

“I thrive when...”

CELT PhotoVoice exhibit, Spring 2020
PSY918

As part of the CELT (Community Engaged Learning and Teaching) PhotoVoice initiative, this was the focal topic posed to psychology students in PSY 918 and members of the partner group, students in SSH 102.

As part of their class project, students were asked to take photos in response to this statement, and write a narrative about what the photo conveys to the audience in response to the topic.

This is the collection of their photos and narratives. This is their PhotoVoice exhibit. Let's start the conversation.

“When do you thrive?”

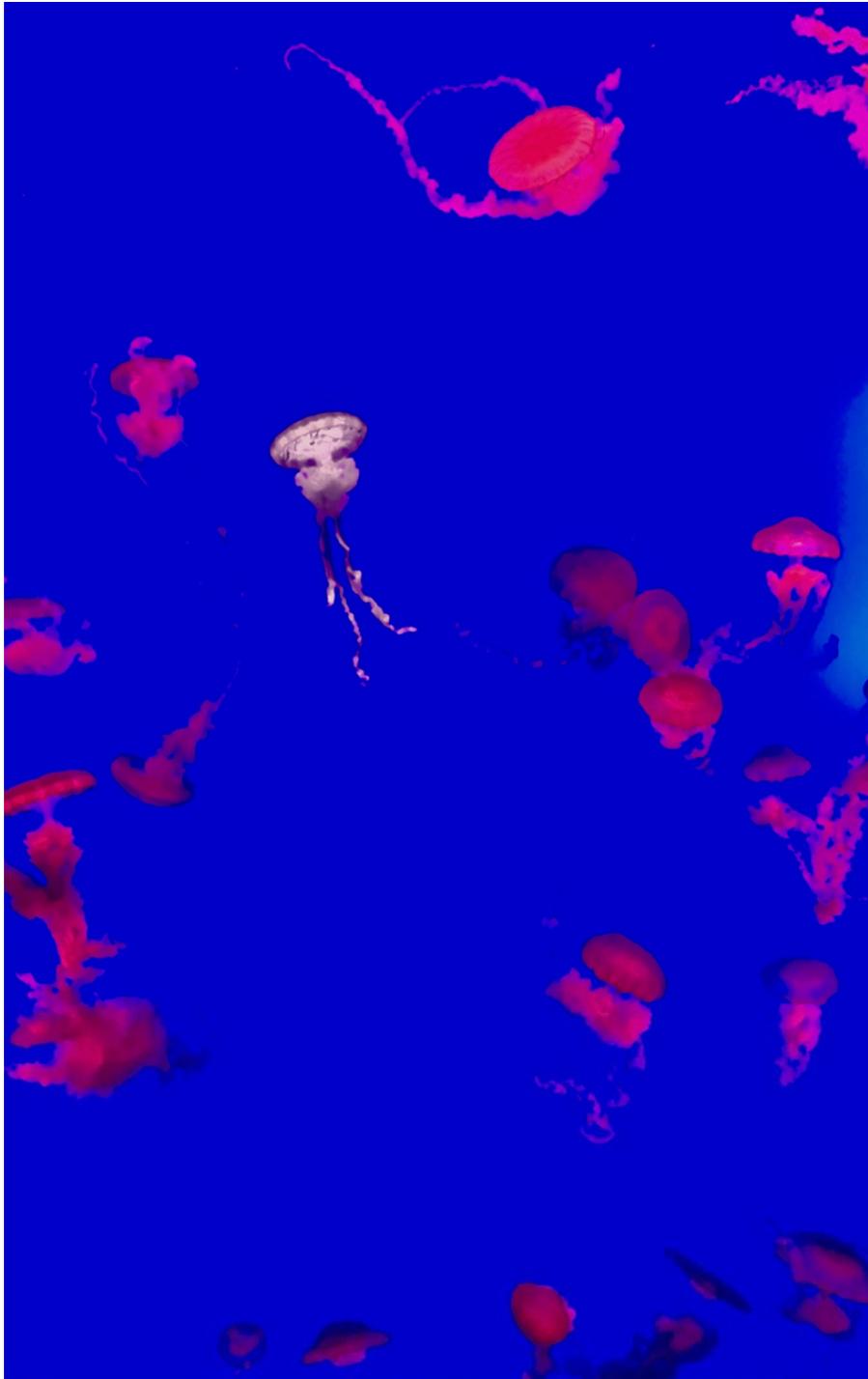


“Book Worm”

by Ayanna Cabrera Martinez



I thrive when I am inspired, this is when I am surrounded by literature that is new and old. It reminds me that knowledge is infinite and this encourages me to try and learn at least something from everything that I do. Being surrounded by hundreds of great minds and ideas pushes me to throw my ideas out there, that there is so much more to discover and learn. There is an infinite amount of information and ideas that I have access to, there should be no limit to where I can go.



