

Standing on the Edge
By Rachel Anthony

I stood on the edge of the cold water ready to cast my fishing rod. My intentions were to catch the biggest fish. I moved the fishing rod at ten and two and launched the hook as far as I could into the water; it created ripples which moved across the water in its circular waves. I stared at the bobber which was floating in the water. The slow movement of the current going in different directions created an optical illusion. Staring at it, I began to think about all the things that were happening in my life; there were happy and painful things. I wondered why those things were happening; was it something I did in the past that made this scenario come to be? Was there something I could have done to forbid these things from happening?

The thoughts flitted through my mind. Some of the things happening made me wish I could choose a different path. But then another thought told me I was happy with the things I'm involved in, such as the school I'm attending, and the people I know. However, the darker events: I wanted nothing to do with them. And with the already confusing thoughts, another came along. I wasn't the happiest with myself. I'm just a timid, quiet, and sweet girl. But I won't lie; I can be a little mean too. I always get mad at whatever I do. I often think I could do whatever I just did better.

Suddenly, I snapped out of the trance and looked at my bobber. It was not where it was before; it was now closer to the shore. I reeled it back in so I could re-cast it, but when I did, I noticed the worm was gone. I stared at it and made an annoyed face. My deep thoughts distracted me from fishing. So, I carefully walked back to my teacher to ask for another worm

because I wasn't about to touch one. I walked over to the picnic table where he was sitting and without me saying a word he began to put a worm on the hook.

He asked me what I was thinking about while I was waiting for a fish to bite. To be able to explain my thoughts was a bit overwhelming to me. Annoyingly, I began to tear up. I tried my best to fight them, but I couldn't. He asked me if I wanted to talk about it, and honestly I did. I was hoping I could get some advice so these thoughts wouldn't bother me.

I explained to him what I was thinking about. I told him first off I was embarrassed about crying and apologized. I always apologize for things that don't require an apology. I also vaguely explained the depressing thoughts which made me cry. I then explained that I beat myself up mentally over everything that I do. We talked for a while. He said a lot, but one thing stuck with me. He asked me what I would say to someone if they told me that they beat themselves up over what they do. That made all the other thoughts cease, and that was all I could think of. I didn't really know what I would tell someone.

After he applied the worm to the hook, I again carefully walked up to the edge of the water. I recast my rod, however, this time it didn't fly as far into the water as I had hoped. Normally I would criticize myself for not doing it right, but now I told myself, "Is the world going to end because you didn't cast it right? Is everyone going to remember you as the one who couldn't fish?" So, to answer that question, I just shrugged my shoulders and accepted it. I did the best I could, and that's what matters.

I went back to my earlier thoughts to give an answer to them. Our choices make us who we are. Would I change myself? Never. Do I wish I could have chosen a different path? No, I love the things I'm associated with. I love the school I'm attending and the friends I have. There are

things that happen in life that I can't prevent, but of course, that's life. Things will happen that you won't like, but they challenge us and help us become better people. There are others around us that may be going through the same things, so if you have a lot of things on your mind, don't be too afraid to open up a little and maybe they will have some inspiring words to get you through it. Overall in my fishing trip, I learned a lot about myself. And since I wasn't too shy and opened up a bit, I got some simple words of advice which I took to a deeper meaning and helped myself change.