

**Title:** Humanities 101

Collective Journal

**Date:** Fall 2012

This collective journal is reflective of our learning and work together in the Humanities 101 course and it features a Rites of Passage theme. Each entry is an individual point of view on selected course materials. We encourage the reader to keep an open mind when reviewing this journal and ask you to consider that many of us used this as a therapeutic process. There is, therefore, certain content readers may find controversial, offensive, or challenging. Remember, we have each had our own unique journey in life and this journal shares that with you. We hope that you, the reader, will be encouraged to explore your own coming-of-age narrative.

For those of you who do not wish to read further . . .



## *Grandma for the First Time*

*At first happy  
Then, maybe, a bit shocked, a little disappointed  
But HAPPY!*

*It was winter, of course, December  
Cold, dark, white  
I was about to be a grandma for the first time*

*I saw the birth of my grandson!  
I had never seen a baby be born  
Not even my own  
Both my children  
Were C-sections*

*3:30 am!  
Woken up to meet her at the hospital  
Up, out, at the hospital  
In no time!*

*"How are you my daughter?"  
Only a middle finger back.  
I knew not to ask again.*

*It was amazing  
The head, the body  
Here comes my grandson  
So proud!*

*Now a single mom  
Hard working and determined  
She managed to get her GED*

*And my grandson  
Now nine  
So busy, so curious,  
Playing games on the TV*

*He is smart  
And so is his mom!*

# 2005



My first place in Edmonton. A little nest below the Fairmont Hotel I called home. My addiction had finally taken me to the place I didn't want to go. Waking up every morning frozen and wondering why I was doing this. Yet I continued on for a couple of years.

## From This to This



After I got clean and sober I realized the only thing I was hiding from was me. Fortunate enough to find myself being helped by a couple of ladies, I was now on my way to recovery and a new life.

# 2008



November 1, 2008 was my first day of being clean and sober. It is now four years into my being clean. I'm living in an apartment which overlooks the first place I called home. I allow it to be a reminder where I can go back to. From this to this.



It was mid-November when my boyfriend at the time decided we should just get married. So we went to get the marriage license and found out that we forgot to bring his divorce papers, so we had to go back home to get it.

When we returned we found out that they couldn't use it because they couldn't photo copy the embossed stamp on it. So we had to go get a new copy from the court house. When we got the copy from the court house it was also embossed. We had to explain that it needed to be stamped and they wanted to charge us for a third copy when all they needed to do was stamp the one we just got from them. They finally agreed.

When we finally received the marriage license we had had enough. We received a list of Edmonton's justice of the peace and started calling to see if anyone could marry us that night. We had two friends as witnesses and no family there. We decided to get married in the justice of the peace's house to be quick and have it over and done with.

Looking back on it now – if it takes three tries to get a marriage license, don't get married.



It was in the classroom where I saw the one boy talking to my grade 8 teacher. When all of a sudden another boy decided to grab his sweat pants and yank them down. Unfortunately he had forgotten to tie up his sweat pants that day. Even more unfortunately the boy had picked that day not to wear any underwear and the class got an eye full of a very white butt. It was a good thing that he was facing the desk otherwise he would have been even more embarrassed than he was. That day he learned to tie up his pants.

Pulling down pants was the boy's favorite pastime and he did not care whether you were a boy or a girl. It was the first time the class had ever seen our grade 8 teacher mad. After that day it was banded from school, if you got caught pulling down the pants of anyone you were suspended from school. Mind you, it was fun to watch because it didn't happen to me that time. I had had it done many a time to me. It wasn't fun to have it happen to you but was funny when it happened to someone else.

## Advice For Students

- Being tolerant, responsible + having compassion for marginalized people.
- Work is a psychological need for adults. Work that satisfies and is compatible with your beliefs, brings comfort + satisfaction.
- Really research what's required to get into the field of work you want to get into to make sure there's no hidden parts that would hinder your aspirations.

## **What advise would you give a youth about becoming an adult?**

**Don't worry about all the expectations that are being placed on you, relax, it's okay to take your time, what do you want to achieve? Take some time to look within yourself, what are your passions, what makes you happy, who do you think you are? The whole point of this is not to live up to the society's expectations. I feel it's more important for you to find what it is that you feel is important and what you want to share with society. I understand that this is a confusing time in your life but I want to let you know its okay to feel confused, its okay to fail, it's okay to not know if you don't know, confusion is part of growing up. Do not be afraid to follow your own path if you need to, it's about your process to grow and mature, to question and to ultimately get to know and accept yourself. It's okay to feel fear, just don't allow it to control you. If you do happen to fall down don't worry, that is part of life, just pick yourself up and keep going. If you run into problems on the journey remember to try to focus on the solutions and hang on to your passions and love. In life there may be no happily ever afters but we do have the choice every day to do our best with what we have regardless of what is happening in our lives we can find some happiness. Good journeys and happy trails, find your bliss and follow it.**

