing, though, if you use it to your advantage. With so much access to inspiration I think it amplifies our ability to make more, better, or different art. You can grow a lot faster as an individual if you utilize it in the right way.

**How has putting yourself in the public eye affected your self-consciousness or efficacy?**

I think it's made my skin tough. Obviously when you put your own projects on the internet, you open yourself up to a lot of feedback, positive and negative. The first time I heard any of the negative criticism it made me a bit heartbroken. It really stuck and hurt, but eventually you hear it enough that you learn to get over it. Of course, if you're having a bad day it can still bum you out, but over time you get stronger at the core, less swayed by those things.

**How has your self-documentation through video over time affected the way you look at yourself? Having the ability to watch yourself at a certain age?**

Honestly, when I first started making videos I thought I'd watch them to look back and see how I've grown, but I just haven't really done that. I'll reread the journal entries and stories I've written, but for some reason video is so visceral and time consuming, I just never rewatch things.





## diaries

*You know I didn't think I was much of a hoarder until this very moment after a couple beers and cleaning out the rest of my space after an epic yard sale. I would never call a yard sale "epic" but there are no other words to describe this thing my friends and I did this past weekend.*

*I'm clearing out the back of my closet and DAMN I still have diaries and journals from my preteen, maybe even elementary, years. I just flipped through a couple pages, and it is fucking brutal.*

*That said, I remember the last time I thought of these diaries and journals and told myself to burn them but somehow I am holding them in my hands at this very moment. I'm going to be 30 this year. Why am I holding on to my childhood self when I just gave my wardrobe away this weekend for FREE.99 (FREE dollars if you're Phil Nisco).*

## and journals

*Then I thought of the last time I crossed these diaries—it was about 2 or 3 years ago when I loaded them in my car after moving from LB to LA and had them all in a crate and Ian begged me (after a few months or so) to get a much needed car wash. So I did, but I had to empty out my car somewhere so I emptied everything into his spare bedroom. I'm a true fucking Pisces 'cause they say that we are cripplingly trusting 'cause I told myself he wouldn't read them. I was wrong. How did I not see that coming? More so, why did I feel so ashamed and apologetic? That was who I was, but I was so, so embarrassed.*

*People ask me all the time if I ever delete videos 'cause I've been on YouTube for over a decade and it was a major "coming of age" situation for me and to be honest, I wouldn't even think of it. All those cringe-worthy moments, well rehearsed thoughts, bad bad haircuts... That was and is who I am and what makes me ME.*

*This is the year of self-love 'cause god-fucking-damn we all deserve to be proud of who we are no matter how embarrassing, how awkward, or how (sometimes I feel so) unloveable we can be. This is the year I'm going to work towards rewarding myself with positive thoughts.*

*I know no one reads this 'cause the count shows on the backend but I am a little drunk (I've had two Tecates, I never drink but fuck, it was like in 2 or 3 hours! Every time I say "but fuck," I always think of "butt fuck").*

*In any case, here's to YOU (cracking open another beer)—YOU are worth it. YOU are worth being loved by YOU no matter how painful you can, and will, sometimes get.*

*THIS IS THE YEAR OF SELF LOVE. ☹☹☹*

## after an epic yard sale



**Is there a goal behind your content, the videos you create and the way you share certain parts of your life? Do you have any intentions for how it affects the audiences that are watching?**

It depends on the type of video. I used to make these videos called “A Brief Conversation” about the changes and challenges creative people face. A lot of the people I’ve interviewed have had a successful career in one life, and out of nowhere decided to switch fields or hobbies. I make those to motivate people to always learn and be curious, geek out on whatever you’re passionate about because it can become an important part of your life if you want it to be.

I make these videos called “Apartment Tours” which are meant to inspire people to work with what they have. There are homes that are tiny; people who love to thrift; and people who love to spend their money. It’s a large spectrum of people living in different spaces, minimal or extra, just to show how everyone is different. The vlogs are just a video journal for me to understand things better, and maybe look back on when I’m older.

**Do your vlogs ever serve as a kind of personal process that helps you understand things you're going through at the time?**

I think so, maybe. I don't make them with that intention. But I guess that's how journaling works; you just do it and it flushes everything out, which is really cool in a way because that's how we solve a lot of our problems.

**What would you qualify as a good day?**

On a good day I'd wake up early and make breakfast, get coffee, sort through all my emails and be productive, and then spend time with friends and family. I used to do all these brunches. I'd have a bunch of people over, all my friends, and just feed them. That's always fun. But then again a good day could mean being a vegetable on the couch and doing literally nothing.

**We're featuring your photography and many of these photos are of your friends. How do your friends affect the work that you do?**

My friends influence everything. I'm constantly interviewing and featuring them in my videos; they're such an inspiration to me. I have a lot of creative friends and we always bounce ideas off of each other.

**What do you like taking photos of the most? What does a good photo mean to you?**

People! A good photo to me is one that captures a mood and evokes a feeling. I have a friend who takes photos of people wherever he goes. People are infinitely interesting. In his photographs they aren't smiling; they're just in the middle of their work or eating at a restaurant. That's a good photo to me, something natural.

**We're featuring your poetry in this issue which many of your viewers don't know about as much as your videos. Does poetry serve a purpose to you? What inspires you to write?**

I write every day, literally every single day. I was telling a friend that, and he told me I should start posting them, but I don't always choose to share my writing because a lot of it is extremely revealing. With poetry you're putting out short thoughts which I find easier than journaling. I write one every day on my phone. There was a point where I shared my poems daily for 30 days, but then they got kind of grim so I stopped posting them. It's a reflection of whatever you're going through in life. So if you're having a really good week, it's super funny and positive; if you're having a bad week, it's super pessimistic and negative. It can almost make me seem like two totally different people.

**Is there anything you're going through right now that you might look back on in the future and think, "Wow, that made me who I am"?**

I mean—everything. Everything that's going on. I just turned 30 and I feel like a lot has changed in the last year. So much changes in so little time. Even in the last 3 months! In three months from now I'll look back on today and probably think "That made me who I am." Any memory of the emotions I've been through over the past month or year or 20 years makes me think "That made me who I am."

**When you reflect on your younger years are there any specific experiences that stand out to you?**

The summer I got back into the 6th grade I had this unrivaled confidence. For some reason it was like I was having a major life change at 12 years old. I got a haircut, new clothes, and decided that I'd be the best version of myself, not so insecure. It was amazing! Because I completely transformed my attitude I found myself with closer friends. Everyone was friendlier to me including my teachers, and I got better grades. Then the next year my parents decided to move so I had to switch schools. I had to start all over again. And I felt totally depleted...13 year old me was like "Dude I just put so much effort into everything being the best version of myself!" So then I became the WORST version of myself, no confidence at my new school. It was horrible. I didn't make any new friends. Two totally different ends of the spectrum. I think that was an early lesson about outlook—if you have a positive outlook, a different mindset, it can determine a lot about your experience. It's the law of attraction; if you're positive you attract positive people and positive things. You can have a bright or dark experience based on what's in your head.

the first time I did s h r o o m s



*you asked me for my favorite tea.  
you used your roommate's coffee grinder,  
pulsed the shrooms into dust  
and didn't clean it out.  
i wondered if he felt it in  
his coffee the next morning.  
i was laying on a rock,  
looking up at the trees sway so vividly  
like a moving painting when i started to cry  
cause i had never and hadn't since  
felt anything more majestic.  
i looked over at you and  
you were sitting on a branch  
with your legs dangling  
happy as a clam and i knew  
that as much as i loved you then,  
we will always be good friends. ☺☺☺*



**What are a few of your favorite pastimes?**

I collect records. I love music and making playlists. It's so nice being able to share music. I also like photography a lot. I shoot a lot of film. I loved traveling but I burnt myself out this year. About a year and a half ago, I wrote a list of all the places I wanted to go. I wanted to travel across all 50 states in the U.S. and tried my best to do so. I was traveling each month to a new place. Eventually I realized I wasn't enjoying it; it became just to check places off the list. The last place I went to was a month ago, and I thoroughly enjoyed that because I gave myself a 2 month break. It's just nice to be home and settled for a bit. It means a lot to have a trip to look forward to, but when you do it too much, it's like you're always looking forward to something else instead of looking at what's in front of you.

**If someone came up to you and asked for your advice on how to spend their time, in order to enjoy life more, what would you tell them?**

It's so funny that that's a question because my ex-boyfriend said I used to spend my time doing things just for myself and told me I should start doing them again. I used to "masturdate", which means taking yourself on a date. I have a list of things on my phone that I love doing, and I'll do them on my masturdate. I was really down 3 months ago when I talked to him, and that's when he told me I should do the things I used to enjoy doing by myself. Things that you'd typically do on a date—a picnic, a movie, getting dressed up and going to a fancy dinner, a museum. There's a whole list of things on my phone that I would do on a date, but instead I do them by myself. Take yourself on a date. Masturdate!





## rosebud;!;!;!;

*I was eleven when my parents bought us a computer game that would forever change my life. It was a game where you guide a family through life and watch them live with real world reactions.*

*I became obsessed trying to keep everyone happy, monitoring every move, and finding ways to keep their lives fulfilled.*

*My computer hacker cousin Tom introduced me to a cheat code where you have all the money in the world; it was a lot of fun in the beginning, but I grew bored quickly and struggled to find new means of entertainment in this virtual world.*

*I trapped everyone in a room with no door and watched them all die; one by one.*

*My computer hacker cousin Tom doesn't know this, but he taught me a valuable life lesson when I was eleven. ☹☹☹*

### **How would you define a successful life?**

It's all relative. It's not a specific number like how much money you make or a specific thing like who you're with. A successful life to me is to have people around that are important to you, friends and family, and to have some goals for the future. Those goals are different for everyone, whether or not you want to get married or have kids, settle down, travel and make art; as long as you have something you're motivated towards.

There are so many different ideas of what a successful life is to me. I look at my friend Austin, and he's the most successful person I know. He goes through emotions like everyone, but in general, he's really happy, positive, always reading and learning things, developing new skills. To me that's success. I look at my friends Nick and Lynnsee; they have a company and work really hard. That's also success. I think it varies with people and what stage of life you're at. Success to me when I was 16 was to graduate school. When I was 22, it was to get a good job and be independent. For me now, it's to work on myself and my community, to build my career in a fulfilling way. I think a lot of people conceptualize success in milestones, and they'll think "when I get here, I'll be successful; I'll feel different." But there's no real end goal, I don't think; at least not for me. It's always changing and developing.



cook, clean,  
pay the rent

*they shared stories  
over stiff drinks and cigarettes,  
a communal language  
which you lack  
what is it and  
what does it count?  
remove yourself  
and you'll fall deeper in love.  
this is misplaced.  
time will give you  
a sense of spectrum.  
know that no matter how  
you feel now, you will feel  
different with time  
but also know that  
there will always be  
another war. ☰*





**For any of the people who watch your videos and might wish their life was like yours, what would you tell them?**

I would tell them that you never know what's going on in another person's life. I don't think they'd want my life. With anyone out there, it may seem like shits and giggles, all fun and picturesque, but you NEVER know what's going on in someone's head. Or with someone's health, even.

**How do you think people, knowing that, might be able to appreciate their own life more?**

It sounds so simple but you have to count your blessings. Always be grateful for what you have because it can disappear quickly. We all have so much right now that we'll eventually look back on. It's crazy easy, especially with social media, to compare yourself to other people. But when you really think about it, we have no idea what's going on in someone's else's life. We're only given our own lives so we should work on building them, making ourselves happy, creating a community. If we're constantly lusting after someone else's life or an idea of another life, we'll never be happy. We won't live our own, and then it'll be over. And then when we find out there's more to the life we chased than what someone posted to Instagram, we'll just be left there going "What the fuck!?" ☹️

much of what I  
know comes  
from others

*My dad once told me over a cigarette in his backyard that it's very important that I find someone with hobbies and interests; like a purpose that keeps them alive, that thing to look forward to that will detach them from the mundane nine-to-five.*

*This he told me while gazing at my mom through the screen door; my mom sprawled out on the couch, gossiping on the phone with my aunt in France or Vietnam or the Republic of... wherever.*

*This, coming from a man who suppressed my curiosity in "hobbies and interests" beyond the Holy Trinity: piano, ping-pong, mathematics.*

*I couldn't register if he meant this to be ironic; he's hard to read that way. In an effort to understand, I helped the conversation along by adding my bit of confusion. His tone was neither of regret because I could not pinpoint a single hobby or interest my mom had or of relief because she has this "separate life" from what I saw on the daily. A life only he and my mom knew of, you know, one full of interests and hobbies that kept my dad so cripplingly enthralled.*

*I pictured this "separate life" where she doesn't answer work calls during all hours of the day; a life where she doesn't make the same meal every other night; not burdened by her children's needs; or simply doing anything besides recapping the tedium of what I was certain her rehearsed daily agenda must have been to my aunt in France who must find it all very interesting.*

*I just couldn't see it.*

*I gazed at her as my dad did through the screen door and tried my best to make a connection as she mouthed the words "clearance sale."*

*In any case, my dad doesn't offer much advice so when the moment comes, I'll take what I can get.*

