

Facing the Demons

Using realism to expose your
inner truth

collaborative CHALLENGE

Facing the Demons Within

Thoughts, writings and black-and-white photography by students of Central Dauphin High School.

See "Behind the Lens" on page 136 for more information about this collaborative project.

See page 141 for information on submitting your group's collaborative work.

8:27 p.m.



Michael Bricker
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

It's 8:27 in the p.m. on Friday, December 28, 2007 and I am sitting here staring at their photographs as I gather their information — their words, their imagery, their souls, really. And I am amazed. By their works, yes, but, more accurately, by who they are and what they trust me with ... Each had the option to bail, to escape, to take a different path, so to speak, and instead each chose to bare him or herself to me, then to one another, and soon, to many, many more ... Why? I mean, why do they trust me this much? Why are they OK with sharing themselves? Why are

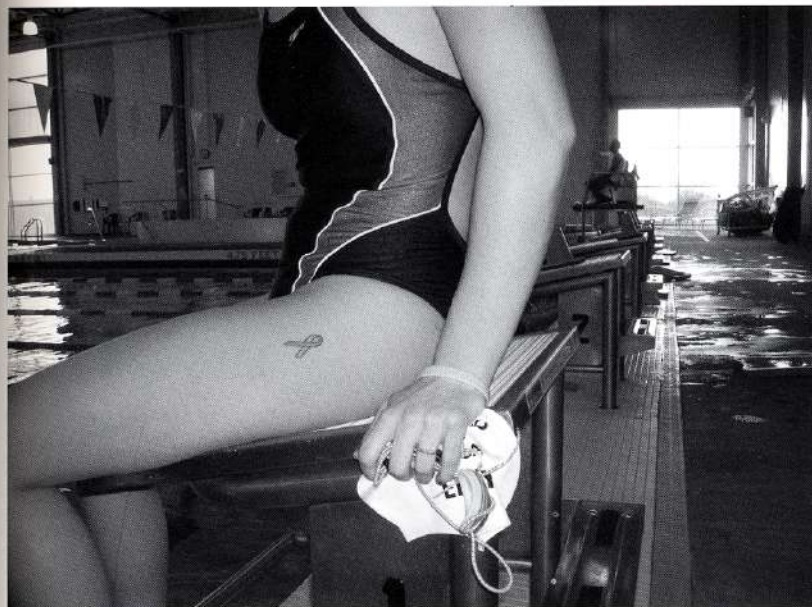
they so amazing? Why are they so imperfectly beautiful? I don't really know. But I do know that it is this honesty, this realism, this faith and this trust that will actually get people to take up their newspapers, and leave their houses and actually listen to that person in their lives whom they had previously ignored ... And that is what it is all about. Each and every one of us has their something or somethings. That is what connects each and every one of us. And that is what keeps us alive.

Camera: Canon EOS 100.

Not Again

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Bretney Endy
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

That day in July ... it was so hard to hear the news that my mom's cancer had come back for the second time. A rush of thoughts about how life was going to change ran through my mind. Breast cancer, shoving its way into my mom's life again, does not just affect her, but everyone around her. And my dad leaving us the next day to be with another woman. Just icing on the cake.

After a lot of talking and crying we had moved on with our summer. The struggles were endless, between my mom's two surgeries and my

dad moving out; I thought my life would never be normal. The craziness started to calm down and the emotions were the only things left.

The idea of the tattoo came to me the first time my mom was diagnosed with breast cancer. I got it to honor and support her and all of the other women with this disease. I surprised my mom at her chemotherapy treatment with it and I received tears of joy and love. This support will never go away, even after I have left this place.

Camera: Nikon COOLPIX L12; Film: T-Max 400 black-and-white.

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The Label That Has Been Sewn



Anila Bhatti
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

There are over a billion Muslims all around the globe in over two hundred countries. Only small groups among these vast people are terrorists and malicious politicians who define us in society's eye. Their every action is instantly sent throughout the world to each true Muslim as an envelope of blame and bias.