This is a photograph of a school of jellyfish at Ripley's Aquarium. I edited one jellyfish to be a different colour in order to represent my own differences as an individual. The photo depicts that I thrive when I experience a sense of belonging. For much of my teenage years, I thought of myself as an outsider, constantly feeling uncomfortable in my own skin. I knew that I was different, and felt completely isolated because of it. But, while there were tormentors in my life, there were also people with kind souls, and I distanced myself from them out of fear. I did not realize that being around them bettered me as a person, and helped me to accept who I am. Surrounding myself with people who had similar beliefs as mine slowly helped me to find myself again. I flourish when I am surrounded by people who accept me for who I am, who love me unconditionally, and who push me to be a better version of myself.

“A Sense of Belonging”

by Alyssa Oddi



I find that I thrive the most when I am by myself, free to create things that I like and can be proud of. I have always enjoyed making art and flowers are one of my favourite things to draw because of how simple yet complex they are. I titled my photo "Simple Pleasures" because drawing is a simple, quiet activity that I can enjoy, especially while drawing flowers: a part of nature that has a simple, quiet presence but when you study them further they reveal intricate details. I like to show that in my drawings by focusing on the balanced form and silhouette of the flowers and adding smaller details with line art. What I like most about making art is the freedom to make whatever makes you happy. Some days I want to draw a new flower, other days I want to make something completely different and art allows me to make whatever I want, whenever I want. It is that freedom of independent creativity that allows me to thrive.

"Simple Pleasures"

by Clare Abbott



This is a photo of me a few summer's back enjoying the view from a cliff. In that moment, with the great weather and the soft breeze, I felt content. I chose this photo in response to the focal topic of this project because thriving, in my opinion, is feeling like you are on your way to success. When I was on top of that cliff, I felt as if I was free and limitless. I felt like the sky was the limit for anything I wanted to do. In moments like these, I truly feel like I can and will thrive, with nothing holding me back.

“The Sky is the Limit”

by Cecilia Alvarez



“Restoration”

by Chelsea-Lynn Wells Green

This photo displays a hectic reflection through the windows, which to me, portrays a busy daily life, which is in contrast with the serenity this space offers me. This space provides mental, spiritual and physical health therapy in the forms of psychotherapy, counselling, massage therapy, etc. I took this photo in response to “I thrive when” because it is important for me to take time to myself to rejuvenate and restore my mind and this space allows me to prioritize myself. I thrive when I practice self-care. To me self-care means focusing on my mental health and taking time to reflect on myself and my life. When I allow myself time to pay attention to my feelings and my emotions, I can truly flourish.



“I Thrive When... I’m Inspired”

by *Devan Nirenberg*

Although the notion of, ‘thriving’ is a subjective perspective, in which one’s perceptions are relative within a universal construct, I thrive when I’m inspired. I deem, ‘thriving’ as a dynamic, creative and continuous process, rather than a pivotal movement which is tangible. Thus, when I feel as though I have a wide capacity to expand my creative thought processes, academic considerations, and other elements alike to the fullest potentials without limits nor constraints, I thrive. When opportunities within any domain present themselves as limitless, attainable and accessible, I feel as though I have the strength, resources and potential to thrive. This photograph depicts me sitting in the foreground on a New York City rooftop, overlooking the iconic, ‘New Yorker’ hotel and city’s skyline. I’ve dreamt of residing in NYC since I was 9 years old, as the city overwhelms me with inspiring visions of new beginnings, challenges and opportunities.



“Escape”

by Delaney Rowley

I thrive when I have an escape - somewhere or something that allows me to take a break from responsibilities. When I become overwhelmed with school, work, and other priorities, I find it's always important to make time to focus on myself and do things that I enjoy, even if it's only for a few hours. It's easy to get discouraged, and to overexert oneself to meet demands at the expense of one's mental health and general well-being. I think it's important to take a step back from expectations and life stressors, and just do something for you. Whether it's reading a book, going for a hike, or hanging out with friends, sometimes we all just need an escape.



“The Undetermined Path”

by Jaydon Frid

This photo is a depiction of a hiking trail that has divergent paths throughout a wide landscape. While making my way through Bryce National Park, I was able to create my own path towards completing one of the most self-fulfilling hikes. I thrive when I trust the process. Working from the bottom up has helped guide me through the processes of life. There will always be challenges and bumps in the road, but trusting the process that things will work out in the end is vital to a successful, healthy lifestyle. I feel as though I thrive when there is struggle because I understand that anything in life that is worth achieving is a process and begins with a struggle. There is so much power in perseverance and knowing that you worked hard to achieve a goal that was in front of you. At the end of your journey, you can look back at the path/hike you just conquered, and relish in the fact that there is beauty in the struggle that leads to a great accomplishment.



This is a photo of a trail leading to the Little Cove Beach in Tobermory. I chose this photo for the focal topic “I thrive when” as a representation of peacefulness and tranquility. As someone who is in a constant loop of deadlines, it is very easy for me to become overwhelmed and stressed. In these situations, I feel that I am able to thrive most when I feel relaxed and calm. In this image, you can see the glare in light, the calmness of the trees, along with the sun pouring in through the cracks of the leaves. All these aspects in this image represent feelings of tranquility to me.

