Insecurity

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Like monstrous tentacles, they wind around my body, constricting my throat, trapping my limbs, crushing my brain. There's quicksand inside, and the more I struggle against it, the faster I sink. There is neediness, fear, weakness, stupidity, paranoia, irritability, the powerful desire to run and hide, and envy—an overwhelming amount of each. It's a whirl of sick thoughts, culminating in the sticky, choking words: "I'm worthless."

It feels as though I have nothing to contribute to anything, that all of my thoughts and feelings are cheap cop-outs or part of some soppy sentimentality. They have little-to-no substance or they're shadows of the things I've stolen or copied from others, no matter how many I've heard or told myself that no one is truly original or can develop alone. Wasn't it Sir Isaac Newton who said that he stood on the shoulders of giants? Well, that was Newton—he was a giant himself, wasn't he? No one could tell him that he didn't have a right to study, a right to publish, a right to change the world.

I don't need to change the world, but I need to change myself. I'm not good enough to fund an independent life or to feel satisfied with the way I live my life. Too often I procrastinate until just hours before an assignment is due. I have blocks of time that I blow off because "I just don't care enough" to do something that I'm required to; I figure I'll get it done later, and too often I do, all the same wishing that I'd started earlier and had time to actually enjoy what I was doing. These aren't the habits of success.

I mean, where is the independence? The brave willingness to try something scary—like being yourself in front of people who intimidate you or to tackle that seemingly impossible math assignment—repeatedly until you're not scared anymore? Where is the hard-working hero that no one can stop, no matter how many times they get screwed over? All I see is the desire to be impressive, to have something meaningful to say—even though there is nothing to say, to have approval for even meager efforts, to have things to come easily, and a tendency to give up too easily. Those aren't any traits I admire. They're shallow and dependent on others.

What fuels these crippling doubts anyway? Is there flaming bigotry waiting to spring out of my head? Cruelty? A closet full of sadistic desires? No, but a person is more than the absence of things that cause them or others to recoil.

And what about the people who *have* had others beat and grind them down until they're all but destroyed? How could I be so self-centered as to feel depressed about myself when there are others who've been through too much and never deserved it? Those who never had anyone to remind them that they are human beings with their own worth and rights to live and to pursue their own happiness?

I don't know. Do the relatively tiny struggles I've had make me worthless in comparison? No. I still have a voice and a choice on how to use it. I can't reverse the horrors that anyone has been through. No one can. Regardless of what I or anyone else has been through, we're all here, surviving, trying to live, and however we got here is part of who we are. It does not invalidate any of us.

It's hard to convince myself that I am okay and that my mind is not a cheap knockoff of the real thing, but staying stuck isn't an option. Sometimes sleep helps, sometimes doing something, however small it might be, and sometimes just admitting that these horrible feelings exist help me breathe again. I heard that voicing a problem, a seemingly embarrassing desire, or anything that sits uncomfortably inside is the first step in dealing with it. I hope it's true. At the least, getting out of my head feels good, so thanks for listening.