It is a sad commentary on our world when my 8-year-old sister asks me why her friend asked her if she is a terrorist just because of her faith. Looking into her solemn, innocent eyes, I cannot give her an explanation. Even if every person in the Middle East were to be a terrorist, the true practicing Muslims of the rest of the world would still form the overwhelming majority. Nevertheless, these few lost souls will forever be the cause of the label that has been sewn upon us.

Camera: Canon



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Spinning, spinning, round and round
When will my feet ever touch the ground?

Floating here above my head
Looking at my life that now seems dead.

Spinning faster and faster away
From the thoughts that want to play.

Crawling through a tiny hole
Into a world with only one goal.

Striving to be perfect forevermore
Why can't I ever find the door?

Spinning even faster now
Past my parents that wonder: how?

Flying through this time so fast
Only if these worries would pass.

Looking up into the cloud-filled sky
Wondering how long before I die.

Spinning, spinning, round and round
When will my feet ever touch the ground?

Spin

Danielle Bostic
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Camera: Canon EOS Rebel G. Film: Kodak T-Max 400.
Photograph taken by Barbara Bostic.

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Pressure to be Perfect

Kelli Stramitis
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

The pressure to be perfect is
overwhelming. when I see those
pretty, thin girls I can't
help but wonder how I could
ever look like that. Their
lives seem so much easier.
If I use a few tricks and
lose a few pounds then I could
come a bit closer to having
what they have.
What could it hurt?



Camera Olympus OM-10. Film: Kodak T-Max 400.

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I miss listening to the sound of the piano
Going to art classes with you
Watching your soccer games
Being mistaken for twins
Instant messaging from across the hall
Pointing out cool cars driving by
Arguing about who gets to sit up front
Your laugh and smile
How much you cared about others
Venting about the school day

If only others had the same amount of respect
Towards uniqueness and individuality
As you
If only everyone did not turn their backs to
Matters that are affecting our youth
These days
Maybe I would have been laughing with you
Instead of writing this

If Only

Dylan Sites
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Camera: Nikon F6. Film: Kodak T-Max 400.

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Am I Good Enough?

Bekah Woolfe
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Am I good enough? Will I make my parents proud? These are the questions I ask myself numerous times a day.

I was diagnosed with dyslexia when I was six. I could not understand why school was so difficult for me and came so easily to everyone else. By contrast, my twin sister excelled. She's not only very intelligent, but a source of constant comparison for me. As I've gotten older, I have begun to realize that there will always be someone smarter, more popular, or better. The notion that it is OK not to be "the best" is something with which I continue to struggle. Letting people see my flaws is not something with which I am comfortable. My fear of disappointing those who matter to me has impacted my life significantly. Self-esteem, or

lack thereof, in my case, only adds to my fears that I will never be "good enough." When report cards come out, my parents see that my sister has received straight A's. I see how happy it makes my parents; they are so proud of her. My report card does not look as pretty as hers, and I feel as though I am letting them down. I have worked long, hard hours for the last 11 years to compensate for my learning disability so as to close the margin between my peers and myself. However, I cannot help but feel inferior and insignificant ... small even.

This project and process have made me realize that the person I am most worried about disappointing is the one looking back at you through this photograph. If I am not "good enough" in my very own opinion, how can

I expect others to think I am? Learning to accept myself for who I am and to be proud of my accomplishments will become easier with time. I know that in my heart that I am "good enough." And, at the end of the day, that is all that matters.



Camera: Nikon COOLPIX L3.

