

Sometimes I think back to years ago, or even months ago and reflect on how much I've changed. That seems to be a constant thing, change. Yet we don't even notice when we're in the thick of it, amidst the fire. When I was younger I had an idea of how my life would go, I mean most of us do, right? We think we'll have our shit together and accomplish everything, save the world, or conquer an empire all by the time we're twenty two, or in the "real world," I mean, same thing right? The hard reality of it is *time*. Things take time, it's why we take four years to go to school and think about our careers only to realize we won't always have it together or know where we're heading. Even after these four years.

It takes time to make a decision to move to a new city or take on a job out of our comfort zone, and until these decisions are made you feel like you're flailing out there in the middle of the universe. Lost, confused and a little upset it's taking so long to figure these things out. One thing I can confidently say however, is it does get better, these decisions get made and we move forward. Always. Because if we don't make the right decision we learn from it and grow. Either way: we move forward. For instance, I can look back to years ago when I hit my own rock bottom, completely unable to be alone with myself, unable to see where I was going in life and smile today. I've grown into someone who appreciates herself more than anything. When I was in this dark period of my life I didn't realize my own thoughts were effecting me subconsciously.

Think about when you meet someone new, you get that first initial instinct off the aura they bring right? Whether its good or bad, you feel it from afar and make your decision whether you want to befriend the person, or not. This is subconscious, and we may not even realize just how aware our minds are of others, but we are. I believe this is based on that mind-body connection. Now think about your own mind and how you see yourself. Think about how you might project this, that if we are so instantly sensitive toward others, what would this mean about ourselves? We soak in everything and everything we think about ourselves, so why don't we focus on this more in our lives? Are you saying kind things to yourself everyday, uplifting yourself like you would with a close friend? Are you happy with yourself?

What surrounds you is a reflection directly dependent on how you see yourself. Think about that for a second. Let that soak in.

I made a choice one day to live each day focusing on this very factor. Permitting myself to change. To light that fire. How I see myself is going to directly impact what surrounds me. I was in the thick of it, but again, it would take some time to get to that point, to where I could fully change my thoughts. First, I worked on my self love. To tackle this task is easier said than done. I trained myself to consider that I am more than my past. I started to see each day as a goal. To see my decisions that I made every day as something that could have an impact on my life.

Today, I confidently say that I am happy with my thoughts. I am growing and learning and have so much to offer the world. The second factor that contributed to this was the power of influence, to have reciprocation between you and your friendships is to understand you deserve to be loved and appreciated. With the right people motivating you (including yourself) you can conquer

much more than you would ever think of. Seeking out the positivity is a way to show yourself that intense and beautiful self-love.

Lastly, I feel it is crucial to map out a plan for consistent growth, to move forward and despite the fear that might arise, do what you want to do. If I want to travel the world, I'm going to make it happen. If I want to be happier with my own body image, I'm going to eat the right foods to fuel my body, think the right thoughts to fuel my mind, and make an active lifestyle for myself. Feeding that fuel, and forgetting the fear in the process. Or even better, let that fear fuel you to accomplish everything you put your mind to.

I could write pages on what you should do to get to this point but that would be overwhelming for you I'm sure so here's what you should take away from this. Changing your thoughts is the first step. Again, that mind-body connection is crucial here, that when you create that initial experience of the day, your mind and body will eventually follow suit. Second comes surrounding yourself with the right choices that fuels the future you see for yourself. You are in control of how you react to each and every day. And lastly, map out what you see for yourself. Dream as big as you want and fuel the process with the fear.

What you change, is up to you.

xx Backpacking Bee xx