“Tranquility”

by Maryam Syed



“Travelling Without Leaving”

by Payal Patel

This is a photo of a garden gateway entrance in the Botanical Gardens of Niagara Falls, Ontario. I chose this photo for our theme “I thrive when...” because I thrive when traveling, as it allows me the ability to find beauty in the most unlikely places. Since Niagara Falls is a common place for most people in Ontario, and myself, it becomes an everyday sight that people do not pay much attention to. This picture manages to capture a common place in a way that allows it to seem as if it is a once in a lifetime view, with the castle like gateway and lush plants. This picture’s ability to make me feel as if I could be anywhere and not just constrained to this one province is important to me because it lets me find the beauty and peace in the most common, yet unlikely places, even without traveling.



“Community”

by Soha Atiq

This is an image of Al-Masjid an-Nabawi in Medina, Saudi Arabia during the time of Hajj (Islamic pilgrimage). In an era where Muslims disproportionately experience religious persecution, Al-Masjid an-Nabawi is a place where Muslims can collectively gather and practice their religion without the fear of violence and alienation. It is important to note that often the limitations of our dreams are defined by what we see. It is impossible to imagine your own success when you have not seen others pave the way. This environment not only provides my community with safety and security but with role models of various ethnic backgrounds, races, social classes, and genders as well. The diversity present at the time of Hajj is incomparable. It undoubtedly redefines social constructs for young Muslim men and women who have become victims of systemic inequality that have sought to exclude them from rewards and opportunities. Al-Masjid an-Nabawi is a place where my community is able to thrive through security, collective representation, support, resources and inspiration. When a community thrives, every member of that community is able to excel. In this way, when my community thrives, I thrive.



I thrive when I am balanced. This photo represents balance, which is depicted in the use of light, colour, and imagery. Coloured gels were used to create a two-toned effect, which is captured in the line of light that goes down the middle of my face and body. The colours are perfectly balanced. The use of dark and light imagery also reflects a sense of balance, which allows me to feel harmonized and enables me to thrive in my everyday life. A soft pink dress, along with a pretty bouquet of flowers, is juxtaposed against harsh and bold face paint to portray this. The balance I refer to is between the different aspects of my life, which allows me to feel joy while also ensuring my motivation and productivity is adequate. The simplicity of balance between rest and activity, or the balance of my social life, work life, and school, enables me to thrive in all that I do.

“Life in Balance”

by Sophia Gentilcore



“Count on me”

by Stephanie Mansour

I thrive when I have social support. We never know where life will take us and what types of challenges we will face. Being able to rely on those I love in times of adversity and in times of growth has given me the support, strength and motivation I need to succeed. This picture represents not knowing what the future will hold but knowing that you have people watching over you to ensure that you have all the necessary tools to thrive. It is about knowing you have people to count on and that you are never alone.



I thrive when I can travel to new places and explore them. This is a picture of a street in Lisbon, Portugal that portrays the colourfulness of the city. Portugal is one of my favourite places I have travelled to because of its hidden beauty. The reason I chose this photo was that it represents a very happy time in my life and the beauty of new cities. This trip to Portugal was one of my favourites because I was able to experience a new place and indulge in new foods and meet new people, which makes it that much better. I feel happiest when I am travelling because of the experiences and the excitement it brings.

“The Colourful Alleyways of Lisbon”

by Sarah Martyn



“Don’t Sweat It”

by Sabrina Sanchez

I thrive when I am challenged. This photo represents a challenge for me in a physical and mental sense. Hot yoga has allowed me to push through the challenges that the practice presents and each and every time I go, a new strength is discovered. Pushing through the challenge of either being tired and not wanting to go, or falling out of poses, or falling out of being in the present during the practice, has allowed me to feel fulfilled on a day to day basis. In this sense, it helps create a parallel to typical everyday challenges and helps create a mindset of the positivity that feeling challenged presents.



“My Team”

by Theodora Petsis

I thrive when I am with my team. The team that motivates and pushes me every day to be the best version of myself. Together, working towards one goal, pushing and supporting each other when we are at our weakest. And challenging and cheering on each other whether we are on or off the field. We win together, lose together, go through ups and downs together and are with each other through it all. We stand by each other through this journey, reaching towards our goals and pushing each other to keep moving forward no matter what the obstacle is. I know, no matter what the obstacle is, I will always overcome it because I have my team.



“Take the Risk”

by Daria Stauffer

Trying new things can often be very scary, but as humans, we seek experiences that allow us to grow. I believe most people can remember a time in their life when they took a risk to better themselves. While jumping off the diving board for the first time is a childhood risk we often vividly remember. Throughout our lifetimes we face many similar risks both figuratively and literally. Sometimes all someone needs is another person to hold their hand and offer words of encouragement until they are ready to let go and jump. I thrive when I have a supportive hand to hold until I am ready to take the risk.