

KIND MIND

-MAGAZINE-

An Issue on

BODY IMAGE

AND MENTAL WELLNESS

Featuring artwork and poetry
from UoG students



"Understanding
Body Dysmorphic Disorder
and Those Who Struggle With It."

Read
about other's
experiences with
body image

A BIT ABOUT CAM'S KIDS

Cam was a well-adjusted, social, active kid with a normal life, until everything began to change as he entered grade 9. After experiencing physical symptoms of illness, like stomach aches and nausea, Cam's family began to worry that he was very ill. After this was ruled out, it became clearer that the cause of Cam's symptoms was anxiety. His family decided a change in environment might be the best solution.

Cam changed schools, but this only helped for a short period of time, and it was decided that home-schooling may be the best solution for now. With the help of school staff, Cam finished grade 10 online, and fully integrated back into school in grade 11. Luckily, Cam was able to receive individualized support from his school, as well as health care practitioners and doctors, that allowed him to better manage his mental health and enjoy his high school years.



In September of 2014, Cam began post-secondary studies at the University of Ottawa, and two months later was fatally struck by a motor vehicle.

In Cam's honour, his family founded the Cam Hick's Kids Foundation, A.K.A. Cam's Kids. Dedicated to "Supporting Young People Struggling with Anxiety," Cam's Kids helps students cope effectively to reach their full potential and realize their dreams.



Cam's Kids

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Disclaimer:

The authors featured in this magazine are not experts. The advice and opinions shared in this magazine are from personal experiences and are not to be taken as fact.



RELAX & UNWIND WITH SOME COLOURING

HELLO! FROM THE U OF G CAM'S KIDS TEAM

Hello! And welcome to the second Cam's Kids @ Guelph Mental Health Magazine! We are so thankful to have you here.

We created this magazine in hopes of developing a space for those passionate about spreading mental health awareness, and for those faced with mental illness to share their stories and insights. We also included art pieces that may have played a role in one's mental health journey, or just simply brought joy to the artist.

Each of the pieces in this magazine touch on various subjects related to mental health, through various forms of media. We hope the content found in this magazine provides a sense of comfort, feelings of understanding that you are not alone, and perhaps some valuable insights and resources to aid in your own journey.

Enjoy!

THE EDITORS



Mckenna Williams



Raquel Rodrigues



Masyn Manchester



Dilpreet Banwait



Photography by: Anonymous

OLD FRIEND

*Written by:
Gabriel Gonzales Vargas*

Back again, aren't we?

The same as I've seen before

but not quite

because now I'm seeing

it's alright to be the way I see you.

You've dreamed of seeing me like this,

but may I say how lovely you look,

though you haven't

changed a thing?

You've stuck with me

this whole time

I'm grateful you showed me everything,

and nothing less.

Oh, Mirror,

may you and I always grow together

through the rest

COUNT HAPPINESS, NOT CALORIES

*Written by:
Madeline Kerrigan*

The ever-pressing beauty standards today imposed upon women make eating disorders an increasingly prevalent concern. Young girls will go to extreme lengths to achieve a look deemed beautiful by the majority of society and the constant presence of social media seeps this idea of perfectionism into our consciousness as we mindlessly scroll and participate in the toxic comparison culture that dominates today. Being a young adult woman, I too am not immune to the effects of anorexia and bulimia and how these disorders among others can cause broken relationships with food and with ourselves. The battle to overcome an eating disorder (ED) is a constant conscious effort, but with the right tips and mindset, it is very possible to heal your relationship with food.

I have been on both ends of the spectrum with eating disorders and know the toll that both anorexia and bulimia can take on a person's physical and mental health. The first step, and often the hardest, is to come to terms with the fact that you have an eating disorder. There is a common misconception that to have an eating disorder, you need to have protruding ribs or be bingeing and purging multiple times a day. This is not true. Eating disorders, like many things, fall on a spectrum, and if you are in a constant cycle of fear or guilt over certain foods, consciously counting calories, restricting, using a scale every day, or obsessively working out to burn calories, odds are that you need to mend your association with food. This is your time to feel validated and to know that what you are experiencing is very real.