## **What does someone need when they become an adult?**

**They need tools that work in difficult times. They need knowledge of how to trust themselves, to find the confidence to become a fully formed being. They need some experience on how to look after there body, minds, and spirits. In today's world we need tools on how to filter out information – what is important and what is garbage. They would need emotional maturity to be able to maintain themselves in the outside world. A deep belief in on one's own ability to survive and perseverance to keep going till they make it. A willingness to accept failure, to realize that really there is no failure you just found another way that didn't work. The courage to take responsibility for one's own life and their actions and to stop blaming others or even themselves. If one is struggling with past trauma, they would need to stop running, face it, heal it, and move into full responsibility for one's own being. In my opinion it would be helpful to have some type of spirituality in one's life, in whatever form works best for that person. My final point for what I think it takes to become an adult is being lucky enough to have the right conditions to be able to grow and mature.**

I have gone through many significant rites of passage in my life and one of the most significant was owning my first car. As I was growing up I used to envy the guys in high school with cars and felt they were real cool, I wanted to be like them. When I acquired my first job I was determined to meet my goal. I saved my money carefully and proudly purchased my first car. To me, owning a car is an important rite of passage. It symbolized the fact that I had finally become an adult. It positively strengthened my self-image and self-esteem. I felt that I had the maturity and capability to confront life's obstacles.

The cars I drive are representative of my personality. Being involved in athletics for most of my life, I always buy sports cars because they stand for speed, strength, and agility; all of which are key to survival in society. Although there have been times when I was without a car, I always feel more complete as a man when I have one.





It was in the school hallways where I learned what “Don’t’ run in the hallways” really meant.

I was seven or eight years old in Saskatchewan when one day I was running in the hallway, the consequences were very tragic. A girl pushed me from behind and I went flying into a desk because I was going too fast to stop. I split my eyebrow open; there was blood everywhere that stained my clothes. The school called my father who had to drive 25 miles to the nearest hospital from school. I got eight to ten stitches in my eyebrow.

I never ran in the hallways again!



I Love the Hallway!

When I come to school the first thing I notice are the pictures on the wall. I love the hallway where everybody is walking and talking with each other. I ask the teacher – where is my room?

When I am walking in the hallway I trip because I am looking at the pictures on the wall. Sometimes I sit in the hallway to study because when everybody is in class it is quiet. I also eat lunch in the hallway. The hallway is very important for me because I use it a lot. The hallway is always my favorite place to be. First, because there are always historic pictures of each class, and the old building’s story written in the portrait. The hallway also has an emergency exit, lost and found, and lockers. When I am going home, the principal is standing in the hallway and saying goodbye to all the students.

## The Fairytale experience

That I would have had a loving father growing up, who would of gently guided me into embracing manhood. He would've loved me and accepted me for who and what I am, not placing unattainable expectations upon me. He would have had the courage to sit down with me and talk to me about important subjects like sex, masturbation, women, drinking, drugs, and religion. He would've help me through these difficult issues for me as a young man, helped me understand how to give it and receive love, and in this way show me how God is a loving God? I would have had a Mother that was strong but not controlling, she would have been there to protect us but allow us to learn things on our own, and provide us with love and care. She would have shown us how to take care of ourselves and to be stable and trust in ourselves. Through this process I could of matured into a healthy young man and got to experience things men experience; getting an education, getting a good job, meeting a wife, experiencing an intimate relationship with a women, providing for a family, and being an independent man.

In the end of all fairytales you get to live happily ever after, with no pain or suffering. Wow! After writing this fairytale I realized I am now glad I never had the fairytale life. I would've missed out on the experience of getting to know myself and would have been doing just what society was programing me to do. I would've missed out on many experiences in life that are really not talked about in fairy tales. One of these experiences is pain. I experience chronic pain in my stomach and bowels that supposedly I have manifested in my mind; the reason is unclear of why I created such pain. My theory at this moment is that it is my mind's way of protecting itself from facing my traumatic childhood and holding onto anger, that I am somehow afraid to release it or am not sure how to. I feel ready now to truly forgive, I feel ready to face the painful memories, and to let go. So in a more realistic fairytale for me I face my inner pain in my abdomen, stomach, and bowels and let it go. I experience healing and am able to go forth to have new experiences with life and help others on their healing journey. I don't expect the happily ever after, but a peaceful state of mind within me I believe is realistic.

The end.

11/19/12

He walked out of my house  
with my identity.

Everyone was laughing at him,  
he thought that he was very  
funny.

My Mom was asking  
why I was getting into trouble  
all the time.

Even though I was at home  
every night.

The mystery man who stole  
my identity was the one that  
got into trouble with the law.

One night the mystery man was  
getting in trouble for stealing  
identities.

He has a machine in his house  
that make counterfeit ID's.

The cops went to his house they  
found a machine in the basement.

They found lots of different ID's  
hanging on a clothes line.

They started to search the rest  
of the house.

