

Kailey Mefford
Changes

“You really don’t even know the names of anyone in your favorite class?”

I sunk into my therapist’s chair a little more, blushing as she looked at me with quizzical, pitiful, and yet almost accusatory eyes. It was true, I never spoke to anyone in my classes, which was probably why my best friend was also my only friend. Still, no one had ever made me feel so guilty for not knowing anything about the people I saw every day. All of a sudden, I realized that I was partially to blame for a lot of sadness in my life; the world wasn’t against me, I was against myself.

Living in depression, I had no ambition or motivation, and so I distracted myself from my own life with temporary pleasures such as T.V. and food. I created a cycle of depression and loneliness; because I kept to myself and sat around all day, I could not make friends, and since I had no friends, I wanted to keep to myself and sit around all day. For years I existed in a void of emotion, surviving and yet never really living.

Realizing that I could change how I lived filled me with a determination that I had not known since childhood. I decided immediately that I would have to change my entire way of life, and kill off my old self so that a new person could rise from the ashes. I already knew of one major change; at the end of the summer, I would no longer go to public school, but to a tiny, alternative private school. I burned with anticipation, knowing that I could not pass up this chance to make a phoenix of myself.

Still, I knew that the changes had to start with myself, rather than just the places I went and the people I saw. I had almost no hobbies, and I hardly even knew what I was interested in trying. Over the summer, I set out to try as many hobbies as possible: I sewed, I embroidered, I gardened, I photographed, I explored and hiked through the woods, I drew, I painted, I read, and I wrote. I instantly felt an improvement in my overall mood, and for once I didn’t feel like I was watching my life waste away.

By the time school started, I was still committed to continue changing myself into the person I wanted to be. I had no idea how to get people to like me, because even though I was friendly, I was very withdrawn. I started forcing myself out of my shell, and it was very unfamiliar and exhausting. I smiled constantly, and talked to everyone. I was very self-conscious with my new self, but I did my best to project unfaltering confidence. Eventually, I came to the realization that I no longer had to pretend to be confident or sociable, because it had become genuine.

Although coming out of my depression took a lot of work, it made me into a new person: one who is confident, brave, resilient, outgoing, and strong. I have made many amazing friends, discovered my passions, and greatly improved myself. The change brought upon by therapy, switching schools, and most importantly the change that I brought upon myself has made me happier than I ever imagined was possible. My triumph over depression shines through all aspects of my life: my grades, my interests, the friends I’ve made, and my ceaseless smile.