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Not Me

Kate Veronikis
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

she asks, "what is your goal?"
you reply, "I don't know ... i just want to be better. i just always feel like i'm not good enough."
and she says, "so you are starving yourself to make yourself better in some way, but you don't know how anything is getting better?"
and you pause. and you think.

it hurts to look in the mirror and to hate what you see. you are convinced you are not good enough in every way and so you try to fix yourself and improve yourself. you hate your face. you hate the way your hair is impossible to work with. your arms - they always look fat; and the same goes for your legs. your stomach is never flat enough. and even something as minute as your fingers or your toes are disgusting to you. most people learn to deal with and accept their flaws. not me.

for many people, when they are sad or hurt, food becomes a comfort. for me, a comfort is something it is absolutely not.

this problem has come to the point where i have begun to spiral out of control. it has become

an obsession. my life has begun to revolve around a goal that i can not even define. but then someone stopped me. someone who cares about me brought me back down to earth and asked me what i'm doing with my life. this person told me it's time to swallow my pride, and let people help me.

i am an extremely independent person, and i have always been convinced that i can do



anything on my own. it took a stumble and a fall to realize i simply can't. the hardest part by far has been trying to let go of my pride and admit that i need help. i am now in the beginning stages of counseling, and i am realizing, i cannot always do things on my own.

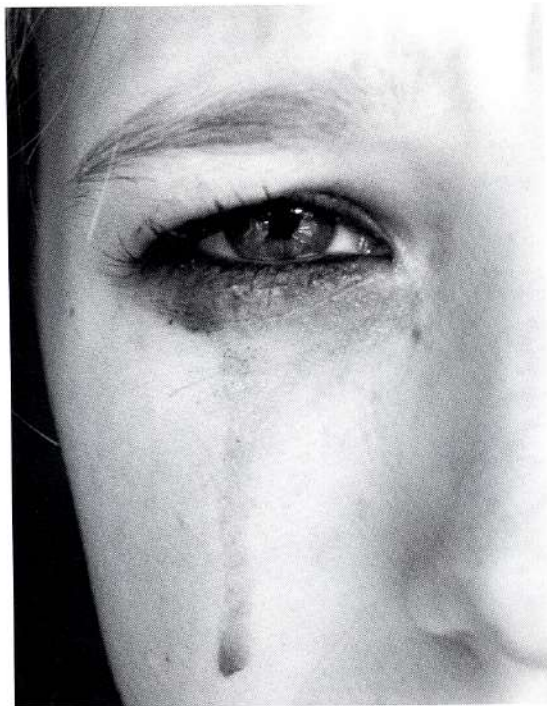
Camera: ProMaster 2500 PK Super. Film: Kodak T-Max 400.

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Refuse to Fail

Nicole Albright
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania



That feeling that you will never be good enough, that you'll never accomplish anything makes me feel like I am so tiny. Like nobody sees anything special inside me ... that I'm just an average person who is only another face in the crowd. The pressure to be more than average and be who I want to be feels like a weight on my shoulders ... a weight that I feel every day. More and more gets added on and it feels like nothing will ever get done. All the stress on my shoulders makes me want to scream at the top of my lungs.

I QUIT!

But I can't quit. I need to feel like I've done something, like I've made a difference.

Failure is not going to be a part of my life. If I want something bad enough, I will accomplish it, and nobody can tell me differently. I've learned to be strong enough to say no; to tell anybody who doubts me that I won't fail.

Failing is my greatest fear and I never want to be called a quitter or a failure. And if I am, that will just make me work harder and harder to get what I want. That weight on my shoulders will be lifted; and I will accomplish my dreams ... no matter what it takes.

I refuse to FAIL.

Camera: Canon Rebel XL. Film: Kodak T-Max 400.

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Fear



Adina Crouse
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

"The key to change ... is to let go of fear."

— Rosanna Cash

At times I feel as though there is no one in the world like me, no one who shares my views or my feelings. I've always felt different from my peers and hoped no one would notice. For about five years I denied to others, and myself, that I was different. I've never cared about the typical things that people seem to

care about. I idealize everything about me, and I dwell on my failures, because that's who I am. I have tried changing, not for myself, but for others. But now I am starting to realize that I don't need to do that. I am not perfect; nothing and no one is. But what I am is an individual, and that is all I can hope for.

Camera: Nikon D40x



*LOVE ME
DARLING,
IM SCHIZOPHRENIC*



















Will you be
with me
FOREVER?





The one who broke it can only fix it