*"You never want to get bored."*

*We all are, act accordingly. ☹☹*

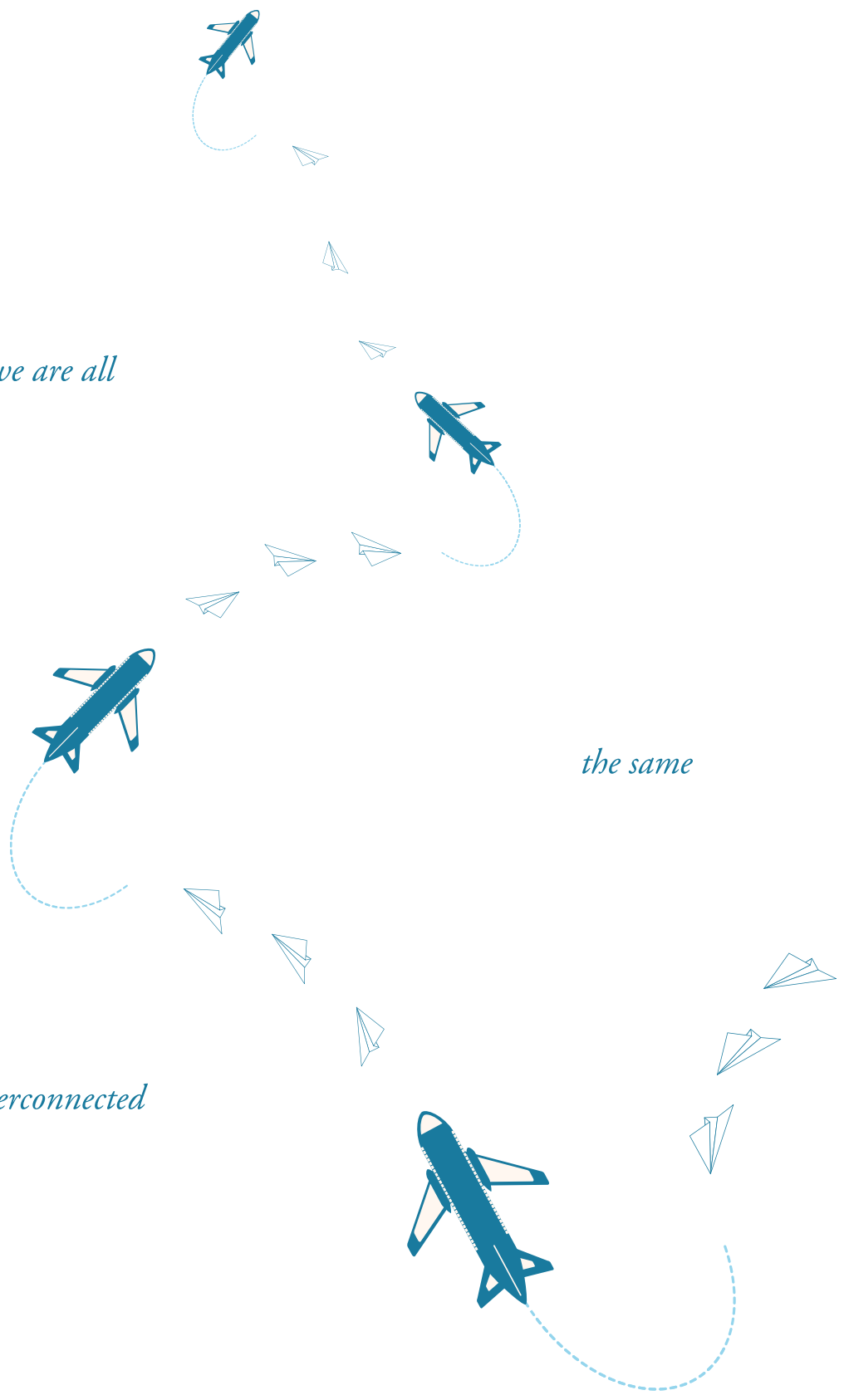


*we are all*

*the same*

*interconnected*

*human beings*



*We sit suspended in the air, together, seated inches apart with settled stomachs recovering from the stress of everything that defines a flight before its departure: security lines, checked bags, and unscanned tickets.*

*I listen to the child crying behind me and a thought deepens. How when his parents try to quiet him at each whimper and yelp there is some recognition that at some point we will all have been where each of us are. Childs, teens, adults on a plane. Surely we were all once the babies and someday we might be the parents. I think about how flustered I might be when I'm 40, tending to my child, worried that we're interrupting the silence of the surrounding passengers. And then I'll think, "Wow, how did time go so fast?" as I recall the flights I took before I had kids. But for now, without them, I look around and think about all the others who could have been the 23 year old sitting nearby, thinking about all of this.*

*It is a sentimental force I cannot quite explain that hits me like a rushing river pounding in all directions, one that might appear frightening if you were not so amazed or inspired by its energy. It makes me want to cry when all of it hits during quiet moments like this, you know? We are all just here, together, doing these things and living these lives. It is as if we are each playing an instrument, different sounds at different times. In certain moments we are able to harmonize with each other. And in others we are able to split off and lead with our own serenades, pouring out the melodies of some graceful solo. But in the moments where we stop playing, just for a minute, to look up and see it all, the entire orchestra that we are all a part of, it is almost too beautiful not to cry. I smile as we rocket towards space, or so one might imagine. The seatbelt signs turn off, the man in front of me chooses his first movie, the woman next to me covers her head in a sweater, and the child behind me begins to quiet down.*

*Onward we go. ☰*

Words + Graphics by Travis Zane

**B E N**

*on  
photography,*

*@itsbigben*

*cultivating  
community,*

**P R E**

*and pushing*

**S C O**

*through fear*

**T T**





## INTRODUCING BEN PRESCOTT

At twenty two years old, I often found myself nestled atop the covers of a twin-sized bed, scrolling through photographs of bursting light between treetops and steaming coffee mugs aside snowy landscapes, longing for a different life. Amidst those photographs stood an Instagram account titled “@itsbigben”, which I began to browse regularly on days I felt most stifled. Those college years in the beachside town of Isla Vista, CA (Go Gauchos!) were defined by a saturation of enriching experiences I now understand constitute a life many wish to live themselves. Our hours were spent amongst close friends in shared houses above the ocean, on shared balconies above the beach; playing games, planning futures, and talking about things kids talk about with occasional tumbles into the waves and trips to the library. Indeed, many of us commented on the fleeting nature of our fortunes; How we might never live so close to the ocean again, how rare it was to be neighbors with our peers, and most of all, how we ought to enjoy it while we could.

Though with all previous chapters of our lives there seem to be times that we look back on with pangs of endearment, I might be so delusional to say that spending one’s youth in a cove called Isla Vista cannot be compared to any other magic. Still, a yearning for something different often crossed the minds of all of us then, since perhaps being young entails a sense of longing regardless of how many gratitude journals we keep.

I recall a handful of conversations with friends, blonde hair brushing in the Santa Barbara wind with the windows rolled down, in which we contemplated the dream of running away. To live in a van or some other nomadic representation of a less ordinary life so we might stop wondering what decisions were the right ones to make. To meet people outside of house parties and classrooms and have conversations in places we didn’t see every day. Amidst our shared words, many of Ben’s photographs would pop into our heads, sometimes on our phones.

These pearly images of outdoor adventures that now define a niche on social media once defined the dream we referred to in those conversations: living a life focused on what truly mattered—moments with friends, making quiet memories together. Inspiration found in the squared snapshots of Instagram accounts like @itsbigben are what drove my friends and I to do many of the things we’re now fond of: skipping school to hop around national parks, sacrificing a “productive day” with one spent paddleboarding through kelp forests or hiking into wind caves, traveling to other places and spending weeks, sometimes months away, only returning to take our exams. Though I did not anticipate meeting Ben years later for the making of this magazine, I attributed many of our memories to his ability to capture his own.

These idyllic representations of road trips and nights spent outdoors began to speak to something larger than the idea of running away. They began to represent a lifestyle focused on values, noticing a friend’s smile or a bird in the blue sky, and how we might live and uphold them in our everyday lives. When I look at Ben’s photographs today, a single word arises from each photo like smoke from an incense stick: “Rejoice”. Rejoice in the most natural successes of our human world: each other, nature (of which we are a part), and the peaceful state of mind that arises from living now instead of waiting to live a future life. ☸

an interview with Ben Prescott

+

*a personal essay on*

*ppaas: s i v v i i t y*

**How did you get started in your career as an outdoor, lifestyle, and travel photographer?**

I started back in 2015. My best friend lent me his camera for 6 weeks and I'd been searching for an opportunity to use it. I drove 4 hours south into the Seattle area to shoot at an Instameet, a meetup for Instagram photographers. I remember getting up at 4AM in the morning to meet with these guys Dmitri Shpak and Yuri Trebushnoy, who eventually taught me everything about photography. Even though they already had large audiences and full fledged careers, they decided to show me the ropes. Five or six times over the next few months they taught me everything they knew. I don't know why. I'm still in contact with both of them. People ask me "Are you self taught?" and I guess I am self taught, but I had Dmitri and Yuri as heavy influences from the start.

**Were you interested in shooting photography at a young age?**

My mom tells me I was, which I find surprising because I always thought photography for me started when I bought my own camera at 26 years old, after trying out my friend's. But my mom has photographic evidence of me when I was a kid running around with an old film camera. She started showing me all the old film photos I took; I had no idea they existed. I guess I was into photography early on without ever realizing it.







**How has outdoor photography and the process of capturing a moment affected your outlook on life?**

Everything I'm doing is a matter of being in the right place at the right time. If I leave late and miss the sunrise, there's no getting that sunrise back. It's made me realize that those outstanding moments in life that wow us—a sunrise at the top of a mountain, meeting a new friend across the country—they all happen whether we're there for them or not. We can be there for those moments, putting ourselves out there, taking time to look around, or we can let it pass us by.

**What kind of photograph or setting excites you most?**

My favorite photos are ones with subject matter, a person, or some activity because people mean the most to me. I'm a big fan of shooting landscapes, but I don't often shoot a photo of a landscape by itself. I think having a subject in the photo humanizes the experience of photography. I find the pictures I look back on tend not to be ones of mountain roads or snowy bridges, but of people. My favorite photo I've ever taken is a picture of this guy fly fishing out of a canoe at dawn. It was extremely foggy, and I caught him mid-cast. I remember being there with my buddies, Justin and Travis Kauffman, standing on the shore watching him paddle out. The lake was perfectly calm. I can remember that entire morning, crystal clear, two and a half years later because of that photo. A good photo brings you back into something you cared about. It puts you back into a moment, letting you relive and learn from whatever it is you captured.

**Online you've mentioned how you used to pose for your father's photographs. Can you explain how your early experiences relate to what you do now?**

That was a funny time! My dad loved to pay me a few bucks here and there to pose and smile when he took photos. I wasn't by any means naturally excited about it, but I'm glad I did it because we have all those photographs to look at now. It's kind of funny thinking about him and his photography. Witnessing him appreciate the value of having a photo to look back on influenced me a great deal. He wasn't just out there with a camera trying to snap photos; he was trying to create memories. I think that's what draws all of us to photography.

**Is there anything specific about your childhood that influenced who you are today?**

When I was three years old my dad and mom put me on skis at the top of Whistler Mountain. I've been skiing every winter for 26 years now. In B.C., we're surrounded by all of this amazing nature, all you have to do is look out your window.

In high school, I was a downhill mountain bike racer and my mom would drive me all around British Columbia, as far as 11 hour drives away. I didn't do all that well, but it was awesome to have my mom support how committed I was to the sport. I kept getting all these injuries; it was by no means easy for her to watch, but she still made every effort to drive me around every weekend.

Growing up with easy access to the outdoors—mountain biking, chairlifts, alpinism—it's affected every aspect of my life. Everyone here does everything outdoors, it's almost impossible to avoid. When I finally picked up a camera, I don't think my lifestyle actually changed in terms of the stuff I do on the weekly. The only thing that really changed when I bought a camera is that now I happen to have a camera while doing all these things.



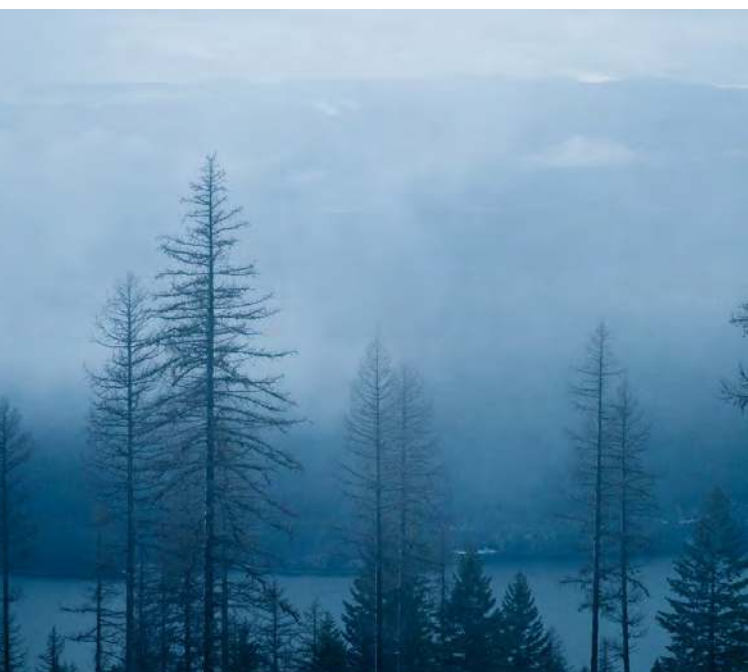




## waiting for moments

*Timing is everything in my work. When you're shooting photography, no matter where you are in the world, you're playing a game of patience and place. You have to wait for people to interact, the sun to move, and the light to filter through exactly how you want it. Golden hour. Blue hour. Photography has taught me a lot about that game, playing with patience. I think people forget that the word "waiting" is an active word. It seems like a very passive thing, to wait. Sometimes passiveness is regarded negatively in our culture, all the things we say. "Don't wait for your dreams to come true". "Don't wait on anyone else". But in terms of photography, waiting is an active process and an integral part of pursuing those perfect moments and big dreams. When I decided I wanted to get into photography, I made a commitment to being okay with waiting around, taking extra time to get up early and be out late for those time-sensitive windows of opportunity, sunrise and sunset, and abstracts like the moment your dreams begin to fabricate into something real. Everything good takes time, a bit of waiting, and a lot of patience. If we're always rushing to the next goal, we'll miss out on the entire process of building our skills and intuitions, lose the opportunities that make a great photo, and sacrifice the moments that make it all worth it. Putting the camera down after shooting, breathing in the air, absorbing the blue and endless lake against sun kissed mountain spines. Seeing your friend's breath condensate in the cold air and noticing just how alive you feel. ☺☺*

by Ben Prescott



### **Does it ever get hard being on the road?**

It's become massively hard for me. Last August I travelled to the Faroe Islands and Iceland. After that I was home for one day and then flew to New Zealand, then came home for 8 hours before flying to the Yukon, then over to Alaska. Very early on, 5 weeks in, I hit a wall. Lots of things started happening. My mom went into stem cell treatment (for lyme disease), which was a great thing, something we spent all year fundraising for. But being abroad while she was going through treatment, when she needed support, that was rough. Then some business stuff happened that I couldn't take care of abroad, the CRA (Canadian Revenue Agency) wanted to consult with me while I was in the Faroe Islands, an impossible place to communicate. I had to get routed through to the Canadian Embassy while in the middle of nowhere. And after that, I got really sick. Everything about that trip was extremely challenging. 5 weeks of treacherous weather, living off of gas station hot dogs, getting little sleep...Being away like that was difficult and made me rethink traveling. I much prefer being home when I can.

### **What are the most important things about being home to you?**

I live with three of my buddies at the base of the mountain and when I come home after being away I really look forward to seeing them, just catching up on life.

I've been out in this area of British Columbia for nine years. My first two years here I didn't make a lot of connections. Right at the two year mark, I started meeting a lot of new people and many of them are now my close friends. My best friend lives 25 minutes away, we've known each other for over a decade. We're both really busy, he runs his own company, but we try to do whatever gnarly thing we can whenever we're together.