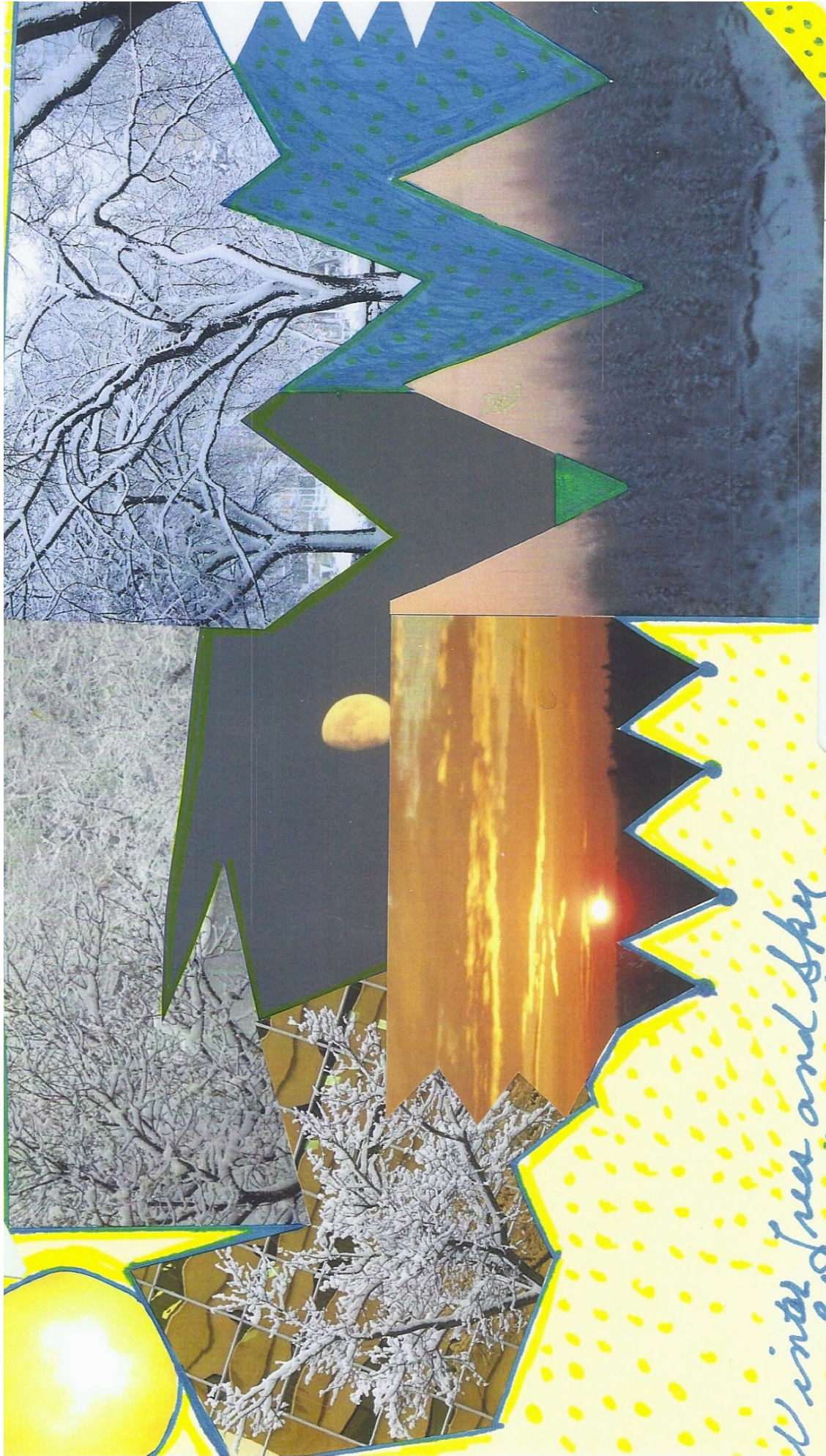
They also found lots of boxes  
with counterfeit papers.

So keep your ID very close  
to you and do not leave it unattended  
in your own house.

"Be safe and very careful with your  
wallet."

A woman is searching and searching for her sibling. She left her country in 1913 when the First World War occurred. She left her family to save her life. She got on board a ship even though she does not know where she will end up. Her ship stops in England and she gets out of the ship to start her new life. She lived in England for a long time. She finally settled in England and met a man. She fell in love with him and she got married and had children. After awhile she was thinking about her family. Wondering if they are still alive she starts searching on the internet. She did find one of her family and that's her older sister. She was so happy and they keep their communication. They make an arrangement to meet each other and in the long run it happens. They meet in person in the end and they are happy together and spend time.





Winter Trees and Sky  
Edmonton ab 2012-13

## The Rite Of Passage Into Drug Addiction And Motherhood

Well here I am at 14, drinking heavily and dabbling into heavy drugs, cocaine to be specific. Trying to escape the pain of home life. Parents are addicts with very unhealthy behaviours. I was the victim of sexual, mental and physical abuse. So I started to feel hell ya, I deserve to feel good, yet not feel at all. 25 years of active addiction, prostitution, criminal activity, jail, institutions, physical violence, abusive partners, Spiritual death and almost physical death. I had definitely earned the RIGHT to use, be angry, to be violent, at least justified in my mind. Fast-forward to the day I found out I was pregnant.