When I first started ED recovery, I would eat one meal where I would not restrict my calories or even attempt to count them. It was an opportunity to indulge in usual fear foods, such as pasta or bread, and to not feel guilty about it. This meal stretched into a day of no restrictions, and then a few. It was a hard step to give up control like that, but as time progresses, you realize that when you wake up the next morning you are okay and did not gain all this weight like your mind tries to trick you into thinking.

A practice I have actively adopted into my lifestyle which has helped me achieve a sense of control is intuitive eating. If you are unaware of what intuitive eating is, it focuses on listening to hunger cues from your body rather than biological weight loss. I don't diet, but instead fill myself up with plenty of nutritious foods, like fruits and vegetables that I feel feed my body and soul, and do not trigger feelings of shame or guilt.

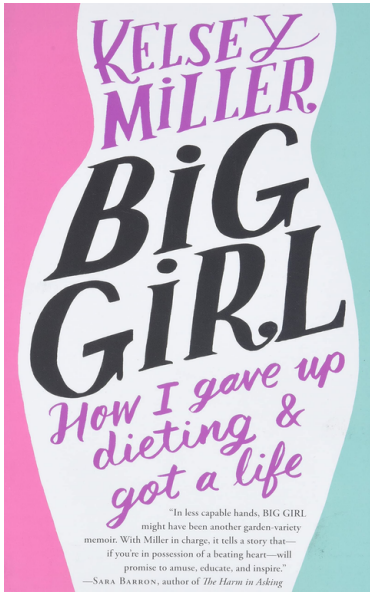


Exercise can be a healthy outlet in ED recovery if you are participating in a way that enhances your health, not hinders it. Exercise is not just about burning calories, but about feeling strong and empowered in your skin while providing a healthy source of endorphins. It is important to listen to the needs of your body and to not overexert yourself. For me, I have found that taking long walks while listening to music has been extremely good for both my mental and physical health, especially on days I feel too tired for an actual workout.

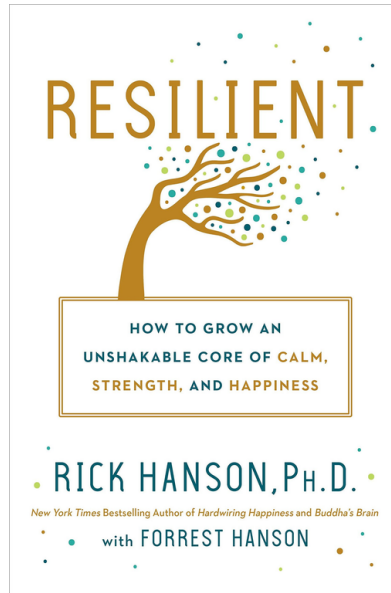
Lastly, and most importantly, it is important to speak to someone about your eating disorder and open up. Seeing a professional will give you the safe space you need to delve into deeper issues attached to your eating habits, as eating disorders are normally just a by-product of a more serious issue. It is also important to open up to close ones about your ED when you feel ready. It may feel like you are giving up control and forced to face the reality of a tough situation, but this is actually a very empowering step and gives your loved ones the chance to hold your hand and help you along the journey while also helping you remain accountable.

One final point, and an important step I have taken to incorporate into my daily routine, is to look in the mirror and tell myself that I love myself just the way I am. It makes such a difference! You need to remember that you are beautiful in your body and that the number on the scale will never define you as a person.

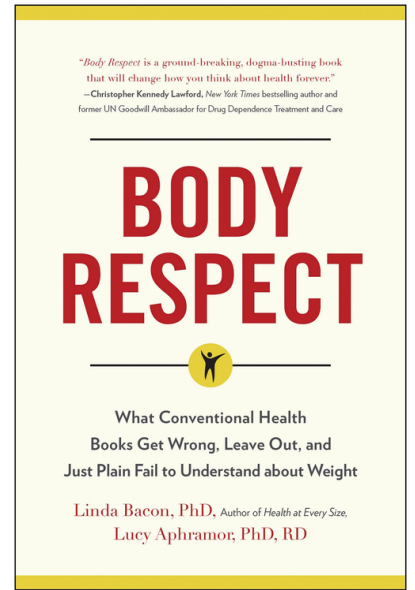
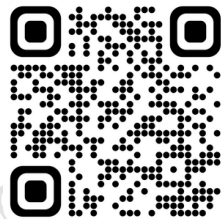
KIND MIND MUST READS



Big Girl: How I Gave Up Dieting and Got a Life
by Kelsey Miller



Resilient: How to Grow an Unshakeable Core of Calm, Strength and Happiness
by Forrest Hanson and Rick Hanson



Body Respect
by Linda Bacon and Lucy Aphramor



Scan to read the descriptions!