My favorite thing about being home is the people, the people I see on a daily basis, being able to see old friends, new friends, and family. It's amazing being with my mom while she recovers, being able to see her means the world.

### **Describe your ideal day!**

I know this is basic but...Just going on some adventure, hiking for a few hours, shooting photos, then coming back and grabbing a craft beer at Field House, the local brewery. That is seriously my favorite type of day!







### **If someone asked for your advice on how to spend their time more wisely, what would you tell them?**

There's a popular analogy we have in my community that says, "You know what's important to you by what you spend your money on". I think the same goes for what you spend your time on. Aside from scrolling memes for 4 hours a night, you can kind of tell what's important to you by looking at how you spend your time. If you're wasting tons of hours on things that aren't pushing you towards a place you want to be in 5 years from now, consider cutting 20% of that out for a week. If you're already taking photos an hour a day, then there might be something to explore there. Maybe cut out that hour of meme scrolling and reallocate it to taking more photos. Experiment and see where it takes you. It seems like the time we spend on tasks and activities can tell us things about ourselves we don't know or weren't consciously aware of. One thing I've been trying to do myself...this is so embarrassing...I watch Vine compilations on YouTube. I'm trying to cut down on that, just a little bit so I can get an actual good night's sleep and function like a normal person!

### **What does "success" mean to you and how do you measure it in your day to day life?**

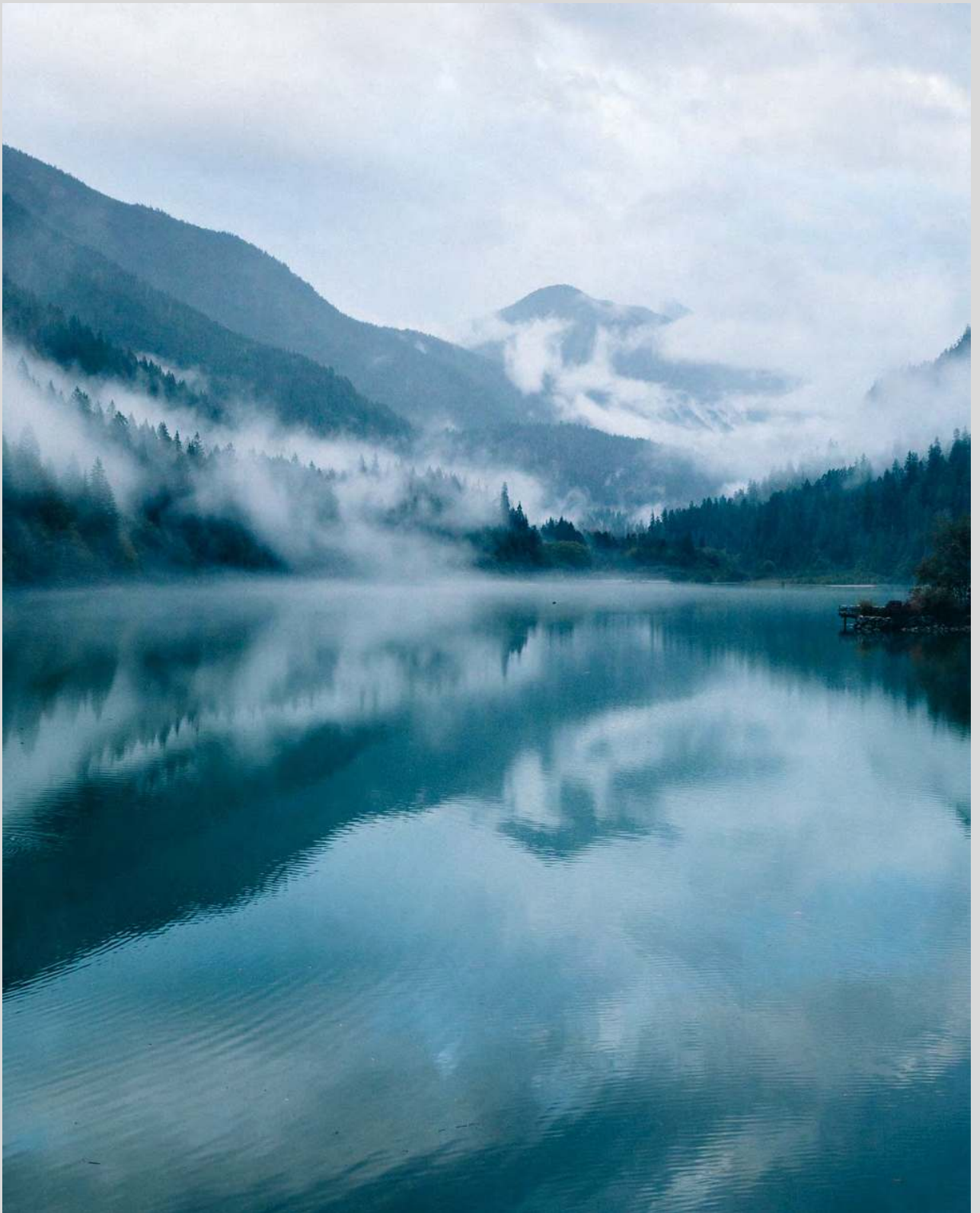
People want to be happy, do good for themselves and for others, their kids, and their parents. Maybe for some, that means a rolex on their wrist, for others, it means reducing their carbon footprint to zero. There are lots of different markers for people, but I think the best way to figure out if you're succeeding is through the risks you take. There are things that you want, but the path to get to them scares you. Once we take that scary path, the experience normalizes the risk itself and makes it easier for us to do all those scary things to get to where we want.

How I define success right now is in the question that risk presents. When that scary situation arises, are we attempting it? Usually, the thing we're scared of doing ends up going pretty well, we get to look back and say, "Hey I did that!" with gratitude.

Just yesterday we were filming this video for a friend named Paige. She was recently in a car accident, hit by a drunk driver, and is now in a coma in the hospital. I don't know her personally, but I know Paige's friends. I suggested to her best friend that we make a video of all of Paige's friends and family to play for her as she tries to wake up. We organized everyone together at a house to film, and as I walked up to the door, my heart rate skyrocketed. I got so nervous. I didn't want to go through with it. It was my idea; I was the filmmaker, and I was supposed to be the one calling the shots. When you're in the midst of that panic, everything happening in your body just tells you to pull out of the situation. It feels like danger, which is weird because there's nothing that can physically hurt you. But I had some friends who talked me back into it, and within 5 minutes I was doing my thing, directing people and filming it all. Looking back, that feels like a huge victory. I overcame the panic and completed a project that was extremely important to me. Paige will be blessed by it.

If you want to define success, I think it's right in there, when you're about to pull out of something difficult because it's too hard and you don't feel like you can do it. But then you say, "Okay, let's just try this". I think success can be broken down and reverse engineered into all of those little things, situations we want to run away from and quit. One of the most important factors in not running away is having support, having our friends and crew. They help us do things we're bad at and we help them do things they're bad at.

Those are my markers of a successful life, having a community around you and from time to time attempting things that are difficult, then assessing how they went.



**It seems like social media is heightening our desire for daily life to be like what we see in photographs, films, and videos. Do you have a response to the "FOMO" (fear of missing out) people experience from their digital feeds?**

If someone wished their life was like what they see on my Instagram page, a bunch of hikes and road trips with friends, I'd tell them to look at their lives and see what's standing in between them and that. But there are things about leading this lifestyle that don't show up on social media feeds. The emails, editing videos late into the night, some days spending several hours replying to comments on photos, certain days paying the bills by shooting long weddings.

Of course, we all want to do all these things, be out hiking and traversing with our friends, but at the end of the day we all have bills to pay and it's still real life. You might see a bunch of these hikes and travels, but the backend is a lot of clerical work and learning how to do things on your own, boring stuff like taxes, pitches, and contracts.

I don't think it's bad if someone sees my feed and wants to live the lifestyle my photography projects, I would just say we all have to be realistic with it. If you want to road trip full time and can find a way to pay your bills doing that, go for it! Some people find a way to do it, and I bet those people live a long time.

**What do you think about when you look back on your younger self? Is there any advice you have to offer others attempting to better their own lives?**

I think, "That kid knew what was going on". When I was 20, I knew exactly who I wanted to be and where I wanted to go. All that changed of course, but I made the decision to leave my old life behind. I used to drink, party, and wasn't so great to people. I had some toxic friendships, we all did really mean things to each other. I lost my best friend two years prior which sent me on this journey of questioning—what is reality, what is truth. After that, I started studying spirituality. I learned to not spend all my money on alcohol and drugs, and not let people manipulate me. I left my old town and spent the next two years with only one friend my own age. It didn't feel fun, it's not necessarily fun discovering spirituality, there are a lot of things you give up, but I think it leads to a healthier mindset and more wholesome lifestyle. Leaving everything behind, all those toxic relationships, was absolutely critical to the person I am today. I would advise my younger self, tell him to embrace the change.

If I'm talking to someone who I want to be real with themselves, who I want to get into a good headspace, I'd tell them to be hesitant when taking advice. Only take advice from the people you can verify want the best for you. That's pretty much limited to your long term friends and family, generally. If I'm telling someone how to navigate change, I'd say listen only to the people who care about you more than you might care about yourself.

**Do you have a goal with your photography in terms of how it affects your audiences?**

My intention with my photography is to inspire people to get outdoors and do things they always thought they could, but never have for whatever reason. My photos are there to show people “Hey, this is accessible within a weekend”. If you live in British Columbia, Montana is accessible for you. Leave work at 3PM on a Friday and be back at 7AM on a Monday. The goal is to show people that you can see, do, and experience a lot of wholesome and challenging fun if you intend to. There are so many cognitive benefits to fresh air and pushing your body. It’ll help you live a long time, think clearer, feel more fulfilled and regulate your hormones. It’ll do so many positive things for your health and your relationships. Plus, there are so many different places and types of people in the outdoor community, it’s a good time that never ends.

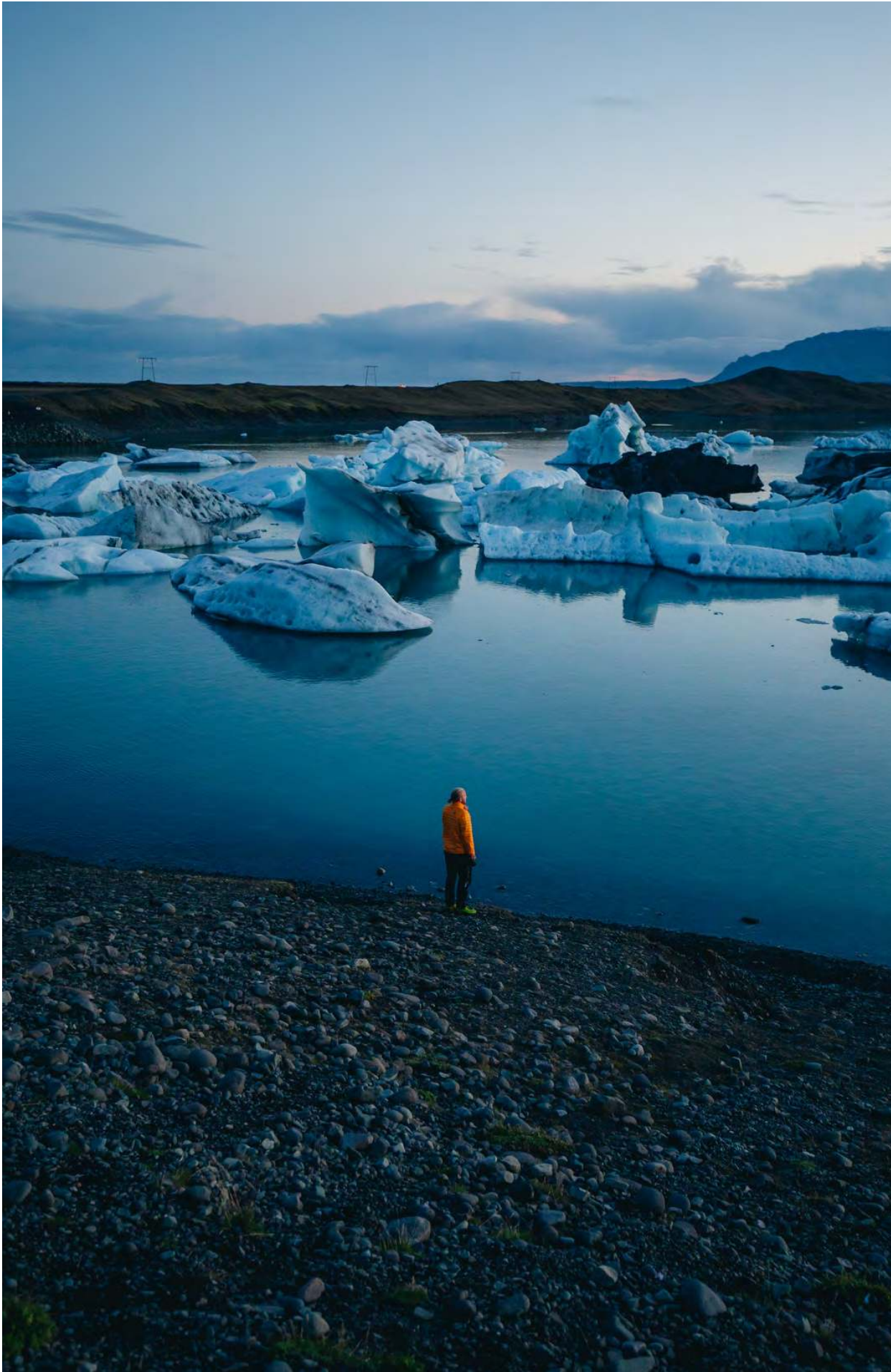
**Anything you’re looking forward to in the future?**

Going out on skis as many days as possible this year! I have plans to make a couple of films with some friends in B.C., and others around the country.  
By glancing through my Instagram it might look like I love to travel, that I’m a fiend for it. I definitely enjoy traveling but I don’t necessarily seek it out anymore. I’m approaching a season of being home more than I’ll be away, and I’m looking forward to that, being settled. Digging into the areas around my home and re-experiencing it like I did in the early days: enjoying home, family and friends, that’s what I’m looking forward to.

**What is one life philosophy you want to encourage others to consider?**

Champion other people’s success above your own. Say, from a community standpoint, you have a group of ten people who have a common goal, and every single one of those people is treating each of the other nine how they’d want to be treated, championing them. That group is going to get more done than a group of ten people who have the mindset of “I’m going to work as hard as possible on my projected task, I’m going to be the best for myself.”