Under the influence, police gave me the option to go to jail or go to detox, I chose detox. Not openly, mind you, but there would be a chance to leave detox, where as with jail there would be no chance, locked in a cell. I took the pregnancy test and sure enough it was positive. I couldn't even comprehend this, as all I knew was how to get loaded and be in survival mode for myself alone. Did I have a RIGHT to be pregnant; after all I was a junky and a prostitute. I knew that killing myself on a daily basis was one thing, killing another human being who did not have a choice, was wrong. I tried to stay clean by going to residential treatment and fell short. For 3 days I was MIA, in a drug house. No food or water and not even caring about the child within me. Made my way back to detox, but not without facing danger and some challenges before doing so. While in detox I knew nothing would change as long as I stayed in my hometown, born and raised. Asked my support to move me anywhere but where I was. So got on a bus and left for a new place, with a few bags of clothes in hand and not knowing a soul. I did detox, treatment, and residential treatment for woman. It was challenging, however I made it happen and at 4 months pregnant I found out I was having twins. Let me tell you the fear was intense. Only knowing one way of life for over half my life was a shock to my system. Wanting to run, hide, escape, and get loaded. Again taking me back to, did I have the RIGHT to kill now 2 people who lived within me and did not have choice?

I white knuckled it and stayed clean, changing the outcome for my unborn children and myself. I started to feel that I did have the RIGHT to give a child the love, honour, and respect that I never received as a child. That God had blessed me with a gift of having twins. I was happy, healthy, and knowing my children would be born free from addiction was, and is, a true blessing from Creator.

CONTINUED . . .

Out on my own now trying to be a healthy mom and giving my baby's the best care. Falling short and relapsing while they were babies. Struggled with all sorts of chaos and madness until I new I was not giving my children the RIGHT of a great quality of life. I gave them up voluntarily to a friend of mine when they were 2 and a half. Did I have the RIGHT to be their mom under the influence?

Going to treatment again and getting into an unhealthy relationship. Having them back in my care, struggling to stay clean, they were apprehended at 4 and a half. The sheer and intense pain of not having them in my life was to great to bear. So I stayed loaded, numbing all feelings – getting and using and finding ways and means to get more. My whole existence was centered in drugs and not being able to stay clean to see my children, meanwhile suicide was creeping closer and closer. I lost the RIGHT to be their mother, due to my disease of addiction and not giving them the quality of life they deserved. They were a gift to me from Creator and I felt just SICK of what my life had become. I'm grateful for those who intervened and kept them safe and out of foster care.

I finally came to a place of Spiritual bankruptcy, the dope wasn't working anymore and death was just around the corner. Not really ready to totally surrender I knew I had to go to treatment again and turn my life over to a power greater than myself and the drugs. Creator became the PEACE in my life that I had so desperately longed for. I had to work very hard in all areas of my life. The Creator saw fit through me staying clean, that I would be reunited with my gifts, my children.

I will be 5 years clean this Jan 10, 2013. I believe Motherhood is a RIGHT that is earned; yet many children are born into a life of despair and suffering, for which I pray for them. Each day I stay clean and do the work for the greater good, I honour myself and my family. Earning the RIGHT daily to be free from substance and have my girls with me. I continue to have the strength and tools to be a better person and give myself and my girls the life I didn't have, in a healthy way. I have given the RIGHT to 2 other human beings the gift of clean breath, breath that is free from addiction.

That is a RITE of PASSAGE all on it's own, for a human being to be born absolutely PERFECT!

What really stands out is how quickly people stigmatize others even before they have any knowledge of a person's unique and individual backgrounds. Some stigmatize even when they do have a basic grasp of a person's history.

I've been on social assist. since the early nineties due to a variety of reasons. I've volunteered for many reputable organizations many many times over the years.

I've been a regular blood donor with C.B.S. for close to 30 years, donating about 140 times.

I've found that the vast majority of people who are judgemental don't judge based on their own level of their own level of self esteem and there's lots of insecure people out there.

I've learned that if you treat yourself as a nobody you will be treated as a nobody. Being an independant thinker is vital in getting respect and having more success in your life.

Nerve or courage is also paramount in sticking up for your rights/feelings/+ personal safety. Pull your own strings or other people will gladly pull them for you.



I have gone through some significant rites of passage in my life – my first Holy Communion, getting my high school diploma, and buying my first car were just a few that were key to my transition into adulthood. Including these and other significant rites of passage that I have gone through, the single most important one for me was getting my first apartment.