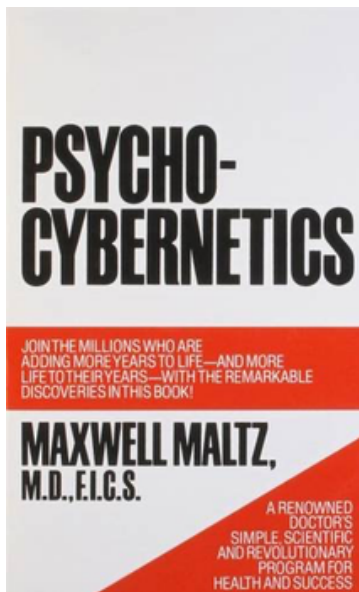
The Link Between Anxiety and Eating Disorders

On the Cam's Kids webpage, **Joelle Anderson, MA, RP, CCC**, discusses the link between anxiety and eating disorders (EDs). According to the psychotherapist, eating disorders and anxiety occur together very often, as "EDs cause more anxiety and anxiety tends to trigger the ED."

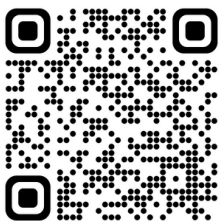
EDs are often used as a coping tool for those with anxiety. Sometimes someone suffering from anxiety may become convinced that having the 'right' weight will relieve the worry and the anxiety will go away. Another way an ED might arise from anxiety is from food-based anxieties, such as food, choking, or allergy phobias.

Anxiety can also accidentally trigger EDs. Anxiety can cause stomach discomfort, which can lead to trouble eating, weight loss, and potentially an obsession with staying at that weight.

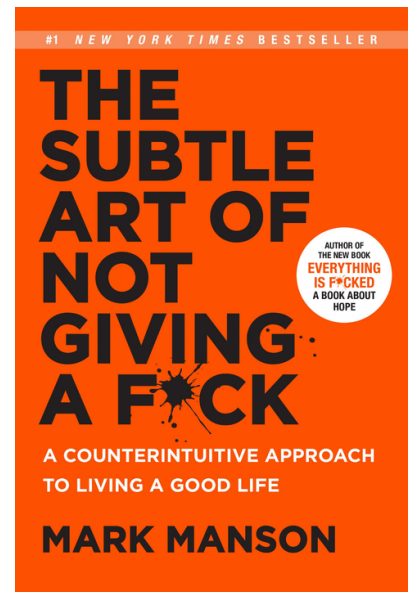
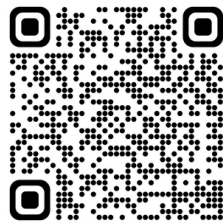
For these reasons, treating anxiety is an integral part of solving EDs and having a healthy relationship with ones body, which is why we felt it important to include book recommendations for anxiety and overall positive mindset practice.



Psycho-cybernetics
by Maxwell Maltz



To read Joelle's full article,
scan below.



The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F***
by Mark Manson





Photography by: Brodi Freeman

Awake again. Dreadful.
It's nothing but another day,
but a day is still beautiful, I think
I think it's about time
I stopped by to "hi" some friends I'd felt too shy
to greet,
or time to wake up
and eye the new birds flying across the street
I should treat myself to some silence today.
Good morning.

Morning

Poetry by:

Gabriel Gonzales Vargas

THE IDEA OF HAPPINESS

*Shared by:
Hailey Kotansky*

The way our mind works is amusing - one instance can change the way we think forever. The way we interpret everything around us. The way we choose to look at the glass half full or half empty. The way we tend to focus on our problems rather than solutions, negative feedback over compliments, trauma over memory. Somebody once asked me: if all my problems went away in the blink of an eye, would I be happy? The easy answer is yes. If I stopped being so hard on myself, if I got along with my family better, if my anxiety went away, I would be happy, right? I've been sitting on this idea for a while, the idea of happiness, the idea of inner peace. What is it that makes somebody happy and another one not? Is it genetic? Is it the people we surround ourselves with? I've tried to feed off the happiness of others before, and the only thing it left me with was doubts about myself, doubts that I could never achieve happiness on my own, doubts that I lack a sense of desirability.