It’s funny how that happens, as you commit to the development of others you end up developing yourself. You don’t really know anything until you can teach it. You discover your strengths and weaknesses when you set out to offer your skills to someone else. ☺☺☺



**"Morning!"**

**"Morning! What's up? What are your plans today?"**

**"Heading out to do some work, will try to avoid an existential crisis, and will probably see some friends."**

**"Same!"**

**"Sometimes I think of us like little spaceships in one of those two-bit arcade games where you just move left and right, avoiding falling debris."**

**"But instead of debris, they're existential crises!"**

**"Yes!"**

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*on  
entrepreneurship,*

*pursuing  
wellness,*

*and unexpected turns*

**CHI  
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*@chinaealexander*

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Intro + Interview by Travis Zane

Photos by Diana Elena

Words by Chinae Alexander



Though we had never met Chinae in person before our photoshoot, scheduled for what is now recorded as New York's coldest day of the year, a sense of stranger-hood was nowhere to be found. Nor was it expected. As an honest voice known to the masses across social media, Chinae offers an intimate look into the thoughts, experiences, trials, and inspirations of entrepreneurship and everyday life. Her new podcast, "Press Send", brings the audience to the forefront, addressing listeners' life issues with each episode. On her website, a biography of her achievements and overall public influence transforms into the voice of Chinae herself:

*In addition to talking about her deep inner dislike of kale publicly in front of thousands on the internet, Chinae owns a successful event planning company, has a new YouTube channel, is in the first stages of her first book, and is creating your soon-to-be favorite podcast. When she's not trying to change the world, you'll find Chinae pondering if a runner's high is actually a "thing", while enjoying a glass of malbec and a nice salad\*.*

*\*pizza and/or tacos*

*Also, it's weird to write about yourself in the third person so I'm really sorry about that guys. I'll make it up to you next time.*

*- Chinae*

As we braced our coats, screaming in the frigid weather, I could only think of one thing that might make someone agree to our asks: a crazy kind of kindness, one we all ought to cherish.

Dear Chinae,

Thank you for being a fervently authentic voice in this world, and someone kind enough to trust others,

a stranger  
or rather, "email friend"  
asking about your life

Plus the favor to endure  
10 degree weather

(minus the windchill, or  
digitally translated: "Feels like -20 °F")

for waterside photos at Domino Park

Chatting at Freehold Cafe felt oddly  
familiar

as did attempting to stop  
your scarf from flying away

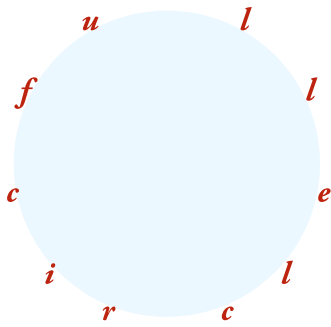
chasing the item of a friend

or perhaps just someone very naturally  
friendly. ☺

INTRODUCING CHINAE ALEXANDER



**an interview with Chinae Alexander**  
+  
*a personal essay on coming*



**Can you describe your "start" on social media and why you choose to share your life online?**

It was actually on accident. I was applying for a job to be a social media director at Class Pass. I started an Instagram account as a fitness account so I could walk into the interview with something since I had zero experience with social media. I had about 300 followers when I went in for the interview, and of course, I didn't get the job. But I kept posting on my account after that and it organically grew from there.

My content is primarily directed towards women. Basically, every day I want to put out content that makes people feel more like themselves. I don't want to share anything that makes people aspire to be me. I aim to share things that make people want to pursue who they are more. That's the ultimate goal.



**Why do you write long form captions alongside photos instead of simply including a single phrase or word for each post?**

Every social media professional or brand asks me to write short captions because people don't have great attention spans. A lot of people tell me "Keep it short", but my thing is "Make better stuff that people will want to stick around for". I was a writer and marketer before I was on social media. I like aesthetics and I like photos but for me, the biggest compliment is when someone says, "You're the only person whose captions I read".

There are plenty of accounts out there whose audiences want a cute photo of them and their dog captioned "Sunday", and that's cool too. People want different things from different people.

**With constant access to the internet and our digital devices, stimulation can become excessive. How might we utilize our access to content and shareability in a positive way?**

I can only speak for myself since so many people have their own ways of combating the stresses of social media, but I think an important start is to realize that social media is not going away.

It's not lessening, if anything it's growing.

Of course, people like different things at different times, I'm sure there's going to be something new after Instagram, but it's important to acknowledge that social media itself exists. Then we can start to think about how we might use it better.

For me, that means making conscious choices of how I appear online: Not heavily editing my photos, showing up on Instagram stories every morning without makeup, so on and so forth. Not to say it's bad to wear makeup, makeup is a part of my job, but showing all the different versions of ourselves and letting people in on that can change the way people think about themselves in relation to their feeds. As influencers, it's our responsibility to create healthier spaces for people to scroll through. I can't control how often people consume my content, but I can control the quality of it, how they might feel after consuming it.

If all we're seeing are tiny girls with perfectly photoshopped bodies, wearing full faces of makeup, and never going through bullshit like eating a microwaved dinner, well, that can take a toll on us. Sure, it's fun showing people the glamorous stuff like flying first class, but also it's important to show people that it's 2AM and you're up editing, you're exhausted, you broke up with your boyfriend, and all your tears wiped off your makeup.

**Eating disorders have been reported at alarmingly higher rates compared to previous generations. What are your thoughts around modern day body image and self esteem, and how people are faring today?**

It seems we're in this very introspective phase about everything, including ourselves, perhaps a little more than we should be. We're very analytical about how we feel, which can be a good thing or a bad thing.

Body image is an introspective battle that has always existed, no matter what culture or time.

But in this day and age, we have access to so much information through the internet. It's great because we can see a lot of the world but also means we have a lot more to compare ourselves to. For me, reaching a healthy relationship with my body revolved around thinking about it less. It might be the amount in which we think about ourselves and our appearances that harms us the most.

Of course, there's so much we can do to improve our confidence with therapy and self-talk, but it's also important to focus on other things. A portion of my content is about body image, but I don't want to be a "body image account". We need to balance out these issues with the rest of the things we should be thinking about.

What has helped me the most has been focusing on improving other parts of my life that aren't centered around the way I look. If I feel more confident in my career, then I'm less focused on my butt, my arm, my this or that. If we start to focus on other things we can build a more holistic, positive view of ourselves and become more diversified people.

What's sad is that people think "If I just have this body or this hair, if my skin is better, if I find this relationship...I'll be happy". But then you get to that place and realize it didn't fix anything. If anything, it can even create more stress, a more limited lens on yourself that only magnifies insecurity.

I don't think this whole thing is about getting to our goals, but rather reframing what they are.

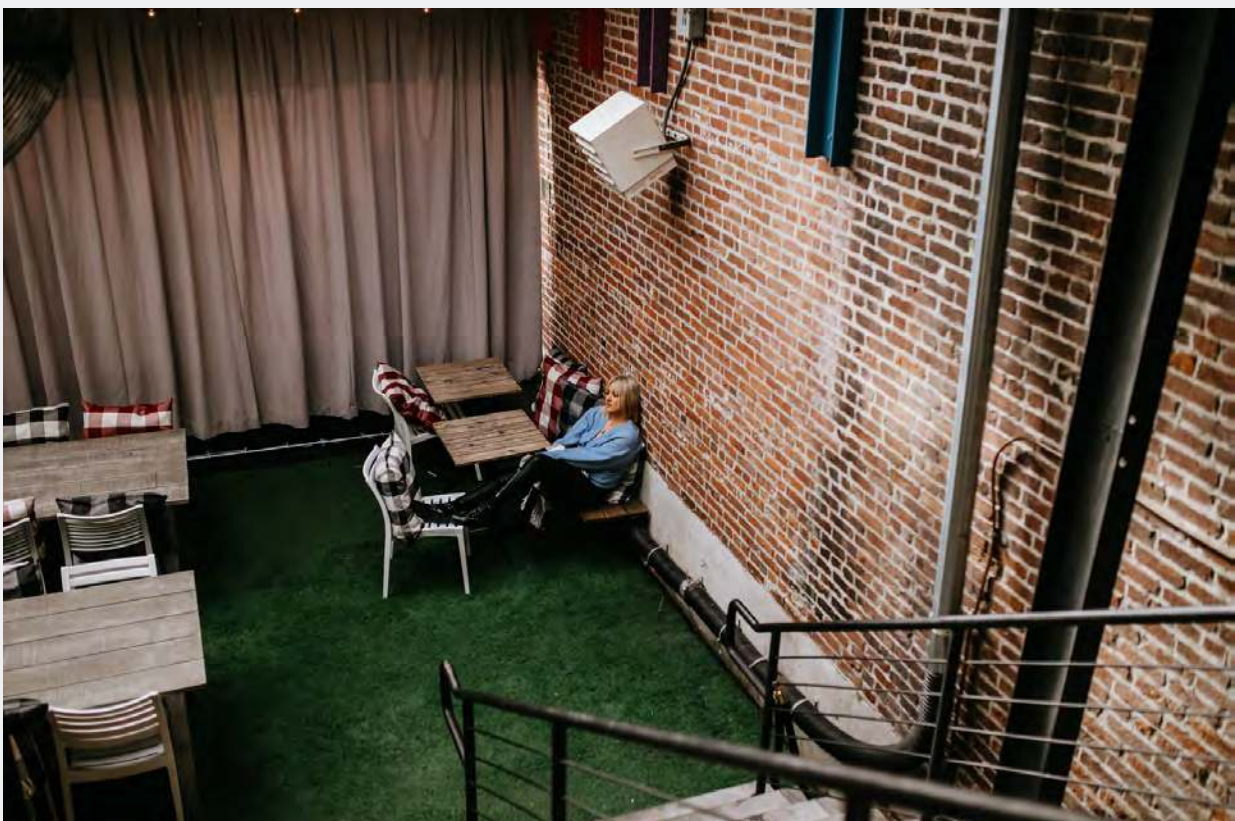


**In one of your posts, you touched on the value of therapy. A lot of people still view therapy with skepticism or a negative stigma. Can you touch on how it has improved your life?**

Therapy can be an invaluable tool for anyone. And that's what it is, a tool. It's not a bandaid or a fix, it's a tool in your arsenal to help support the things that you're pursuing in life. To me, it's similar to reading a book that helps you with personal development. In that case, no one would say, "Oh you're reading a book about growing as a human? That's weird." But there's something about therapy that weirds people out. It's like any other helpful activity, like going to a yoga or meditation class, like sitting with a friend and chatting about life. All of these things are tools we have to help us improve ourselves and feel supported.

Some people see therapy as a resource you engage in when something is going wrong. What I try to tell people is that therapy is there to support what you're doing in general, whether that's getting through hardship or building your happiness.

I'm actually looking for a new therapist right now, and I'm at one of the best places I've been. I feel really happy, so I'm thinking "What better time to get support and put my personal development first?", because things are going really well and I want to continue on that path.





**What would you say to someone who wished their life was different, comparing themselves to someone else on Instagram?**

Most people's lives on Instagram are not their actual lives. Frequently, we're only sharing snippets of the good parts. I try to share as much of the whole view as I can so people aren't misguided. We also don't see a lot of the work and potential stress that comes with living your life online as an influencer.

Also, when we wish to become like someone else, we'll frequently fail at doing so. Trying to be the best version of yourself rather than focusing on the best version of someone else is a better approach to life.

# the best pizza in new york

by Chinae Alexander

*Sixteen year old me sat in a West Village cafe, the rain poured from the sky outside and jazz poured from the speakers inside. It was my first time visiting the city I'd fallen in love with via movies and television since age eight. I think Home Alone 2 might've had the strongest impact on my New York dreams... Turns out the only true part of it was in fact, the pigeon lady, and all the eclectic characters you see around the city.*

*The rest of the school kids on the choir trip were visiting 30 Rock or the Empire State Building, but I chose to venture alone to the West Village. I'm sure I'd heard about it somewhere. It was the place with all the beautiful brownstones... The "real" NYC.*

*Of course, as a 16 year old tourist, I came wildly unprepared for the eventual afternoon rainstorm that would thwart my original plans to frolic through the cobblestone streets, ones with names like Hudson and Barrow. With no umbrella, I had to seek shelter from the downpour and tucked into the first place I found: Tartine.*

*The characters in that place were nothing like I'd ever seen growing up in Texas. This was a time before coffee shop culture crept into the South. I was enamored immediately with the slowness of the place, tucked against the contrasting speed of the city. People sitting, drinking coffee and eating croissants while the flakey crumbs fell upon their daily copy of the New York Times... Seemingly with nowhere to go. They were sitting, reading, having meetings, writing, talking, and thinking. I didn't grow up in a place where these sorts of spaces existed, but I knew I wanted to grow up to be one of those coffee-drinking, newspaper-reading, pen-in-hand people.*

*I sat quietly with a stack of business cards from the places I'd stopped at along my visit, in addition to my mini stapler and a small black notebook. I stapled each card into the notebook and wrote specific journals about my experience so I could revisit each place when I moved to New York, a plan that would develop into a life much bigger than I'd realized. It was my own personal version of Yelp, I suppose.*

*At one place I'd gone they didn't have business cards, it wasn't that sort of establishment. Sixteen year old me wasn't going to be stopped by a lack of resources, though, so I carefully ripped their logo out of a paper bag. I fastened the rough-edged, brown slip to my notebook and wrote ecstatically next to it: "Cafe Metro, Best Pizza in New York!". Truthfully, it had been my only pizza in New York.*

*Truthfully, it had been my only pizza in New York.*

*I moved here in 2007 and never did I step foot into a Cafe Metro again. I actually thought they didn't exist until I saw one after a chiropractic appointment one afternoon. For nostalgia's sake, I went in and bought a cup of coffee.*

*As I sipped that mediocre coffee in Bryant Park, I felt this overwhelming sense of full circle-ness, that we were all still here. Me, Cafe Metro, and that pizza. I smiled thinking about how much my sixteen year old self knew about my thirty three year old self. That I would \*still\* feel lucky to live here. That I was right about my dream.*

*Never give up on the things that stir your soul. Never lose sight of the fact that you are paving your path, each and every day, even if you aren't aware of where it'll lead.*

*And NEVER eat the pizza at Cafe Metro, because it is in fact, very shitty pizza. ☹️*



## **What is one of the most difficult things you've experienced?**

I started my first business, an event planning company, after being kindly fired from my old job. I wasn't fired because I wasn't a good employee but because my boss believed in me. He told me, "You're an entrepreneur, go start a company. I'll pay you what you're worth, I'll be your first client for two months".