For me, having my own apartment enables me to be my real self instead of being controlled by other people's beliefs and values. The freedom and independence that I feel gives me a great feeling. It is here that I am the King of my own domain and can make a statement about myself. This climate of freedom that I experience makes me paint a positive image of myself. Through this positive image I strengthen my self-esteem and self-worth. I truly believe that it is important for one to have his or her own personal space in order to become the real person that they are. This personal space can be a foundation with which you can become a complete person.



## Happy memories of School

There was a day in grade 6 when we had a dance party! I had so much fun; I really broke loose and danced like a manic. I had so much fun, we all had fun because we all let go, I think. I will remember it for the rest of my life. To this day I enjoy dancing and it helps me feel happy and fully alive.

We used to laugh a lot in school. We could laugh about almost anything. Sometimes we would laugh so hard we could barley breath, those were some of the good times in life. I would also get into a lot of trouble with the teachers because I really enjoyed being the class clown, it was my favorite thing in the whole world at the time to hear other laughing; it was music to my ears. When I think back to those days it seems like a lifetime ago and I was a totally different person, but the laughter stays with me to this day. It's funny, when I was in school I thought that life would really be great when I got out of school, but when you get out of school you remember how much fun you had when you where in school.

When the bell rang for recess my heart would soar, I was free from the drudgery of learning stuff I really had no interest in. It was time for some fun, yee haw, we would all be yelling and screaming and putting on our boots. We would play games, mostly the boys played sports and I never really paid much attention to what the girls where doing. We invented all kinds of new sports and that was the best because we made up the rules as we played, we did this naturally, we made one game that was a mix between hockey and soccer and we played it with a tennis ball, what a blast we would have! All my cares and worries would disappear. I was free even if it was only for 15 minutes this kept me happy and discharged of enough energy so that I could go back to sitting in the classroom. The sports game at recess mattered more to me then all the stuff we were doing in class and I would wait in anticipation for the next recess to come upon us so that we could do it again.

I remember the ritual of the first day back to school from summer break. It seemed so important to me back then to have new clothes for that first day, it seemed to matter to all the kids. You could smell new-stuff smell in the air, everything seem fresh and exciting. It was a big event in my youth. It was great to be back in some ways, to see all your friends again. It was also sad in some ways because you would lose the freedom of being free in the summer.

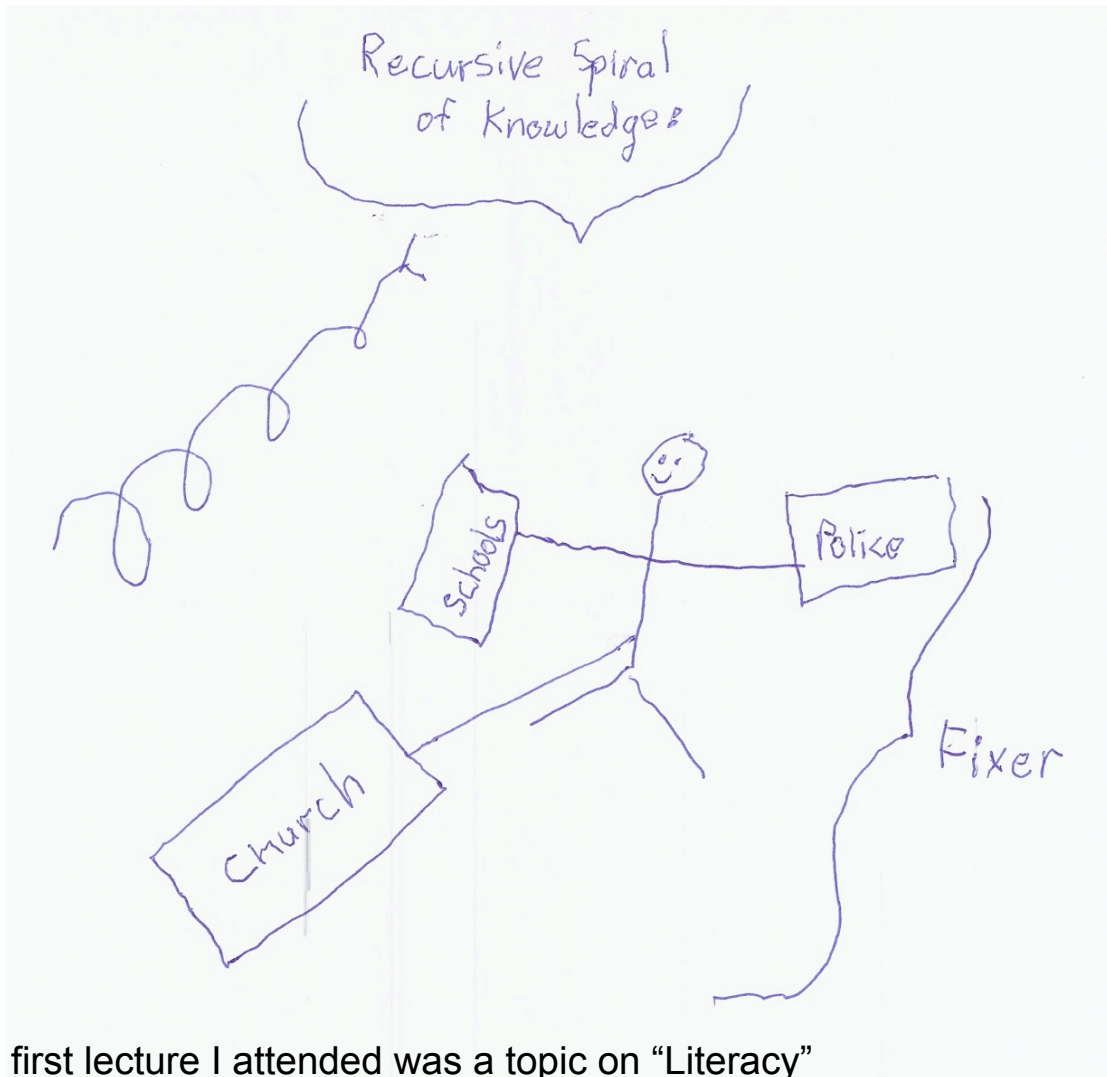
The first day back to school kept getting harder and harder for me as I progressed through school. I started to feel more and more inferior to the other kids. I remember wanting to have brand name clothes, as this would some how compensate for the way I was feeling – now I could care less if a pair a jeans has a red tab or an orange tab on the back pocket, but back then it was the world for me. I also wanted my hair to be straight and in style, and to have no acne, to look perfect? I needed to impress everybody for some reason now when I think about it I think how foolish it was, but that the way it was for me. I remember my first day in high school I was so self conscious that I hid in the forest for the first day I just couldn't go into the school. I still remember how that I felt looking around at the trees and feeling safe because they where not judging me? I have changed a lot since then, when I look back I know I am making progress. I no longer worry so much about what others think about me, I just focus on trying my best to respect others and myself.

