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Mirrors, Manipulation, and Me

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Mirrors, Manipulation, and Me

Abstract

Yesterday I was sick to my stomach. Literally.

I tossed and turned all night, woke up and felt sick, and spent the first two hours of my day in bed trying to calm down while. I was worrying that I was a bad friend, student, and girlfriend. The hardest part was that I was criticizing myself for having these insecurities. It's tough to get out of that cycle, but it's what I need to do. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Surge, Surge Gettysburg, Gettysburg College, Center for Public Service, Depression, Anxiety, insecurity, emotional abuse, self-love

Disciplines

Mental and Social Health | Women's Studies

Comments

Surge is a student blog at [Gettysburg College](#) where systemic issues of justice matter. Posts are originally published at [surgegettysburg.wordpress.com](#) Through stories and reflection, these blog entries relate personal experiences to larger issues of equity, demonstrating that -isms are structural problems, not actions defined by individual prejudice. We intend to popularize justice, helping each other to recognize our biases and unlearn the untruths.

SURGE

[VERB] : to move suddenly or powerfully forward or upward

MIRRORS, MANIPULATION, AND ME

February 9, 2015



Yesterday I was sick to my stomach. Literally.

I tossed and turned all night, woke up and felt sick, and spent the first two hours of my day in bed trying to calm down while. I was worrying that I was a bad friend, student, and girlfriend. The hardest part was that I was criticizing myself for having these insecurities. It's tough to get out of that cycle, but it's what I need to do.

Today, I start my 30 days pledge of self-love.

I can no longer wake up and look in a mirror to criticize my stomach and thighs and then curse myself for being vain. I can no longer analyze everything I say and do. I can no longer spend my time scrutinizing

my flaws and hating myself for lacking confidence. I can no longer believe that others are better than me. I can no longer treat myself poorly and then hypocritically give the advice to my friends struggling with self-esteem.

I was [emotionally abused](#) as a child. I lived in constant turmoil and fear. I would wake up with my father yelling at me to get out of bed and be productive. My efforts to complete chores and homework were constantly criticized. My phone calls were monitored and my father read my text messages and emails. In fits of rage my father would call me a whore, a failure, a fuck-up, and a disgrace as he threw things across the room or pushed me against the wall. If I tried to fight back I would be punished by having my possessions taken away, by being restricted from having meals, or by being told that I would be kicked out of the house. At his worst, my father chased me across our property with a truck and threatened to kill me.

He provoked such constant fear and shame in me. I now realize that my confidence and self-worth have been undermined as a result. Every day, I worry that the abuse is written on me. I worry that I am a freak. I worry that I am unlovable. I worry that as soon as people get close to me they will see that I am messed up. I have read self-help articles by the dozen, I have gone to therapy, I have taken anti-anxiety medicine, and antidepressants. I post quotes on Facebook and I write in a "positivity diary."

But, I am still fighting. And, dammit, this fight is hard.

In these next 30 days, I pledge to recognize negative thoughts about myself and then not to judge myself for them. By observing how often and for what I am criticizing myself, I can better understand my thought patterns and prevent the negativity from being constant.

After 22 years of fighting against my inner thoughts, 30 days may not be enough. But, it's a solid step in very long journey.

To all the fighters out there – I ask you to join me. You too can stop your obsessive [thoughts](#).

Anonymous