The first night I went home after being fired, I built a website on Squarespace and I was like, "Okay, I guess I'll become an event planner". I just had to pick something. I remember walking through the streets of Park Slope, texting my other coworker at the job I'd just been fired at because I knew, he needed a nanny. I told him I'd be his nanny. I was so afraid I wouldn't have money, or couldn't be an entrepreneur.

I kept pacing the streets of Park Slope and wandered up to a flower shop. In the window, they had a sign that said PART TIME WORK NEEDED and I thought, "Okay, I can do flowers, so I'll hustle together these little side jobs and that will be my life". I wrote all these notes in my phone telling myself to call the flower shop the next morning. Then I woke up the next morning, and told myself "Fuck that!". I refused to buy into my fear because I knew out of everything that fear would've been the obstacle to screw me over, the roadblock to whatever I tried to pursue.

The fear of being in that position, thrown into a space where I felt completely afraid, dreading the possibility of failing and disappointing myself and others, was not easy to push through. But you just have to do it. If I can point back to one thing that changed my life and completely adjusted the trajectory of everything onwards, it would be that moment.

When my Instagram account started growing I had to make the choice to shut down my event planning company in order to focus on social media, which was also scary as hell. Making choices that are sacrifices, hoping they eventually lead to more space for you to do what you're supposed to, is always hard.

My whole life has been a bunch of plans that haven't gone as expected, but the outcome has always been right. Failure isn't failure, failure just redirects us to something else. I think as a society we get so bogged down when things don't work out, but we have an extremely small view of our own lives. I always try to remember, whenever things don't work out, that all the things I have and love right now are things I never even knew I wanted.

## **How has your definition of success transformed over time? What are some new goals you have on the horizons?**

When I was younger, success was more about survival, as it is when a lot of us are young. As I get older, my definition of success and wealth simplifies. To me, it's the ability to be generous with your time, money, and energy. The ability to be generous means you're overflowing with those things, and you're willing to sacrifice them on behalf of another. To me, it's an accessible definition. If I have the financial means to support others and the energetic means to treat others well, if I'm able to give, then I'm successful.

I moved into a much bigger apartment so I could literally be more generous with my space. I thought, "What is a tangible way I can be more generous in my life?". And in New York City one thing most people don't have is space. It was meaningful for me to pay more money for a space where people could gather and be together.

Even when I lived in a studio apartment, I'd ask myself, "How can I still make this work?". I remember having meetings with people whom I thought were really important, they'd come over to my tiny apartment and we'd just sit on my bed and eat lunch. People loved it!

In terms of goals and projects, I'm launching a podcast and am looking to lock in a book deal this year. I have some financial goals I want to hit as well, I want to double my income, which is doable. I don't really care about the monetary aspect of it, but it's a tangible goal to create more resources to do other things, to create more for people.



**Can you revisit an experience from your childhood that relates to the life you live today?**

I remember when I was little we'd sell chocolate bars at school. You had to order them from the teacher, most people ordered one or two boxes and I asked for ten. She asked me, "How are you going to sell all these chocolate bars?"

I told her that I wasn't going to sell them by the bar but that I'd sell them by the box. So my mom drove me around to all these businesses and I sold all of them by the box. I think that was when my entrepreneurial spirit first came out. I don't really remember what I wanted to be when I was young, but I did want to be around people, and I wanted to run my own show.



**As an icon for self compassion, what are some major challenges you've been through that you aspire to help others champion?**

I used to think that wellness and self love were checkbox items we'd achieve and then be done with. I was always waiting for this switch to flip, but what I've learned is that it's a long process and a daily choice. Being compassionate to yourself is a choice we have to make every single morning, getting up and asking ourselves "How do I care to view myself today, what can I do to build a better life?"

It's the same with wellness. People beat themselves up all the time for not being perfect or reaching their goals—getting their workouts in or eating perfectly a certain day—but wellness is a lifelong process. We'll never be perfect. It's a hard pill to swallow, but by understanding that wellness and self love are ways of living made up of a million tiny choices, rather than one big one, we can feel like we can manage it better.







**Are there any important lessons or values you conclude upon when you look back on your younger self? Is there anything you would encourage others to live by amidst periods of growth through various stages of life?**

I think the world is really hard on people growing up, and I think we're hard on ourselves when we're growing up too. We're so focused on figuring ourselves out. We want to know who this person, ourselves, will be, and the amount of pressure we put on ourselves to become whoever we think that might be is insane. Because we're already becoming that person, you know?

I was really concerned about all of that when I was younger. I would love to go back and just say, "Relax, you are already becoming the person you're trying so hard to become". There's no need to try to control it. A lot of times the person we become is due to all the failures, obstacles, and workarounds that were never a part of your plan.

It's a hard thing to choke down, to let go, I get that. But if I could go back and tell myself anything, that'd be it. ☺☺☺



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Every inspiring life consists of a variety of vivid stories, twists and turns brought about by different places and diverse people.

The following profiles celebrate the strongest value of the Revolukin brand: You, the communities around the world—individuals, friends, families—celebrating the human experience through a creative and thoughtful lens.

Join the community with a chance to be featured in the next print issue by sharing your own stories, creative compositions, and insights on life by tagging @revolukin and #revolukin.



*Alexandra Strauchova*  
*Slovakia*

"These are all photos I took while road tripping through Estonia with my best friend. Estonia is one of my favorite countries to visit and I don't enjoy anything more than gazing out of the car window while driving through it. I get extremely excited not knowing where the road will take us.

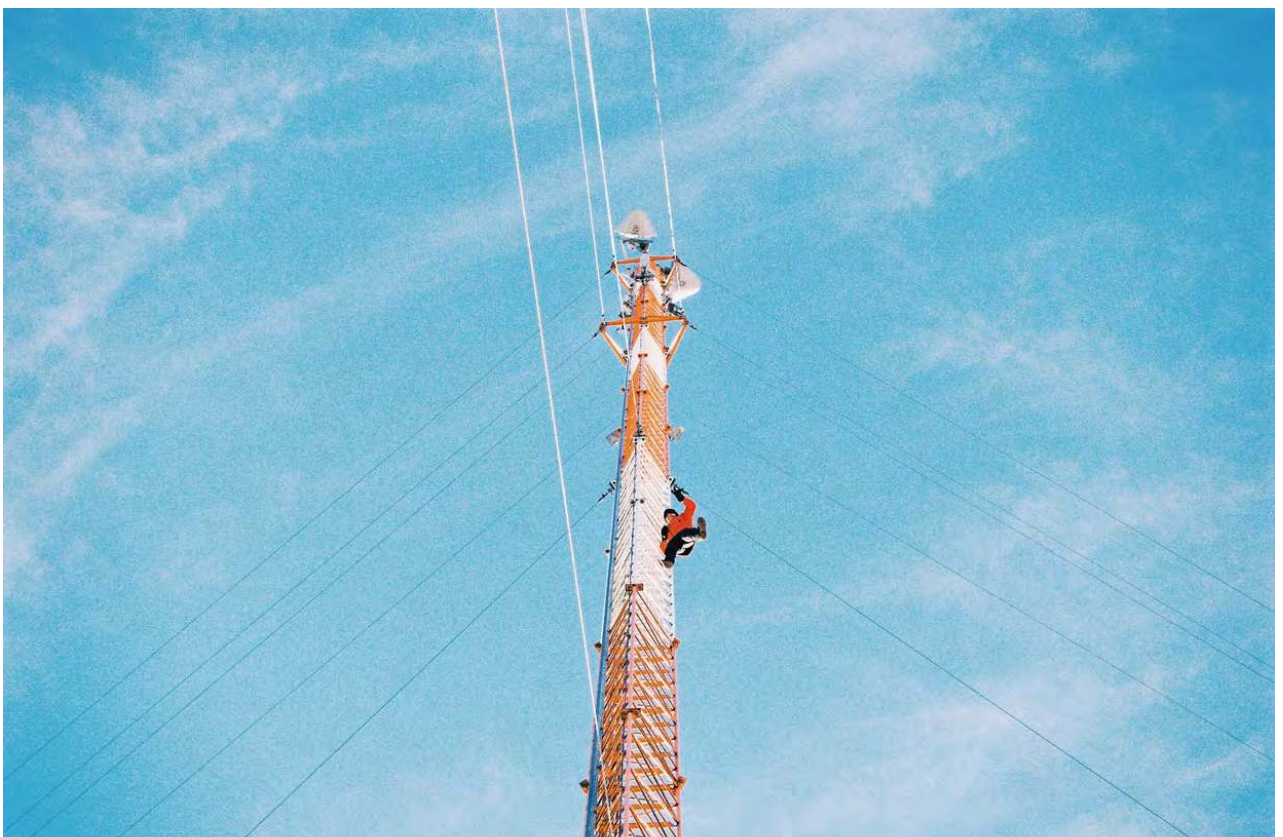
National Geographic created a project with Estonia called 'Living on the Edge' and put 28 yellow windows in 28 different locations around South Estonia. We decided to see all the "yellow spots", and thanks to that we saw a lot of things we wouldn't have otherwise. At one of the spots, a man was walking with more than 30 Huskies trained for dog sledding. We talked to him for about an hour. It was amazing to see the connection he had with them and to hear how it all works, how they train and so on."





"One summer morning we climbed to the top of Trolltunga Mountain in Norway—probably the most photogenic (and now well known) spots across the Norwegian mountain range. It was extremely foggy, so we didn't have a good view, but as we were trekking back down the fog started moving away!"

"This is my best friend. We climb a lot on cranes for fun. Usually, I climb with him, but sometimes I decide to stay on the ground. In that case we have a deal: he takes photos of what he sees and I take photos of what I see. A couple of months ago, we climbed one together. I don't even know why, but I was laughing the whole way up, and once we were at the top I kept laughing. I guess I was just happy being with him, we don't live in the same country. We caught an incredible sunrise, too. It just felt so good to be alive in that moment, at that place, with my friend." ☹️

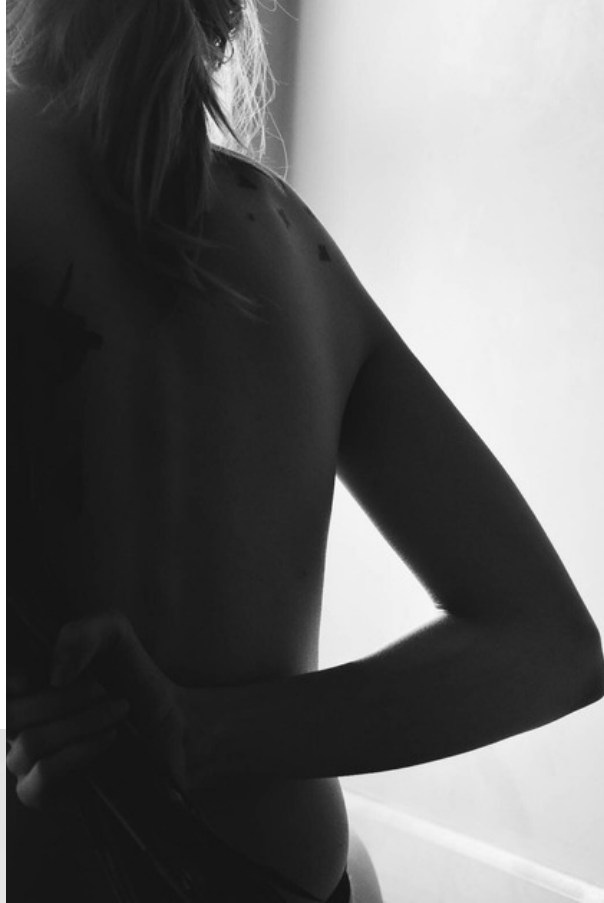


*Takoda Patterson*  
*U.S.A.*



"Last year in April, I had a major stroke that affected my left cerebellum. The doctor was surprised that I was able to move because I should have been paralyzed from the stroke. However, I knew that I had a mission to complete, more art to create, and more people to reach. I taught myself how to take pictures, write, and paint again. I think the art of storytelling is one of the most impactful things we can pursue. 'What does this say?' or 'How do I feel when I see this?' are two questions that I always ask myself. I use photography to tell stories of where I am, where I've been, and what goes on in my mind." ☰





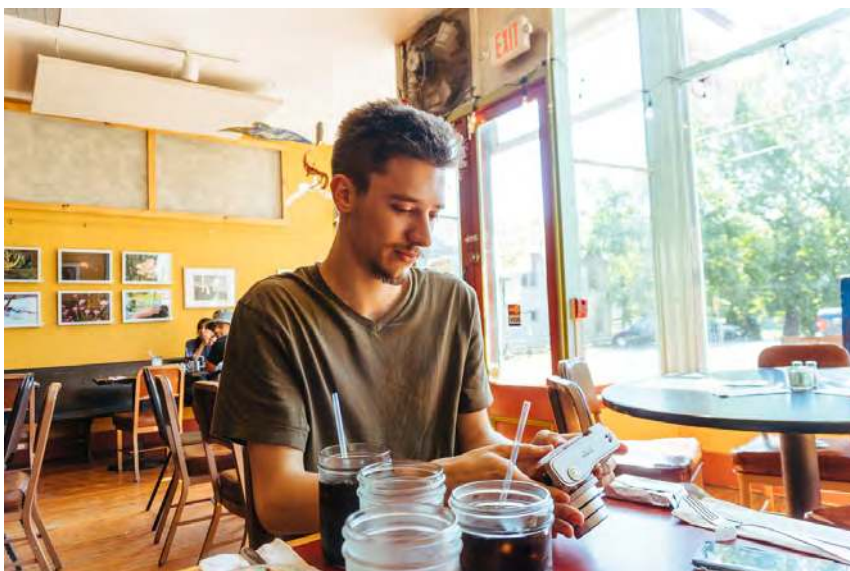


This is where an ad for a creative tech company not attempting to take over the world would go. Instead, we have photographs of the editor's grandmother (above) and dear friend (below). Aside from the subjects, there are four positive objects and one negative object. Can you spot them?

*Answers:*

*Positive - Crossword, colorful stripes, polaroid camera, iced coffee, hip mason jars*

*Negative - Plastic straws*



III

**I N Q U I R Y**

Surveys, field interviews, and features  
with everyday humans,  
activists and humanitarians,  
studying art  
and science  
and time  
in relation to the human journey.