First we have objective view and then the subjective view:

- 1) Objective View – outside of myself
- 2) Subjective View – “I experience”, from myself

Next we view “A Matter”

- 1) A Matter – Something to be concerned about
- 2) No Matter – nothing to be concerned about



The first lecture I attended was a topic on “Literacy”

The media we explored were:

- T.V.
- Radio

In North America the literacy of the individual corresponds with the school system and coming of age within it, such as the ages that follow:

- 1) 13 – 14
- 2) 14 – 16
- 3) 16 – 18
- 4) Adulthood

## **The Middle Sister**

Once there lived a pretty little widow who had three little blond girls. They live in a pretty little house on a pretty little street. There was an older sister, a younger sister, and a middle sister. The middle sister had pretty blue eyes and curly hair.

The little girl's mother was a beauty. She made a modest living that kept her girls happy and healthy. One day a kind wealthy man came calling; this made the mother very happy. He courted her for a few months and then they were married.

He took the family away to live in his castle. When they arrived it ended up being a broken down hovel. The kind wealthy man wasn't so wealthy as he made himself out to be. He wasn't very kind either.

One day the middle sister was gather herbs in the woods when she met a kind old lady. The little old lady asked the middle sister why she was crying. The middle sister told her how her mother was tricked in to marrying a man who had no money and how he was hurting her mother, older sister, and little sister. The old lady told the middle sister to come back for the next three days at the same time. Over the three days of visiting the little old lady they became good friends. On the third day the little old lady turned into a wolf, she went with the middle sister and ate the evil man that was hurting her family.

For the rest of the middle sister's life the wolf was always by her side. When a bad person came to hurt her family the wolf was there to swallow them whole. If they were of kind heart they only saw a friendly dog. They little family prospered and live happily ever after.

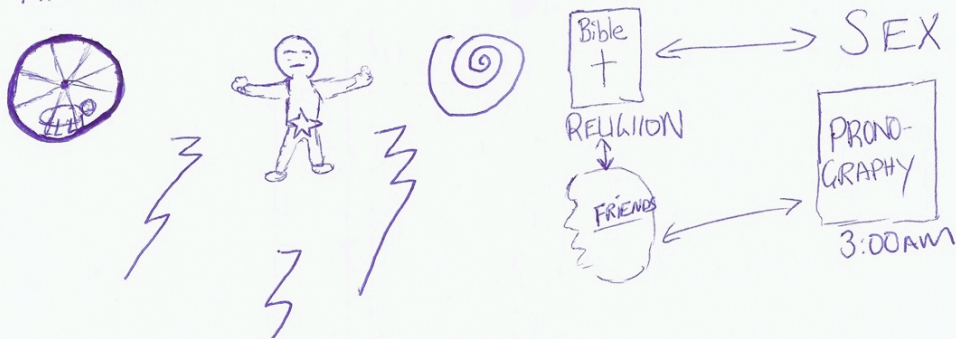




10 years OLD  
 Childhood CONFUSION, Periods of Chaos AND TIMES OF GREAT JOY. THIS PERIOD SHAPES MY LIFE AND SETS ME OUT ON THE JOURNEY OF LIFE, WITH ALOT OF FEAR AND ANGRE, AND HOPE AND DREAMS TO BECOME LARGER THEN LIFE

