



We See

What We See Changes Who We Are

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WITNESS Project Booth at the WEnEX Exposition

Ending in This Pain

By WITNESS Youth Staff

It started with him. She wanted him to notice her. She wanted it to be more than just a friendship. Her feelings for him grew- and so did the pain, frustration and anger. She felt unloved, unwanted, and undeserving. She felt that she shouldn't be here, shouldn't be alive. He was the centre of her world; she was not the centre of his. The thoughts became stronger, and soon she gave into the temptation. The first time the razor sliced through the soft flesh of her wrist, it was painful. As she watched the bright drops of blood form on her skin, the pain was washed away by the feeling of accomplishment. She had done it, even if it was only once. And it had felt so good.

The cut was small, but it was deep enough to let blood trickle down her arm and soak the inside of a Band-Aid. A few days later there it was again, nagging at her to pick up the blade. It was like a dare: to try to cut deeper, to try to cut longer. To try to withstand the pain that was coursing through her veins, to shut her eyes and let the feeling envelop her very being. With the doors locked, nobody

could bother her. Only one person knew. He knew, but it was beyond hope he would care enough to try and stop her. He didn't care. He couldn't have, or she never would have ended up the way she did.

It was him that she thought of when she did this...But now, it was an addiction for her. It was a way to express her anger and pain. It was a way to relieve the feelings she possessed. Whether she liked it or not, she constantly found herself climbing to the bathroom, opening the cupboard and finding the small, sharp razor blade she kept hidden out of sight. She was still her happy, bubbly self to those who didn't care to look closely, but deep inside she felt as if she was dying: little by little, one second at a time. Was there a cure?

It wasn't easy to stop, and now that she had started, it was always in the back of her mind. Keeping a blade in her purse when in public, she would quickly slip off to the bathroom. Nobody would notice her absence. Maybe it was a way to make people care about her, if they noticed. At least they would have a little bit of pity, give some

kind of attention she had been yearning for most of her life. So there she would find herself, once again in the bathroom, her arm over the sink and blood stains on her skin. Her fingers would be holding the sharp piece of metal, as she looked down at the wound with pride. And every time, it just got worse.

Pictures of him flashed through her mind. Pictures of him, telling her it was going to be all right, telling her that he was there for her. She had always been there for him, helping through his tough times and holding his hand when he needed somebody to comfort him. But here, in this time of dire need, she was alone, always alone. And she found out he had been lying to her, playing her the whole time. Her heart was crushed. This someone, who she had thought was really the real thing, was just like every other guy out there. He told her things, made her think that his empty promises were really reality, and that he had feelings for her.

What I Look For in a Friend

By WITNESS Youth Staff

I would like to find a friend who is funny, kind and friendly. I won't mind if she or he uses bad words at times, but not all the time, only when she or he is angry or isn't in a good mood. I want to find a friend that is humorous. I don't want friends who are always straight-laced and strict. I don't want friends who are alcohol users or drug addicts. I want healthy-minded friends.

I dislike it when my friends lie to me. I used to lie to my friends at times, but not anymore I know lies hurt people and I want my friends to be trustworthy.

Strangers think I'm quiet, but my close friends think I am crazy, and I talk a lot. I am adventurous but

slow-moving. I hate petty people. I am emotional, so I would like a sensitive friend and not an ill-tempered one.

I have a best friend; actually I treat her as my sister. We attend the same school. She is Chinese too and I feel very comfortable with her because I can show her my real thoughts and self. Jia Ying is her name. She is quiet sometimes but also crazy at other times. She takes care of me all the time when I am sick. She treats me like her sister and I do the same for her. I enjoy this kind of friendship or something more than a friendship. I would like to have another friend like her.

Witnessing

By WITNESS Youth Staff

For a few summers now, a little girl around five years old would come to stay with my neighbours. The summer day would pass happily along and then out of the blue, there would be screaming and sounds of lashes. My first thoughts were that it was the dog in my neighbour's yard being beaten and then as the sounds died down and the sobbing became clear I realised it was not an animal, but the little girl. Once was bad enough, but then it became a norm. The summers would go by with her getting a number of beatings. I never saw it happen; I don't know why it happened, but the fact that it happened unnerved me. Since I never saw her being beaten, my imagination has to suffice, and the image is not a pretty one. The aunt that beats the little girl is not a skinny model in the newspaper, but rather a large woman. It would take three and a half lengths of the little

girl to make up the height of her aunt, whose arms are almost as big as her barrel thighs. The sounds of these beatings are the worst though; it's like no mercy on this little child as she cries out for 10 to 18 minutes. This shouldn't be happening. What does one do to deserve animal-like beatings? Even animals shouldn't be beaten like that. The last time she stayed, which was a short time this summer, she was downstairs one night playing and then something caused her to cry. She went up the stairs crying, and was then beaten by her aunt for crying! It was the most stupid thing I had ever heard, and it really shocked me. How does one find beating a child mercilessly a good solution to a problem? At any age I would not want to be beaten for anything, not only because it hurts me and the people around me, but because it destroys the 'me' of the future.

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Are you a witness or victim of violence? You are not alone. Make your anonymous call to Help & Shelter today and speak with a live counselor on 227-3454 or 225-4731.

"What we see changes who we are." – JR