*Krista  
Kim  
&  
the  
Techism  
Movement*

An interview with the artist  
on the meaning of our  
humanity in the digital age

+

The creative movement  
merging technology and art



Words by Krista Kim  
Interview by Travis Zane  
Photos by BFA

*Krista Kim is the founder of the Techism art movement, a movement encouraging greater interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration between innovators of the tech industry and modern artists. Kim's work is often a response to our constant exposure to LED light via modern devices, questioning our current aesthetic principles and what digital innovations pose for humanity. Kim was the first artist in history to be invited by the Mayor of Paris to present at the iconic outdoor square of Palais de Tokyo Museum and the Museum of Modern Art of Paris. Based in Toronto, she regularly exhibits in New York, Paris, and global art fairs such as Art Miami.*

### ***How has technology affected our perception of time?***

In order to truly perceive time we must live in the present moment. Relentless distraction has created a time warp in which we are continuously caught up in a multitude of tasks, intimately linked to digital communication, meeting a proliferation of deadlines that are only made possible by our artificially expanded productivity. We're in the middle of a paradigm where technology can and should increase our capacity for leisure and enjoyment, as it allows us to be more productive, however in practice we often fall trap to maximizing that productivity and continuously increasing the bar.

This constant distraction robs us of moments with ourselves and others. Moments of contemplation, meditative or isolated and without stimulation, are important for our individual development and well-being. All of the time we spend focusing on our social feeds or LED screens could instead be moments we spend reflecting on who we are and what we value.

Moments are no longer lived, they are shared on social media. There's this subtle idea that if something isn't shared on Instagram, it didn't really happen. We no longer experience life without some alternative representation of it. Reality has become somewhat contrived, and we often perceive our experiences through our audiences. I believe that the best moments of our lives are experienced in the first person, completely with ourselves, without viewing things through a screen on our phones or sharing things online as they're occurring.





***Out of the endless variety of new technologies like smart homes, self driving cars, and commercial drones, what is one niche of technology you believe will alter the way we live and interact the most?***

I believe the greatest innovation that will change our existence is human genome mapping. Once AI has successfully mapped the human genome we will be able to live longer, alter and custom design our DNA, and shape the health outcomes of our children. Medical practices will change forever when we're able to detect the potential for disease in our DNA, challenging the need for pharmaceuticals, cancer treatments, and so forth. The role of doctors, nurses, and the functionality of hospitals will need to adapt, which will completely change the healthcare system.

With suspended mortality the average human being will need to endure more, facing the consequences of environmental and economic changes over the duration of multiple lifespans. Hopefully the future will host a healthier, wiser population who will want to live the spans of their lives on a healthier, more sustainable planet. Hopefully they will want peace on a larger scale, because they will be able to witness the lives of their succeeding generations to a new extent: great great grandchildren. Hopefully they will want to be more attentive and careful with the environments they inhabit, and more mindful of the outcomes of their decisions, because it will no longer just be "the future generations" that have to deal with them. I hope, and believe, that advancements within AI and genome mapping can spark a positive evolution for human civilization.

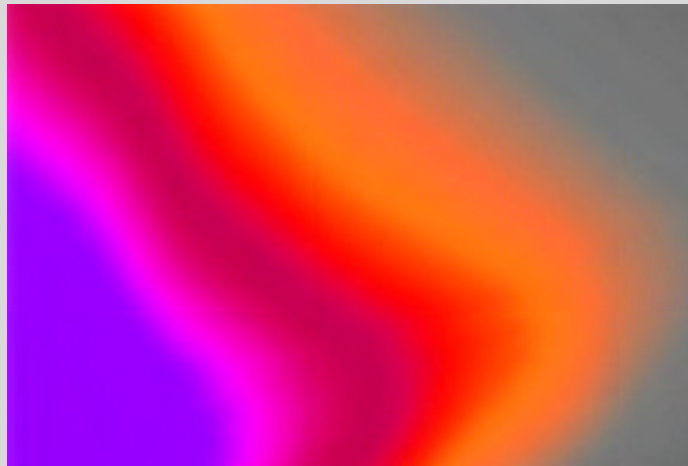


***In your opinion, is it imperative for every person to learn a bit about technology-related topics like coding, cybersecurity, and cryptocurrency?***

I think we are all in a state of disruption at this point in time, and we all need to practice being creative. It's wise for young people to learn to code and to understand new technologies, though not everyone will become computer engineers. Flexibility, creativity, and social skills are imperative for young people to grasp in order to navigate the globalized world and create new opportunities for themselves. Our current post-industrial revolution's division of labour and information will become obsolete. I think the future will be more collaborative and less conglomerate, led by individuals with diverse skillsets and mindsets, coming together to tackle problems and invent creative solutions. I think this is already evident with the rise in entrepreneurship and self-employment. One positive aspect of social media is that it simplifies the task of connecting people with different skills to pursue a common mission.

Our education systems must adapt to strengthen the young individual as a unique asset, with more of a focus on the development of creativity. Our current education system was archaically developed to support the industrial revolution, to train people to follow orders and become employees of corporations. It is hardly supportive of individual expression or creativity. AI will replace the labour force of administrative tasks and manual labor, and the only way people will be able to compete in the future workplace is with excellent interpersonal skills and introspective intellect, to know what their unique gifts are and how to use them.

Uniqueness, individuality, finding your own hybrid skill set—I think that will become the greatest asset for future young professionals. Cookie cutter jobs and systemically conformist behaviour are quickly depleting.



***What do you believe the world will look like in 80 years?***

I believe that digital disruption has introduced a kind of spiritual vacuum where people are consuming more and thinking less. As an artist I feel a responsibility to bring light to this. We are more connected than ever through our devices, yet more disconnected than ever as human beings.

It is a part of human nature to seek connection, to look for something greater than ourselves. People want to feel passion, universal love, and acceptance in the form of community. All of this is now being studied scientifically, in psychology, neuroscience, and sociology. It's been shown that practicing meditation, mindfulness, and experiential connection to nature creates a more healthy and well rounded individual and, therefore, society.

I believe that meditation will become a mainstream practice in the modern world. I think in the future we will need to elevate ourselves towards a transcendent concept of humanity that diminishes racism, prejudice, and fear of the unknown. Meditation will play a central role in this, while also strengthening our creativity, which in of itself is a form of self-empowerment and freedom.

I believe that people will become more self-empowered by establishing a stronger sense of service to the greater good. I think people will become more spiritual, pursuing a level of self awareness that has been missing in Western culture until recently. We're seeing more and more people practicing mindfulness and meditation. People are curious to find a greater connection to the universe, which has been a part of Eastern philosophy and culture for thousands of years. The merging of eastern and western values will become more prevalent as time goes on.

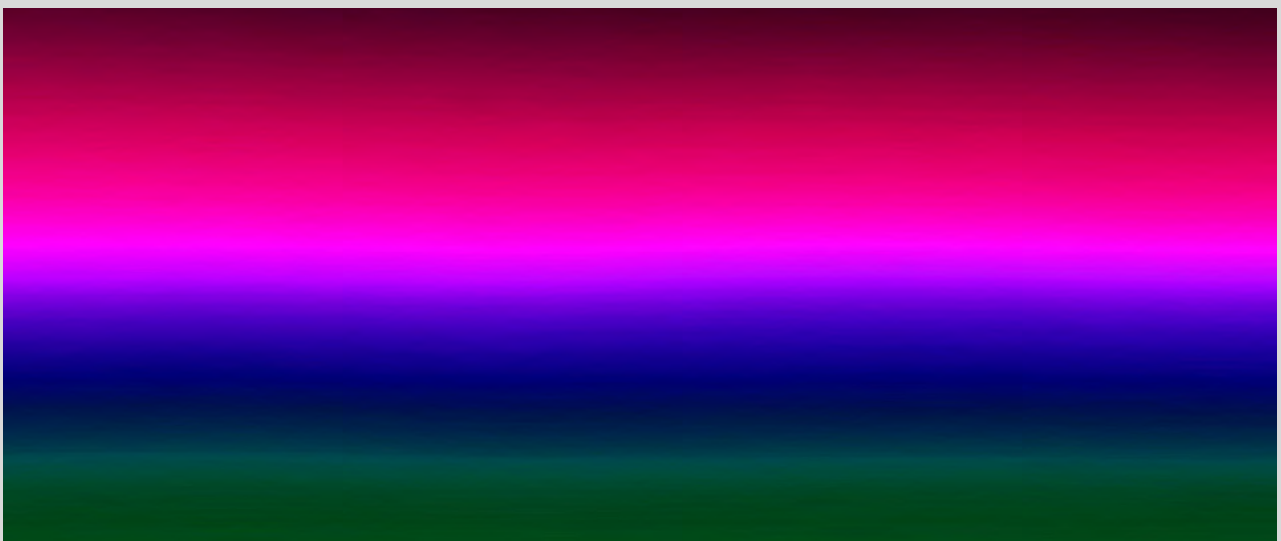
I think the current online trends of exhibitionism—sociopathic, fake, ostentatious displays of wealth—and high school mindset popularity are early adaptations of social media culture. I believe the culture will evolve into one where authenticity is a normalized practice. Social media can become a legitimate tool that properly informs us and allows us to express what it means to be human. Maturity and intelligence in our online spaces will be coveted.

Larger segments of our population will be of mixed race. Extreme and polarizing tribes and viewpoints will become more marginalized as power structures and divisive ideology are exposed and lose influence. The future generations will be global citizens and largely based in multiple cities throughout the year. The value of travel and experiencing life abroad will become a more normalized part of life and education. The sharing economy will be more prevalent, especially with housing and transportation. Political systems will be monitored and controlled by digital technologies, giving everyone the ability to express their political views. Political power structures will change, allowing citizens to make legislative decisions, no longer sideswiped by lobbyists or corporate plutocracy. People will freely interact with one another in real life as an extension of digital interaction. There will be less separation between digital associations and physical associations.

Traditional institutions, such as marriage and religion, will no longer have the same prevalence. Sexuality, mating, and raising children will continue outside of traditional nuclear family structures and families will become more diverse. A village construct will emerge and the sharing economy will make social culture more collaborative; couples and individuals will raise children and support one another as extended families.

Artificial intelligence will eliminate blue collar jobs and administrative labor, yet creative fields will thrive because AI will not have the capacity to replace human ingenuity.

The world will be more efficient, but there is a risk that entire segments of the population could become disenfranchised and left behind in poverty. Education systems must be able to support and accommodate the re-education of labour that will be replaced by robots. There is a risk for violence and division if these groups are not supported. The wealth-poverty gap must be managed properly through corporate taxes of technology companies and government supported programs that educate and support the populations at risk of gentrification and loss.



***Technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and automated creation are playing an increasing role in the way we consume and create art. What might the future look like for non-technology focused practices like writing, painting, and photography?***

Painting, writing, and photography will not disappear. They will become rarer skill sets, as people continue to learn the basics and stop there. Photography is extremely diluted through technology, there is a sense of mindless creation. There are probably more images than we can count produced by every device on our planet.

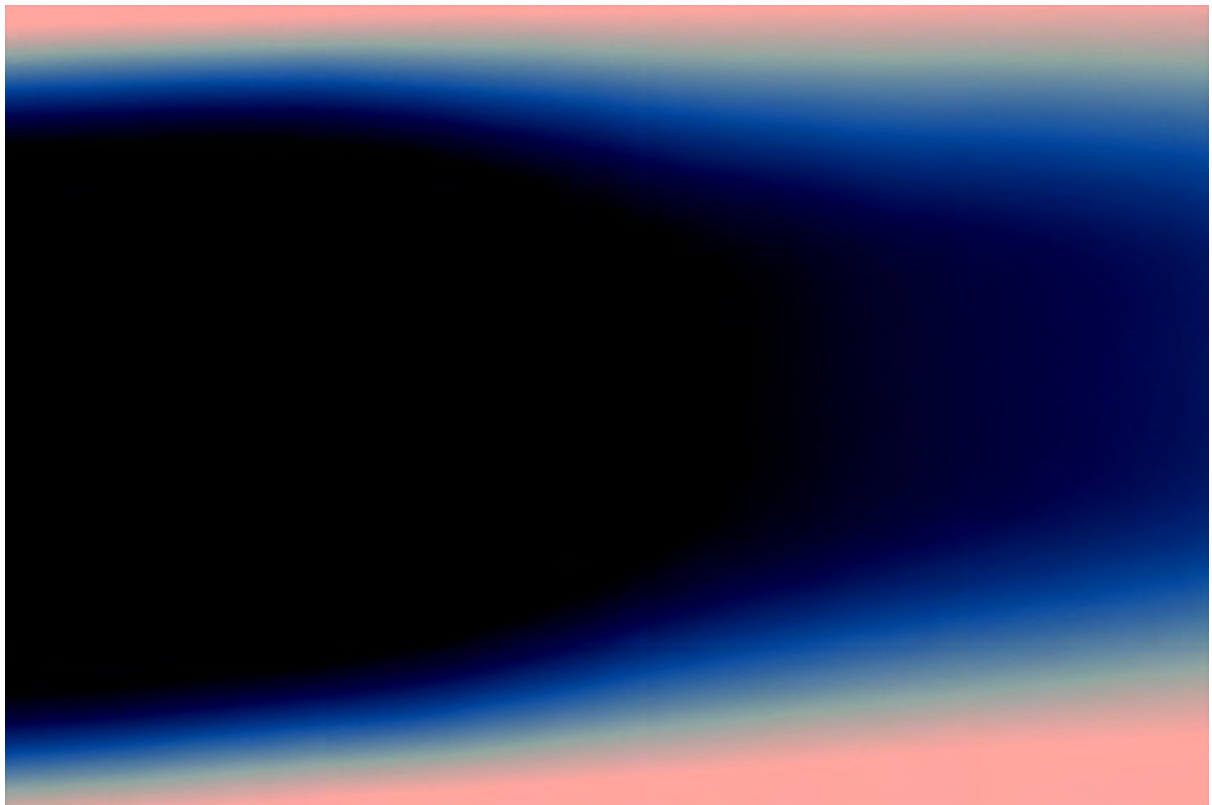
However, the scope and the possibilities within digital art will exponentially increase with advancements in new technology. In 80 years, people's taste in fine art will lean towards digital, and paintings by Rothko, Picasso, Warhol and Basquiat will continue to rise in value and cultural heritage. Thought provoking work, like the paintings by these great artists, has brought civilization to where it is today, and will determine where it will be tomorrow.

***What values do you think we need to focus on in order to ensure that our future is one defined by positive progress?***

Spiritual mindfulness is essential in the digital age. We receive thousands of messages daily that try to manipulate us to buy or to think a certain way. Meditation can give us clarity when navigating the chaos of digital disruption and distraction.

***In what ways might we develop alongside technology, keeping up with its pace, instead of falling victim to its advancements?***

If we can teach everyone to meditate as a daily practice, just as we shower or brush our teeth, then we can begin to create a civilization that encourages every individual to develop a strong sense of self without ego, normalizing practices that shield us from digital addiction and manipulation. ☸



Techism is a movement that reconciles technological innovation with the creation of art. It emphasizes innovation, be it technological or philosophical, as a medium in and of itself. Techism does not put technology before art, but rather positions the two as natural companions in the modern wave of human expression. We are the masters of technology, and using it to create art is the expression of digital humanism.