11 - 12

NEW FRIENDS, NEW EXPERIENCE BUT THINGS STARTED TO MORPH FOR ME, BUT SOME HOW I COULD NOT STOP THE PROCESS THAT HAD BEGUN INSIDE OF ME



12-16



WHAT DO PEOPLE THINK ABOUT ME? I WANT TO BE COOL LIKE THE OTHER KIDS? HOW CAN I BE COOL? I NEED TO BE DIFFERENT THEN I AM SO GIRLS WILL LIKE ME! SOME TIMES I FEEL TERRIFIED OF BEING AROUND OTHER KIDS I FEEL DIFFERENT OUT OF PLACE. WHY CAN'T I BE COOL MAYBE IF I TEASE ON THE REAL GEEKS THAT WILL MAKE ME FEEL BETTER ABOUT MYSELF, I DON'T LIKE WHO I AM I JUST WANT TO BE SOME ONE ELSE.

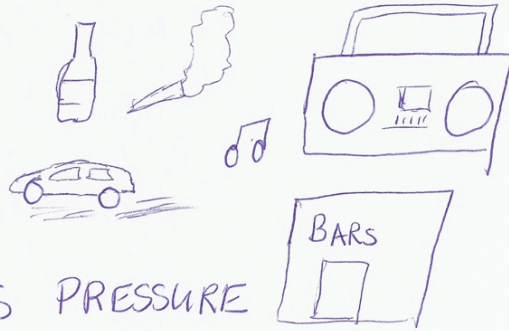
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16-24

WHEN I

DRINK AND DO

DRUGS ALL THIS PRESSURE



COMES OFF MY BACK AND I FEEL OKAY  
BEING MYSELF, I FEEL LIKE PEOPLE  
LIKE ME AND I FEEL COOL! I CAN  
EVEN DANCE AND TALK TO WOMEN AND  
THEY LIKE ME TOO WOW THIS IS GREAT!  
OOH CRAP I CAN'T SEEM TO CONTROL  
THIS LIKE I DID WHEN I FIRST STARTED, BLACK  
OUTS, HORRIBLE THINGS HAPPEN!

0-33



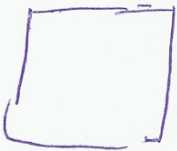
~~OVER~~ OVER ATTACHMENT TO MY MOTHER  
I FEEL RESPONSABLE GROWING UP FOR HER  
HAPPINESS, I WANT HER TO BE SAFE  
AND HAPPY, AT TIME I FEEL ALONE AND  
SCARED WITH OUT HER TERRIFIED. I  
SOME TIMES HAVE A HARD TIME MAKING  
DECISIONS FOR MYSELF, I FEAR LOSING HER  
AND AT TIME FEEL ANGRY AT HER BECAUSE  
I FEEL SO RESPONSABLE FOR HER BUT I LOVE  
HER DEARLY!



0-33  
UNBRIDLED ANGER AT MY FATHER AND GOD WANTED TO MAKE THEM PAY FOR MY SUFFERING, WANTED THEM TO BE KILLED AND THIS ANGER HAS TURNED ON ME, AND THEN IT BEEN INTERNALIZED AS ANGER TOWARD MYSELF



0-33



CRAVING SO BADLY TO HAVE THE HOLLYWOOD EXPERIENCE OF A GIRLFRIEND, SEX AND INTIMASSEY WITH A WOMEN, TO HAVE SOME TYPE OF WORLDLY SUCCESS TO PROVE TO EVERYBODY THAT I HAVE SOME WORTH. I WANTED THE HAPPILY EVER AFTER, INSTEAD I GET THE EXPERIENCE OF REALITY, AND HAVE TO STRIVE EVERY DAY TO JUST ACCEPT MYSELF AND MY LIFE THE WAY IT IS, WHICH IS THE WAY I WANT IT NOW ANYWAYS, THANK GOODNESS FOR UNANSWERED PRAYERS.



33

- FREEDOM TO BE MYSELF

## **Separation-**

The first time I moved out on my own I was 32. I had never lived on my own before. I left home when I was 16. I had gone from my mom's to living with my boyfriend's parents, and then I left there and moved into a group home. I stayed there a few months, signed myself out, and came back to Edmonton. In Edmonton I went straight into the women's shelter.

In Edmonton I met the father of my three oldest boys. I moved in with him. I had a bad life with him. So when I finally left him I moved back into mom's house with 3 kids. I ended getting into another relationship and another child. It had gotten to the point that I couldn't handle 4 kids and did what I thought was best for them at the time, I signed guardianship over to my mother and came back to Edmonton. Then I met my husband and had another child. We were together for a few years after our baby was taken away. When he left me I went back to my mom's.

