I, as a writer, am inexperienced. From an early age, I knew writing would never be my strong suit. I was self-conscious and timid when it came to my own feelings. When asked “What experiences do you have as a writer?”, I came to a standstill. However, I quickly realized that writing is not just about essays or novels. Writing is anything that comes to mind, put down on paper. I then remembered my best experience writing. It is the story of my journal, at a time in my life that many would label an “emo stage”.

Writing was not a huge interest of mine as a child. I was never the best speller and I was definitely grammatically challenged. Instead, I had a love for drawing because there were no rules to it. Nobody could tell me it was wrong. However, as I got older, I began to read more and get the hang of things I did not understand before. Writing for me though, was more about thoughts and putting them together. I wrote poems and short stories about my life. When I turned 13, my mom gave me a journal for my birthday. Receiving just an empty book as a gift seemed so odd to me. I told her I would never use it, but that was a lie.

The journal quickly filled up with quotes, poems and stories. The journal soon carried memories and sections of my favorite books, shows and movies. The pages were drowning in my “first experiences” and my “worst experiences”, making it go from an empty book to my own diary. My journal allowed me to write in a way I never had before. The English classes I had been taking in school were more about non-creative, structured writing and research. My journal was nonconformative and free. There were no rules or pressure towards my writing. I just wrote the way I wanted to.

I only took one class in high school that allowed me to write poems and memoirs. This class transformed me as a writer and my journal is proof. Poems taught me how to write about my feelings; memoirs gave me a chance to write about how my life was changing. Every day, my journal had a new note of self-reassurance. However, my journal was something I never took lightly. Nobody has seen my journal. Nobody knows about my journal. In fact, this is the first time I am even talking about my journal. After letting go of this stage, a feeling of extreme embarrassment kicked in. Why did I think so much? Why did I feel so deeply? All of the sudden, my once positive writing experience became a negative memory. Horrified if anybody would have found it. My journal went from being my escape, to being my dirty little secret. I went from being inspired by John Steinbeck and Harper Lee, to following in the footsteps of Stephan King and J.K. Rowling, as if it was more acceptable to follow a life unimaginable than to enjoy works of metaphorical tall tales. I noticed an extreme adjustment in how I looked at the world. I tucked back into my timid self. Not allowing my thoughts and feelings to show. I never again wanted to wear my heart on my sleeve.

I notice I have trouble with writing about my thoughts and how I feel, especially when I have to share it with others. It is as if I put on a new persona when I write about my opinions. I take the opinion of the majority. The more agreeable it is, the easier it is for me to write about. I second guess myself when it comes to my writing. I’d like to feel more comfortable with writing and be confident in the works I turn in. I hope to learn how to put my thoughts together in a way I feel comfortable with. Writing will always be a love of mine and as I progress, I hope I can discover myself and a way of writing I can be confident in.