Many traditional practices of artisanship have remained and will continue. Techism is not a movement that stands in opposition to older practices, nor does it assert brusque claims that the old will be swept away with the new. Artists have the autonomy to decide when and which practices to adopt and discard with each phase of their creation.

In the age of digital disruption, technology will continue to transform and revolutionize services, manufacturing, healthcare, media, and education; it will continue to revolutionize creative platforms. We are in the midst of creating a new digital civilization, and artists must contribute to this new culture in order to preserve our humanity. We cannot leave the role of directing culture to technocrats, engineers, or corporations. It is in our collective interest to include artists and people of diverse identities to contribute to our future in order to achieve balance, harmony, and humanism. Digital disruption is causing fear and unrest, and without a broader dialogue that is inclusive and expressive of our true emotions and concerns, we risk wider conflict and misdirected blame. Art is a force of nature that brings us together. It is necessary today, more than ever.

Art is no longer limited to a frame on a wall; it is evolving into an interactive practice. Collaboration has always enabled art's creation. Collaboration materializes consciousness. Art is consciousness. Techism is an appeal and return to the notion of art as shared, as tangible, as thing and idea and experience. Art is experiential. Art is phenomenal. We, the viewers, participate and discern for ourselves what we behold.

Digital software, like traditional tools, allows the artist to become multifaceted. New technologies allow collaborative expression between artists, engineers, and intelligent software.

Algorithms are everywhere, and they control what we see through social media platforms. "Sharing" and "liking" has created a narcissistic and egocentric society that is lacking in humanity and authenticity. It is our "hyper-connectedness" on social media platforms that is diminishing real human connection. Our culture is being ruled by inhumane social media behaviour which contributes to depression, anxiety, and addictive behaviors.

*The Techism*

Artists express humanity in their work. Art is a force of nature that brings us together. The contribution of art using digital technology will create a more connected and humane culture, which will affect how our society chooses to use and innovate technology for the future. It is the demonstration of possibilities and expression of free thought that will create a more balanced culture.

Techism is a movement that recognizes technological innovation as an artistic medium, and encourages artists to promote digital humanism in the formation of culture. As we are in a transition phase between the institutionalized “painting & sculpture” tradition of artistic expression and the ever-changing digital world, collaboration, co-creation and dialogue with engineers and technology specialists is key to this movement

Freedom of thought, individualism and equality in a future of digital disruption and technological advancement is important for the future of humanity. We must choose to express connectedness, humanity and transcendence at the forefront of technological innovation through collaboration, dialogue and freedom of expression.

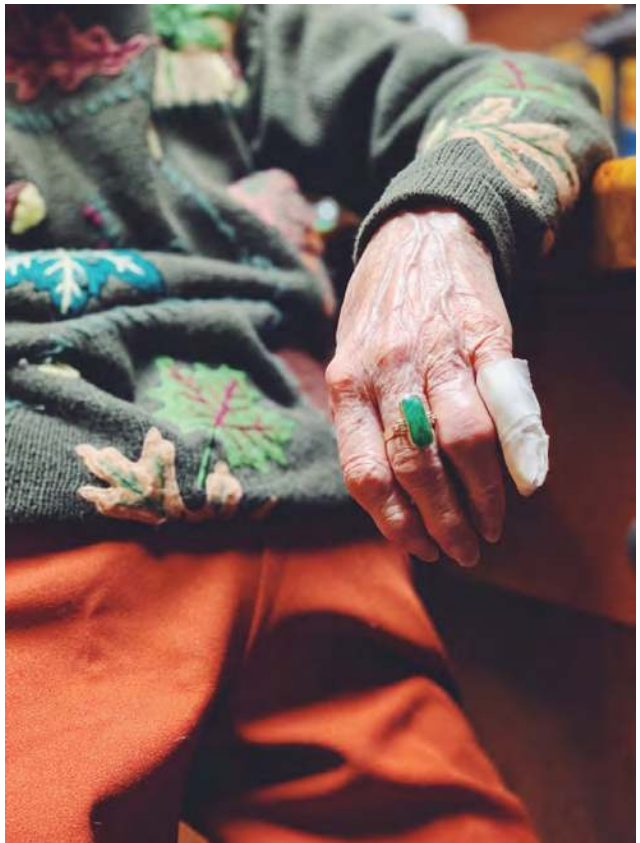
Our future is unknown, but we are aware that hundreds of millions of dollars are being invested into AI, deep learning, brain computer interfaces, and the opening of the space frontier. The importance of Techism and its influence on humanity is crucial, now.

It is imperative that companies who are ushering in this new civilization (Facebook, Google, Amazon, Neuralink) recognize the importance of creative human expression, and support the Techism movement for the preservation of a free-thinking society that is empathetic and humane. We need to transcend the highly organized and complex digital constructs that are permanently transforming our world and human existence. As technology connects human consciousness on a level never seen before, empathy, humanity and rational free-thought must thrive—these values are imperative for our future.

The creation of a free, humane and great digital civilization is our core belief and vision. ☰

W i s d o m  
Y e a r s

"If you could share one sentence with the entire world, what would it be?"



**“We are not alone!”**

*Dallas LeBlanc, 07/06/1935*

**“Love one another.”**

*AnnMarie Porcelli, 03/06/1939*

**“Give more than you receive.”**

*Frank Porcelli, 08/17/1934*

**"You're all really more awesome  
than you think you are!"**

**"We all just want to belong in some way."**

**"Don't think about yourself so much."**

*Anonymous Group of College Students, 1995-2001*

**"I saw this bumper sticker that said "I'm just  
another version of you!"...That's what I would  
say: Remember, we're all shared versions of  
one another."**

*Nan Senzaki, 07/06/1935*

**"Enjoy every day, the world will always  
be here. Have fun!"**

*Jeanette Zane, 09/17/1923*

**“Let’s go to the store.”**

*Blake, 11/04/2013*

*What We Know About  
Time*

*or*

*Notes on Time in the  
Perspective of Research*



Words + Graphics by Travis Zane

## Perception of Time

- Our emotions affect our perception of time, influencing our experience of the duration of events.
- Reversely, our perception of how quickly or slowly time passes by can reveal a lot about our emotional states.
- Our experience of time is slower when we feel fear versus more neutral emotions.
- Embodied cognition is the mimicking or simulating another's emotional state in attempts to understand it, a natural process we all engage in when witnessing another's emotions.
- Embodied cognition can directly affect our subjective experience of time: When a young person interacts with an elderly person who speaks and acts at a slower pace, the young person's internal clock slows down.
- Our perception of time appears to be tied to a global distribution of pathways in the brain, a functional network rather than a single region.
- Dopamine is the primary neurotransmitter involved in time processing.
- Compounds or drugs that activate dopamine receptors can speed up our perception of time.



## Time & Meaningful Work

- The fields of psychology and sociology have established meaningful work as a strong correlate and predictor of well-being.
- A study evaluating experiences with meaningfulness in work, across a variety of jobs varying in temporal perception (e.g. refuse collectors, stone masonry crafters, and academics), revealed that meaningfulness often appears in the form of a fleeting moment rather than as a persistent, sustained experience.
- The experience of meaningfulness arose most often when 1) Subjects felt connected to others & 2) Subjects held an awareness of their work's significance in a wide frame of time (its historical roots and affect on future generations).
- All groups experienced meaningfulness in work, suggesting that what we do is less important than how we do it (with others and a holistic perspective).



## Is Human Time Real?

- Not everyone agrees that the human division of time into past, present and future is an accurate reflection of reality (Is time really divided in this way, or is it a human invention?).
- There are two schools of thought debating whether our division of time is constructed or real: A-theorists & B-theorists.
- A-theorists believe our tensed picture of the world (with past-tense, present-tense, and future-tense) is a reflection of reality, in other words stating that the passage of time is an objective truth.
- B-theorists believe that all time exists in parity, that there is no difference between past, present, and future and that the flow of time is an illusion.



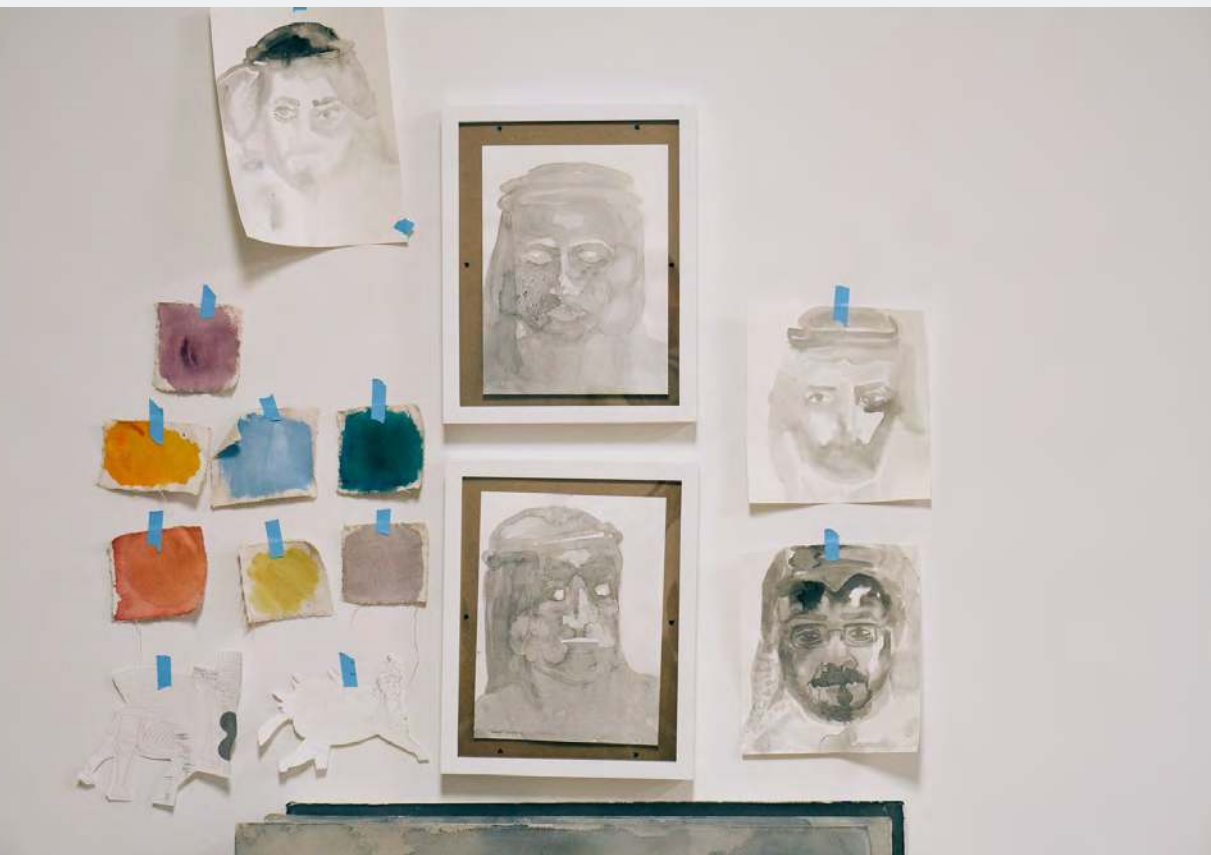


*Razan  
Al Sarraf*

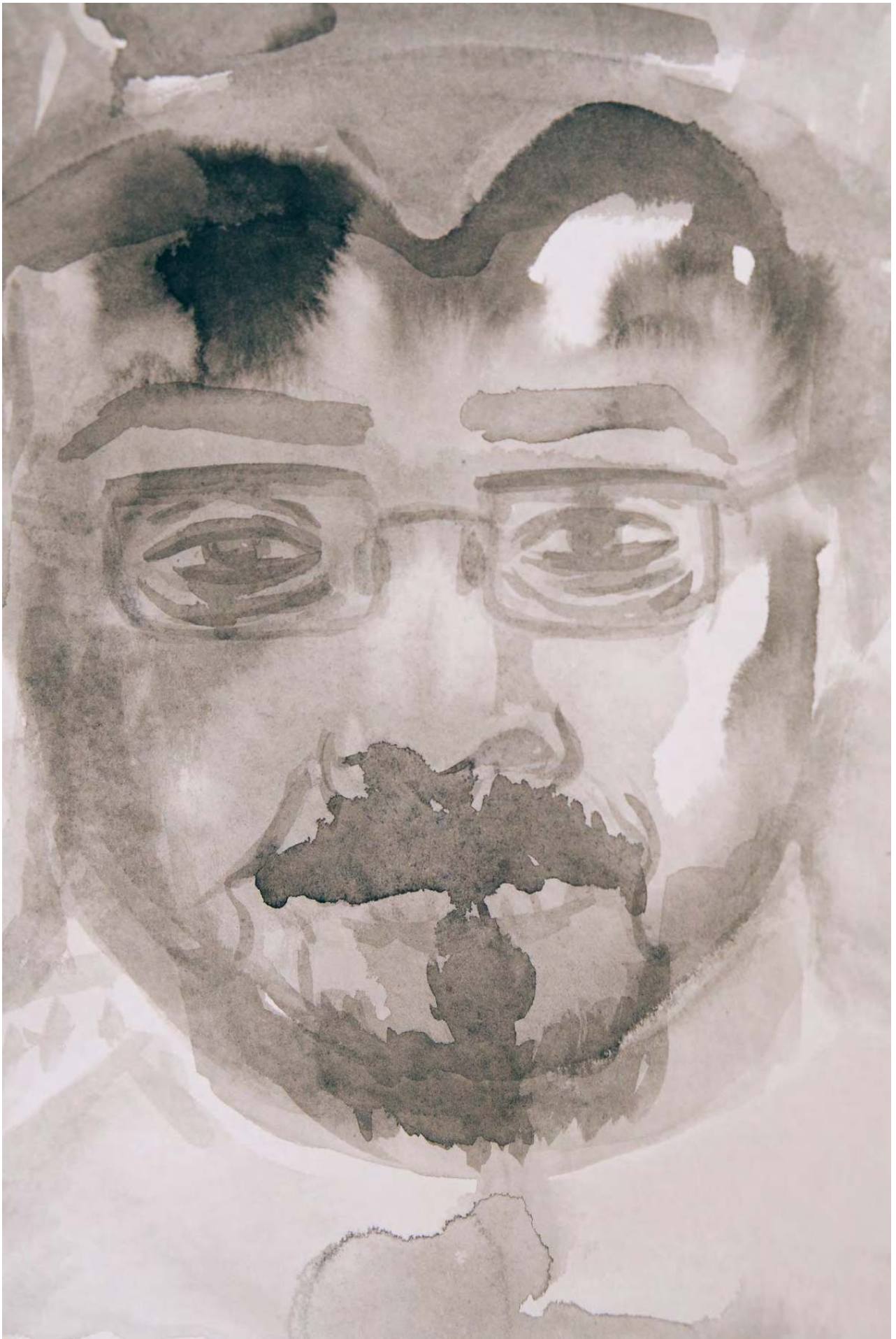
Words + Art by Razan Al Sarraf  
Intro + Photos by Travis Zane

*& the  
100  
Portrait  
Series*

*Razan Al Sarraf is a Kuwaiti-born, New York based artist encouraging holistic human perspectives on the Middle East through visual works addressing the cultural and political climates of the region. At 22 years old her work has been featured in TIME, Harper's Bazaar, and The National. Her ability to create parallels her ability to connect, often cooking for friends, hosting parties, and communicating with emerging artists from around the world. Sarraf curated and co-produced a New York City exhibit titled "Generation j: Young Arab Artists" with the gallery ArtX, where she showcased her "100 Portrait Series" and celebrated works from other artists across three Arab countries.*



*Sarraf's "100 Portrait Series" displays one hundred portraits of deceased ISIS members. Sarraf hand painted each portrait with oil on canvas, referencing photographs from propaganda videos, news outlets, and social media. The series contemplates the humanity of those we associate with terrorism, the history behind them, and the narratives we often slight.*





*100 Portrait Series*



The “100 Portrait Series” began from an assignment in Peter Hristoff’s class at the School of Visual Arts in New York to paint ten monsters. Everyone came back with what you would typically associate monsters with, like sharp teeth, googly eyes and furry skin. I wanted to tackle the subject with a concept closer to home, something I experienced personally or thought about, so I went online and looked up photos of the terrorist group ISIS, known to me in their Arabic acronym as Daesh. From mug shots, selfies, and screenshots of propaganda videos, I painted them with oil paint on canvas, each 8x10 inches in size to resemble the sizes of human heads in real life.