## **Transition-**

Making the first step to leave my mom's for good and finding an apartment was the hardest thing for me to do. I had never been on my own, never had to be responsible for myself. I didn't know how to cook for one person (still don't after 7 years).

## **Reincorporation-**

When I first found my apartment I was so scared. I had been staying at the Woman's Shelter for the past few months after leaving my mom and dad's place.

The first couple of weeks were so scary that I had to go back to the shelter to spend the night. I needed the company of people around me. I sat at a table all night; just having the feeling of people around made me feel better. I remember going home at around 5 am because I was getting tired.

Looking back on the past 7 years I wouldn't change the experience. I have learned from having the opportunity and from having the change of living on my own.

It has been a long time coming for me to make the big step from going a pre-adult to adult at such a late age. Most people make that step at a young age, me I did it at a later stage in my life.

Now I get to start a whole new chapter and this one will be with him and me? I hope!!!





have Wonderful friends

Which made wonderful  
Memories

Plenty of Laughs

Some taught me alot, others  
not so much

a few made a Big impact on me

Friends can be Counted on

Love the music we Play

And the Fancy drinks we have

Lucky to have friends that I do

Smile with friends

## rites of passage for runaway devil

*“ a modern cautionary tale...a chilling portrait of an approval seeking man smitten with a manipulative young girl, who would stop at nothing to get what she wanted”*

Perfectly illustrated from the book Runaway Devil, crime reporters Robert Remington and Sherri Zickefoose bring to life the course discussions of van Gennep's Rites of Passage. They describe the breakdown of a young 12 year girl from Medicine Hat Alberta. Telling of the separation of her social identity from family, beginning with the deterioration of her honour roll status and Christian upbringing to the uptake of a gothic subculture of misfit teens and prepubescent rituals of black lipstick and fingernails and songs from Cradles of Filth. Transitioning to a world forbidden by her parents and shunned by other church goers by a lustful affection for a 23 year man who also came from a broken home and enjoyed living on the edge. Together the unlikely pair would share the loss of their peers' and others' understanding, and then together they would form a union that was unbreakable, misunderstood, and unrivalled by many. This passage of lust-filled confusion would turn fatal, with hatred so strong it lead to the killing of her mom, dad, and 8 year old brother. Forever altering her as Canada's youngest person ever convicted of a triple homicide or act of familicide. She is finishing off a 10 year sentence which is the maximum for youth crimes and is finally preparing to incorporate back into society!

There are many themes packed in the book Runaway Devil all which touch base somehow with course material including van Gennep's Rites of Passage. **The age of majority** is illustrated through the concept of a 12 year girl and the 23 year old man in a relationship, it is noted in the trial that “statutory rape” was not exercised in this case. The text explores how parents set limits around who they could or could not associate with while young JR, like many of us as teenagers, was given these boundaries she continued her union in secret. It's often addressed in this book how indifferent both teens are to rules and how they do not see their unfolding relationship as unusual even considering the 11 year ages difference.

**Coming of age and the narratives** we relate too, including music and online profiles, allow alter egos to exist in society. The text follows JR's and Jeremy's online relationship, the plot, and the secret anger they both shared that would eventually be executed in murder.

During the trial it was often questioned whether or not JR's and Jeremy's choice of music may have influenced them to commit the murders. In 2009 the lead singer from Cradle of Filth was interviewed by the Calgary Herald and stated: “It depends on the person. Some people, their rationale isn't good no matter what there listening to. Some people take things literally.”

**Death**, another rites of passage, is a strong theme. The idea of a 12 year old murdering one's own parents has sociologists and all of Canada quite baffled, pondering what kind of psychological and emotional disturbance could possibly exist. When exploring annihilation of an entire family by a child there are no easy explanations and in the Runaway Devil the authors speak with several professionals in child and criminal psychology, they list three categories in which this case may or may not fall under:

- the severely abused child who is pushed beyond his or her limits
- the severely mentally ill child
- the dangerously anti-social child

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**The ceremonies and rituals** of teens, street kids, and of gothic subculture often offends **Western culture**, as were JR's parents and their Christian community.

Amongst all the greatest themes combined in this book is this whole concept of **forbiddances** and **forbidden love**. When searching for explanations for their behaviour both JR and Jeremy are often seen parallel to Paul Bernardo and Karla Halmalka. Their age differences and mentality combined has been looked at as fire and gasoline.

Using her online messages, the Runaway Devil tells of how sexuality was used as a manipulation tool that was first initiated by JR as a way to retaliate from her parents. The book is subtitled "How Forbidden Love drove a 12 year Old to Murder her Family" and truly makes the reader question just how far people will go (and have gone) for forbidden love. It also looks at what exactly is forbidden love for a 12 year old child.

Why is it we are shunned when we fall foolishly in love with someone much younger or older than us, and who says it is wrong or right? Why are the laws around our minds and emotions so greatly contested when temptation is so strong? Who is the law, and who decides the fate of our love and affections, our inner passions and longing for somebody we know we shouldn't have?