When I was 16, I could look in the mirror and find 32 things I wanted to change about myself. I want to say I had 32 things I loved about myself, but the problem was that I never even took the time to look. As little as 12, I started focusing on the parts of myself that could be better, the parts of me I wish looked like others, the way I didn't like my laugh, or how I

wouldn't go out in a bathing suit for the fear of being judged. But the truth is, if you aren't judging yourself, who is?

It took me up until this point of my life to put a definition to happiness. A definition that is so simple, yet so hard to achieve. Self-love and confidence. I realized that once you learn to stop spending your whole life comparing yourself to the person beside you, or being scared to love who you love, or expressing who you are instead of what is trendy, this idea of happiness won't be so far out of reach.

You may not learn this today, you may not learn this tomorrow, but the one fundamental thing to take away from this piece is that happiness is a state of internal love. Everyone has the power to look in the mirror regardless of their feelings and say, "I love myself; I am beautiful; I am strong". You may not believe it, you may feel silly, but I promise you, once you take that step to find even the smallest ounce of love you have for yourself, happiness will slowly follow.

**"I love myself;
I am beautiful;
I am strong."**

REFLECTIVE JOURNAL PROMPTS

Right now, my body needs...

Right now, my mind needs...

Right now, my soul needs...

I am grateful that today my body helped me...

When I think of my body, the first thought that pops into my head is...
because....

When I think of my body, the first thought I'd *like* to pop into my head is... because...

I'd like to improve how I see and treat my body because...

I can be kinder to myself by...

The next time body-bashing thoughts overwhelm me, I will soothe myself by...

The most important thing I can ask my loved ones to do in supporting my body image is...

Always wanted to journal but just never found the time? Let this be the start of a good habit. Take a break, pick your top three prompts and get journalling!

Tartakovsky, M. (2012, December 10). "Body Image Booster: 20 Journal Prompts to Dig Deeper." *PsychCentral*. Retrieved from: <https://psychcentral.com/blog/weightless/2012/12/body-image-booster-20-journal-prompts-to-dig-deeper#1>

THE NOT-SO-FUN-HOUSE MIRROR

Poetry by: Savannah Vagt

A distorted view

It's too much, but not enough

It's wrong, it's not right

Is ugly, gross, or horrific the word?

Concerned

They don't look like me

They are bigger, they are smaller

How can I look taller?

Confused

Who is beautiful?

Who is right?