After receiving initial curiosity and interest from the class as to what these individual’s motivations and characteristics were, and how they were influenced to join ISIS, I decided to make it a mission to paint 100 of them to educate myself and others further on the topic. It took about a year to finish, excluding a few months here and there to travel to Kuwait. I avoided traveling with the portraits, considering the heightened political atmosphere we live in.

The photos were sourced primarily through social media, especially Twitter. Some of the photos were from grids of 20-50 anonymous portraits posted from news sites declaring those who died in a bombing or a massive terrorist attack, meaning the details were not as clear, which I chose to translate through the series by not finishing some fully, obscuring others, and fading the features of a few.

Daesh (or ISIS) spent a lot of their time and resources filming videos, taking selfies, photographing their progress, flaunting their strength and exuberance in order to promote their mission. This made it easy for them to target kids and isolated individuals for recruitment, particularly with the popularisation of social media as a tool to connect humans across borders and backgrounds. The motivation for many of the victims was to experience a feeling of belonging, they did not feel at-home where they lived and sought to escape to a place that welcomed them and claimed would fulfill their needs, regardless of how difficult the journey was to get there.

While I completed the series my perception of these “monsters” changed dramatically. I almost began sympathizing with them from the sheer state of delicacy and tenderness involved in the painting process. There is a certain intimacy you experience from painting portraits, especially life-sized ones that are based on real-life images. I became obsessed with that discomfort, a duality of sympathy and disdain, challenging it while continuing my quest to complete all 100 portraits.

I also became interested in the cross-cultural dialogue these portraits pose on the history of portraiture itself. Traditionally in Islam, painting portraits has been seen as a tampering with the hand of God or an unrightful attempt at perfectionism, whereas in the West it is traditionally used as one of the highest forms of praise, to celebrate a loved one or a subject of great wealth.

There is something unsettling and intriguing that occurs in that split second in which the viewer attempts to decide if they should have a positive or negative reaction to the work. I’ve had people ask me if they were family members, or successful immigrant-stories that I wanted to promote. It is that exact space of uncertainty I hope to investigate, the humanity behind our friends, enemies, strangers and families.

What does it mean to be human, for all of us? ☰

## A Reflection on Painting 100 Portraits

by Razan Al Sarraf





## HOODED



*Sarraff is now working on a series of paintings titled "HOODED" exploring the individual, collective, and multidimensional experience of the Middle Eastern woman, an artistic dialogue on identity and culture. ☰*





*Photographs in the following photo essay were contributed by the UNSPLASH community.*

Kirill  
Lucas Davies  
Steven Lelham  
Goh Rhy Yan  
David Hofmann  
Oliver Sjostrom  
Maarten Duineveld

Hoang M. Nguyen  
Ana Grave  
Samuel Fyfe  
Ian Dooley  
William Recinos  
Jelleke Vanooteghem  
Jordane Mathieu

Ritesh Singh  
Ahmad Odeh  
Isaiah McClean  
Greg Rakozy  
Blake Cheek  
Kameron Kincade  
Grant Ritchie



In the field of positive psychology the term "FLOW", first coined by psychologist Mihály Csíkszentmihályi, refers to the experience in which we lose our sense of time and space whilst engaged in a challenging activity.



The experience often involves an activity we are rather skilled at, a determination to overcome the associated challenges, and sustained enjoyment at attempting to do so. While in flow we are immersed in the actions we carry out, whether that is paint strokes, words on a keyboard, navigating the slopes of a mountain, or directing the rising yeast and browning meats.



The following photographs represent activities often associated with the flow experience, activities we all might have lost ourselves in at one time or another, in which 5PM turned to midnight, or perhaps the next morning.



























Edafe Okporo is the Director of the RDJ Refugee Shelter, the only shelter in New York designed to serve homeless LGBTQ refugees and asylum seekers, and the author of "Bed 26: A Memoir of an African Man's Asylum in The United States"



## *A Conversation with Edafe Okporo*

Interview by Travis Zane

***Can you describe the experience of discovering your sexuality, and at what point it became a threat to your own life?***

When you grow up in a broken country like Nigeria, you must protect your identity as a gay man. I grew up in a society that saw being gay as being evil. It was very difficult for me to say, "I am gay". It was difficult to see that people like me are normal. My friend died of AIDS in 2014 right after the government passed a law that criminalizes same sex relations for up to 14 years in prison. That was a turning point in my life. After seeing the suffering of my friend who died of AIDS, and the Nigerian government actively persecute gay people, I started speaking up on behalf of gay men, on behalf of myself. This led to me being outed in my community, which led to the persecution I faced that made me flee to the U.S. seeking asylum.

***What was the immigration process like, coming from Nigeria to the U.S.—what surprised you, what left an impression?***

Growing up, I only saw America as a place where your freedom and rights were respected. The biggest surprise came through the experience of being held in a detention center. It made me understand that the immigration system is different, it does not represent the freedom or rights associated with America, it is corrupted to oppress the poor, the less privileged migrants who are fleeing from countries where people's skin color is different.

I didn't expect persecution coming to America. I didn't expect the system to be run by private entities, to be backed by company investments, to be an entire wealth operation and systemic problem. Prisons and detention centers are not meant to keep a check on immigrants anymore, they are used to keep fast checks in people's pockets. The concept and design of a detention center is not even a productive way to organize, manage, or keep a check on migrants.

***Can you compare the experience of being an LGBTQ individual in Nigeria to your experience in New York?***

There is a level of freedom you have that comes with being a gay man in America. You do not have to look at your back because there is a piece of paper that can protect you in a court of law. In Nigeria there is nothing that can protect you in a court of law, you are very vulnerable.

But being a gay man and a black man in America brings interesting dynamics. You are sexualized by the gay community or seen as a sex symbol for simply being black. It is difficult to explain how the dynamics change with time, in different places or with different populations, but one good thing about being gay in America is that the law is being built to protect us. We are fighting for this.

***From the adversity you've faced in your life, what is one key thing you've learned about living?***

One thing I learned is that you will always face adversity, whether you are gay, straight, black, white, poor, or rich. But if you go ahead 10 years from the date you face adversity, you will see yourself in a different situation and understand, most of all, that people heal in time.

If Governor Jared Polis of Colorado had committed suicide when he was younger he would not have actualized into becoming the first gay governor of the USA. When you face adversity you must find your community and trust that there are always people out there who share your same view or struggle.

There are billions of people on this planet, if not one person shares your experience there will be two people, three people, a hundred, a thousand, three million, standing somewhere in the world, right there with you. You might not see that person today or tomorrow, but if you keep on living you will eventually meet them.

That is always a reason to live, and that is always a reason to continue documenting your story. So that one person like you can witness your courage and find the courage to continue living themselves. Being alive is the greatest privilege we have, no matter our adversity.

***What has running a refugee shelter taught you about compassion?***

I lost my country because of the compassion I have for people who are suffering due to their identities. It surprises me in general how some people think about refugees, how anyone could ever look down upon them or alienate them. People do not choose to be refugees.

Now, working as the director of the center, I notice the privileges I have that other refugees do not. Though I have faced great adversity, there are always others who are facing more. I have a social security number, and that itself can change someone's life. Having a job can change someone's life. Having enough money to use the subway can change someone's life. Many people don't have these things, many refugees do not have these things. Naturally, we should have compassion for these people and act thoughtfully towards them, people who do not have as much as we do.

***Has art and writing served as a healing or therapeutic process for you? Can you speak about the book you just published?***

In my book I chronicle my experience of being a gay man in West Africa and the challenges of immigrating to the United States. I chose to write a memoir because by the time most people in Nigeria grow up, the gay people they used to know are already dead.

It is very important for us to know, throughout history, that people survive, that people like us can eventually thrive.

I think it is also important to share my story as an immigrant, because America has been very corrupt to migrants like myself. That needs to be shared.

We all have our own unique stories. Your story might not be appealing to everybody, but if there is somebody like me out there that is searching for courage and a reason to exist, having something documented to turn to for inspiration and confidence can be life saving.

***What are some positive aspects of Nigerian culture you're fond of?***

It is hard for me, after facing persecution in Nigeria, to think of something positive about Nigeria. But I was born in Nigeria, and as a positive person I must believe there are positive things that can arise from the experiences in my life. I would say that Nigerians are very resilient and positive people. They are one of the happiest people on this planet. When you wake up and go outside there is a sense of community, they say "Good morning" or "How is your night"? They are all striving to live as human beings, together, which is truly special, because in many places it is not like that. In New York it is different.

***When you look back on the past 28 years, what are you most proud of?***

What am I most proud of? Oh my god! I am proud of so many things. I am proud of everything, actually. But the thing I am most proud of is being alive today, because I choose to truly live every day. I'm not sure what is better or what is worse, to be proud of the good things or the bad things. I am just proud to be alive, so naturally I am proud to have had all of the experiences I've had, good and bad. I am proud of everything because if certain things did not happen, even the testing trials, I would not be where I am today.

***Can you name some things you're grateful for, things that have brought positive change into your life and helped you become the individual you are today?***

Friendship is very important. If you have a positive view and a supportive community, you will be okay. Life charges attract. The most difficult decision I had to make in my life was to leave Nigeria, to find a new country and a new family. When I decided to move on, I told myself, "This is the end of negativity. From this day onward you must always remain positive." I think hosting this mentality has drawn positive people into my life. I have a lot of friends who are compassionate, I'm grateful for my partner, I'm grateful for all of the people in my life. And so I continue to screen out negativity every time I sense it.

***In your experience, what is the best way for someone to approach an individual with opposing or extremist views?***

As an activist who has been speaking about LGBT rights for a very long time, I've come to discover that it is very difficult to change the way people think. It is easier to change the way people perceive things by offering them a true and authentic life to believe in, setting an example. Just by living, people can change the world. When I see people preaching about god or condemning others for not following their religion I think to myself, "Why don't you live like Jesus instead, and make people see you and think 'I'd like to be like this person'...". Lead with your actions. The easiest way to change people is to live by what you say.

***How do you sustain being an activist?***

Being an activist is not being drowned. An effective activist is someone that can plan, someone who knows the difference between fighting and living. It is like having a job—you get to your office, do the work, and then once you're back home you have to know how to turn off and be with the ones you love. An effective activist is someone who knows how to separate their fights and assess the productivity of each one. If you continue to fight and fight and fight, without ever pausing to evaluate your actions, you might be yelling at an empty room without even realizing it.

It's also important to realize that we cannot solve everything as activists, it takes people within government as well as those without. We need to think critically about how we can work together. Our job is to present the problem and find meaningful solutions—if all we do is complain, well, that is not very effective for us nor the people who are listening from within the government.

***What would you like to see out of our new generations in terms of civic engagement? What would you say to the people growing up right now who want to make a meaningful impact in the world?***

A lot of people want to create change in this world, but for young people they don't know that it takes time, a long time. Life is a marathon, not a sprint, in order to create impact we must be patient. We must be aware of the larger focus and less involved in our day to day ambitions and strifes.

The most important thing it takes to make a difference in this world is your circle of influence—your friends and family, your neighbors, and your online circles. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, you have access to all of those people, so why not let them know what you think about the world? Tell them how you feel. By sharing and retweeting things we believe in, using icons like symbols of support for Pride or Refugee Advocacy, we can help people understand how we feel about the world and all its social issues. It sets an example and is a positive way to impact people's lives.

If people can begin sharing more openly, people can also begin helping more actively. If someone doesn't know how they feel but shares what they're thinking, that opens up a possibility for dialogue and connection. Perhaps a friend or family member who works in psychology sees someone's thoughts and reaches out, says "Hey, I saw what you've been going through, these are actually signs of depression." That can save a life.

Lastly, I think it's important to realize that metrics does not equate impact. It's not the amount of likes or followers we have that determines the impact we are making in the world. It's about each individual life, real people, saving one person who could have been endangered. Instead of trying to change the whole world we can start with making someone's day, helping a friend or a stranger. We can choose to be more open, more kind, and more thoughtful in our everyday lives, the way we work and interact with people. We can choose to live with an open mind and open heart. Then, surely, by the time we leave this earth we will have made a positive difference in the world. ☰



*This magazine was crafted with love, pieced together by some crazy thoughts, countless hours, and many, many sleepless nights.*

*When you're finished with the issue, if you aren't inclined to nook it in your favorite bookshelf, sleep with it under your pillow at night or frame it in your kitchen for all to see, feel free to pass it along to someone else.*

*Simply write (your name) below to (the lovely person you're sharing this issue with), hand the magazine over and embrace them in a hug.*

*Because sharing and giving is the best part of all of this.*

Pass along the love

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A CREATIVE INVESTIGATION OF THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

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