**"Nothing Personal"**

by [Allison Wei](http://www.teenageviews.com/Teenviews/117/) (Monte Vista High School) on 2015-04-26 01:26:59 PDT

Who am I? Really?

I carry the things I find dear.
I carry the weight of my beat-up sketchbook, filled with scribbles I’ve done since the ninth grade;
Scribbles of people, scribbles of how I feel, scribbles of the moon and the sky.
I carry Radiohead song lyrics stuck in my head and wisdom my grandmother shared with me before she passed away.
I carry two friendship bracelets my sister made for me in the summer of 2012:
One powder-pink, the other light green,
To remind me that she’s always there.
I carry a notebook to jot down any quotes I hear
For daily motivation and inspiration.
I carry photographs of my mother and father,
To remind me of all they’ve done and their unconditional love for me.

I carry my blood, my veins, my beating heart,
All that I am thankful for from my mother and father.
But I also carry the weight of Osteogenesis Imperfecta:
Fragile bones, isolation, self-doubt, and a lost childhood.
I am one of 60,000 who have OI.
I carry 32 fractures, ten surgeries, crooked arm, and countless of trips from Livermore to LA, then Danville to Stanford, to see my doctor.
I carry a number of leg braces, walkers, and casts, all which come with bizarre looks from strangers and teasing from other students at school.
I carry the weight of people saying, “it’s no big deal” and “I totally understand, because I once broke my thumb before.”
I carry flashbacks of never being able to go on the rides at amusement parks or running with the “normal” kids at the park,
And flashbacks of adults following 7-year-old me around, and telling me what I can and can’t do.
Most of all, I carry the guilt and shame for causing my parents so much trouble.

I carry the weight of high school: the pressure to go to college, the fear of being criticized for who I am, and the pressure of being “perfect.”
I carry the days spent walking in the halls,
Not making eye contact with a group of girls who would whisper in each other’s ears and snicker whenever I passed them.
“What’s wrong with her?” she said.
“Shhh! She’ll hear you!” another said.
You’re right.
What is wrong with me?
The awful feeling of being rejected, and having my self-esteem pummeled into the dirt is always with me.
I am nobody.
I carry the hours and hours of taking notes, researching articles online, and knowing I really screwed up when I haven’t slept yet and I hear birds chirping outside.
I used to think in weekdays and now I think in test days.
I carry the stress of feeling low and defeated when I fail a test and dozing off on my desk in class.
Nothing is heavier than my backpack, except maybe my eyelids.
I’m losing sleep, losing hair, losing my mind.
But I am still young and stupid.
This is probably nothing.

I carry my love for art—
The sound of sharpening new pencils, and the way a paintbrush feels when it glides across a canvas.
I carry the excitement when I start a new project and the satisfaction when I finish.
Inspiration is everywhere, and sometimes, it can even come from harmful things too.
While I was recovering from fractures or surgeries, my sketchbook was my best friend.
And it still is.
Lines, shape, color all express what I see.
Space, texture, and value all express how I feel.
The best part is when I forget the world around me,
And I am lost in a world of imaginary things.
Children with tattoos, jellyfish in the sky...
It’s 3:45am, but who cares?
This is where I am happy.

I carry the fear of loneliness;
A silent phone, an empty house.
But I carry the consequences of being introverted and shy;
Feeling like I never know what to do or say.
But when I do acquaint with someone,
I fear that they will get tired of me.
I carry the weight of using self-deprecating humor as a method of coping with my insecurities and social anxiety,
Because it is so much easier to deal with people laughing at me
When I’ve already beaten them to the punch by laughing at myself.

I carry the feeling that I will never amount to anything significant in my life, and time will keep passing on.
Eventually, all these people I’ve met will forget me in a few years after my death because I didn’t do anything great or unique.
In the end, I was just another pansy in a field of flowers.

I carry love and passion, as well as hate and abhorrence.
I carry curiosity and imagination,
As well as ambition that is handicapped by fear and laziness.
I carry delirium and nostalgia of days in the past.
And I carry insomnia and restless nights, dreaming of impossible fates.
I carry thoughts of wonder, should I have took that chance while I could have?
I carry, and hold onto, the days when I feel a bit more confident in myself.
I carry my dreams and my aspirations, both physical and mental.
I carry my wishes.

Above all, I carry hope for a better tomorrow.