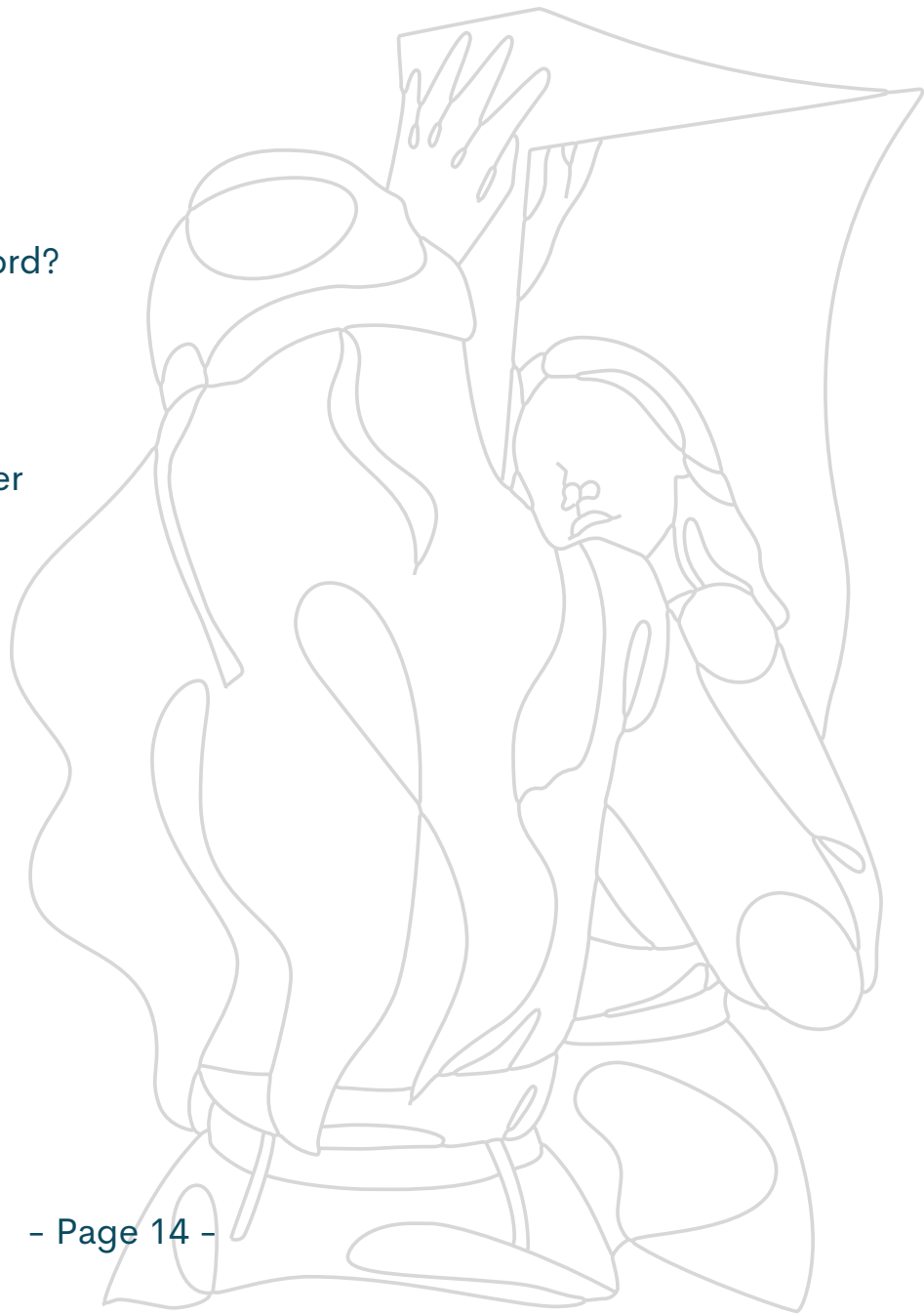
Me?

The mirror?

Social media?

Society?

Catastrophe



A BIT ABOUT "THE NOT-SO-FUN- HOUSE MIRROR"

Written by: Savannah Vagt

As the development of social media continues to advance, so do the negative ramifications that these platforms have on body image. Specifically, platforms that are picture-based, including Snapchat and Instagram, are closely related to a deteriorated body image that is constant across genders. The target of appearances throughout these platforms applies an emphasis on the internalization of body ideals with an increase in appearance comparison [3]. Sadly, these negative influences that social media has on body image also includes a higher frequency of eating disorder behaviours and attitudes [1].

Social media can influence emotional and psychological distress with the support from society to focus on appearance, users are more likely to have negative evaluations when socially comparing themselves [2].

To support a positive body image, listen to your body (hunger cues), focus on personal body acceptance, understand the diversity of bodies, and focus on healthy lifestyle goals instead of weight and image [2]. Lastly, understand that there is a societal stigma towards body image and weight and that this does not determine whether a body is realistically good, bad, or healthy.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY MADELINE KING

The use of double exposure allowed me to create an image that depicts the feeling of living within the constraints and double standards surrounding our bodies in society.

We are unable to clearly view our bodies without the input of societal beauty standards creating an inaccurate, blurry and distorted view of ourselves within our minds.

This photograph creates this unfocused view of the subject and their seesaw perception of themselves.

