



Courtney Schoeberlein

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25 years old

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“I was born a Baltimore wildflower, roaming, exploring, spreading myself to different places trying to figure out who I was and where I belonged. 25 years later, I still have my misgivings at times. I was diagnosed with severe OCD and anxiety, and years later a fine layer of panic disorder. Doctors

wanted to just throw bottles of pastel-filled numbness at me, and called it a cure. Anxiety finds a place deep inside you and bores a little home for life. I spend every day trying to find solutions and quick-fixes for my little quirks and fears. You know true mental suffering when you feel mind-numbing fear over something as mundane as grocery shopping, watching the news, taking a walk. Fear not, as every day is a battle and a growing opportunity. My art is my own personal therapy session, trapping and releasing my worries into the wind and connecting with other people who may see a piece and think “Ahh, been there.” Ironically, sometimes my goal is to disallow someone to understand my goal at all. My message, however, is simple. I have spent a lifetime working, but the truth lies within and amongst learning your limits, understanding them, and eventually eradicating them. I’ve lost a parent, a home, a great career, and a total way of life during one of my darkest times. I am now on the other side and I can look back at who I was and know at the end of the day that nothing is insurmountable and we are all just little puzzles that only we can solve. And to quote what I consider one of the most meaningful fictional characters of our time “Happiness can be found in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light.”

-Albus Dumbledore: *Harry Potter*.