UNDERSTANDING BODY DYSMORPHIC DISORDER AND THOSE WHO STRUGGLE WITH IT

Written by: Sara McLean

Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD), as described by the Cleveland Clinic, is a mental illness in which individuals become preoccupied with a minor or imagined physical defect (2). BDD is often accompanied by a compulsive need to check one's reflection in the mirror and conceal any perceived physical defects (3). The disorder can have a significant impact on an individual's professional life, personal life, and relationships (3). BDD affects people of all genders, however, it is more prominent among women (1). BDD has many similar features to Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and many individuals with BDD may also have OCD (1). BDD is considered by some to be an OCD-spectrum disorder or even a type of OCD (5) and a chronic condition (2). Individuals with BDD often see themselves as aesthetic objects and base their self-worth on their appearance (6). They may also view themselves from the spatial perspective of an onlooker—this



perspective is common to those suffering with social anxiety (6). It has been postulated that individuals suffering from BDD may be more aesthetically sensitive and maintain higher than average aesthetic standards (6). Many individuals with BDD engage in compulsive mirror gazing (3). These individuals scrutinize their reflection often as an attempt to disprove the negative mental image they have of themselves; however, this behavior often leaves them feeling even more distressed (3). Onlookers may see this behavior as an act of vanity, however, mirror-gazing is typically a very upsetting experience for BDD sufferers (3). A series of interviews with BDD sufferers conducted by the Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine in the Unit of Medical Psychology from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences at Linköping University reveals that interviewees described feeling ugly and expressed that this feeling had become a part of their identity (3). Even after receiving reassurance from friends and family that the defects perceived by interviewees were indeed minor or imagined, the interviewees often felt no relief (3). Interviewees also described feeling disgusted by themselves (3). BDD is associated with a high suicidality and often has a devastating impact on the lives of those afflicted, however, it is often under or misdiagnosed (4). It is a relatively understudied and misunderstood disorder and affected individuals often struggle to receive adequate treatment (4).

Symptoms of BDD typically begin to appear during adolescence but most BDD sufferers will not be diagnosed until 10-15

years after symptoms first appear (4). In the meantime, sufferers may seek non-psychiatric treatment such as dental work, dermatological care, or aesthetic surgery (4). These alternative treatments rarely provide relief from symptoms and may make patients feel even worse (4). An anonymous internet survey conducted by the Department of Psychology at the Humbolt University of Berlin found that many individuals with BDD were often unwilling to seek psychiatric help because they were too ashamed to speak with a psychiatrist about their appearance concerns, they believed that only plastic surgery or any other dermatological procedure could help them, or that nobody would understand their problems (4).

Body Dysmorphic Disorder is a serious mental illness that can cause severe

distress and impairment (4). Symptoms will often persist despite reassurance from others or non-psychiatric treatment (3). Individuals with the disorder often engage in mirror-checking and attempt to conceal their perceived flaws (3). These behaviors are not acts of vanity but attempts to find relief from the disapproval that BDD sufferers experience (3). After scrutinizing their reflections for lengthy periods of time, most individuals afflicted with BDD will feel no better about their appearance and may feel even worse (3). There are many factors that may prevent BDD sufferers from seeking psychiatric treatment (4). There is a pressing need to increase awareness of the disorder among the public and healthcare workers in order to support those diagnosed with Body Dysmorphic Disorder (4).

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UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Stress Management & High Performance Clinic

www.selfregulationskills.ca

Student Wellness Navigators

519-824-4120 x52131

Counselling Services

519-824-4120 x53244

Student Wellness Website

wellness.uoguelph.ca

Crisis Text Line (Canada)

Text UofG to 686868

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Good2Talk (Ontario)

1-866-925-5454

keep.meSAFE (International)

1-844-451-9700

Guelph Sexual Assault Domestic Violence Care

(510) 837-6440 Ext. 2728

24 Hour Line: Ext. 2210

Here 24/7 (Guelph)

1-844-437-3247

Kids Help Phone

Text CONNECT to 686868

Crisis Services Canada

Toll Free Line (24/7): 1-833-456-4566

Text Support (4pm-12am EST): 45645

Canadian Crisis Hotline

1-888-353-2273

The Trevor Project (LGBTQ+)

Text Line (24/7): Text START to 678678

Toll Free Line (24/7): 1-866-488-7386

INTERESTED IN CONTRIBUTING?

We will be looking for individuals who are passionate about mental health awareness to contribute artwork, photography, and written pieces for our next issue during W23/F23. For more information, contact Masyn Manchester at mmanches@uoguelph.ca.

— “ ————
SUPPORTING
YOUNG PEOPLE STRUGGLING
WITH ANXIETY
————— ” —

