



On Butterfly Wings

Beautiful, Vibrant, Wonderful You



Everyday Woman; Extraordinary Hero

Grace Wong

Growing up I used to have a huge fear. The fear that I would turn out like my mother. As a young girl growing up I always thought of her as hard, cold and distant. This wasn't who I was and I just never wanted to be that way. I was so afraid of turning out like my mom that I didn't even want to have children of my own for fear of passing on my genes. I always had a want for a family, not a family where the parents are constantly traveling, leaving their children home to be taken care of someone else. This left me to find my heroes and heroines elsewhere. They came from books. Books about women or men who had it all -- the love of their life, a family, a good career and an adventurous life. This is what I wanted, to have a family; a large family with adopted children, to give them a chance.

I grew up with very little ambition for school. All of my ambitions were for living life, for meeting new people, having new experiences and loving how I lived. I felt like I was on top of the world; however, as soon as I failed out of my first year of university, I was lost. I was in a relationship that wasn't for me, but thought... this is where I want to be, to have a family before I'm 30.

It was one summer when I was home from school before starting my new bachelor's program that I got the harsh truth from my mother. She told me, and I'm paraphrasing here, "You have to do what you have to do. Just do it and get it over with." That's when I realized that I wasn't where I wanted to be. I wanted to change my relationship and do something new. I needed more experiences and my mother was there. Our relationship changed then. I grew up and realized I had the biggest role model I could ever have, right in my family.

This is when I opened my eyes, and noticed that she has been right. All she has been doing was trying to lead in me in a direction that was best for me. But what I love her most for is that she let me discover it on my own.

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She let me make my mistakes and learn from them. She even supported me in any way that I needed. Over the past 5-6 years I have come to respect her for what she has done for me, and her family.

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She is a strong, independent, confident and powerful woman. Every day she strives to improve herself and her life. She reads, she cooks, she gardens, she travels, she works, she keeps learning. No matter where she is in her life, she won't stop improving as a person. Her favourite compliment is being compared to a man. She has taught me how to take control and make my life what I want it to be. She has taught me how to stand up for myself and not let people walk over me. She is the strongest woman I know. She is my hero.

Thank you,

Grace



Who Needs Rescuing?

Kayleigh Radatus

Where do we find our heroes and role models in today's world? Somehow, the idea of these somewhat legendary figures seems like something belonging in the distant past, and yet when I look around, I see how many of our Heroes and Role Models are now coming from the media, rather than from our own community.

I'm sure we have heroes and role models in our community, but it seems we hear less about them because of how intently we focus on people in the media. Looking to the media for guidance isn't necessarily a bad thing. There are some amazing people acting in movies, and some great characters, too. But there is danger lurking in our focus on the media. It's powerful, and can impact our values and beliefs in good ways, but also in very damaging ways.

In 2012, the movie, *The Avengers*, was released. This was a great movie--a lot of fun, with powerful messages of sacrifice, persistence, acceptance of others, and working together for the greater good. Of course, with the release of such a huge movie, there was a lot of *Avengers*-branded merchandise released as well.

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And somehow with the sheer volume of merchandise that was released, Disney dropped the ball in a major way. There were no shirts with just Black Widow on them (the only female hero in the movie). T-shirts available for boys practically shouted the words; “Be a Hero”, while the shirts for girls had the discouraging message; “I Need a Hero.” The women’s shirts were just as bad, stating; “I Only Kiss Heroes”. Really? Really. In today’s world, where there is so much voice and discussion about equality and personal power, how could Disney executives have gotten this so wrong?

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This isn’t the first time something like this has happened. Disney managed to make a movie about a girl who is her own hero – Merida in the movie *Brave* – a girl who loves archery, and fights all of her mother’s attempts to make her into a “lady”, yet the merchandise that went with the movie wasn’t a Merida-themed bow and arrow--it was a vanity set. What? Wait, what? How does that possibly relate? The one thing that represents everything Merida DOESN’T like is what Disney decides to market for the girls who loved *Brave*?

The problem is that we are working against generations of thinking of how girls and women are supposed to be. It requires a constant voice to get our message across.

We’re perfectly fine on our own. We do not need to be saved. My role models can be women or men – gender makes no difference. It’s about what that person has done, and how they have lived. I believe in constant growth. I believe in personal power. I believe I, and every single one of us is enough as we are. I believe in role models and heroes. And I believe that each and every one of us has the power to be both. We don’t need rescuing. I’ll stand on my own two feet and look to my heroes and role models as the trail blazers they are. And if life gets hard and circumstances force me to my knees as they have so many times before then I will rise again by the strength of my own body. It may take a while, but I will do it. And in knowing my strengths, I will ask for support and help when I need to. I will turn to my heroes and my role models for guidance. This is not weakness. This is not asking for rescuing. This is turning to my circle, my tribe, my community, and those who have gone before me to be my guides, to remind me of what I am capable of, and to lend a hand if that is what I need.





Who We Are



Emily Savage

Managing Editor

Emily is a university graduate still looking for her place in the universe. She is also apparently a fan of dating cliches and romantic turns of phrase. She's been writing for more years than she'd like to count. You can follow her on Twitter (@esavage3) where she mostly posts about her love affair with books.

Heather Embree

Articles Editor

Heather is a metaphysical healer and soul intuitive practitioner in Guelph, Ontario. She has been a regular writer and editor of various genres over the past 15 years, as well as a human and earth rights activist. For more information visit www.blossomingheart.ca.



Lisa Browning

Publisher

Lisa is the publisher of One Thousand Trees, a monthly online magazine devoted to facilitating wellness through connection, creativity and community service. She also offers writing, editing, and publishing/pre-press services, and has recently launched a children's book division called Saplings. She is inspired to make a difference in this world, and to help others realize their passion and their gifts. For more information visit www.onethousandtrees.com.



Kayleigh Radatus

Who Needs Rescuing?

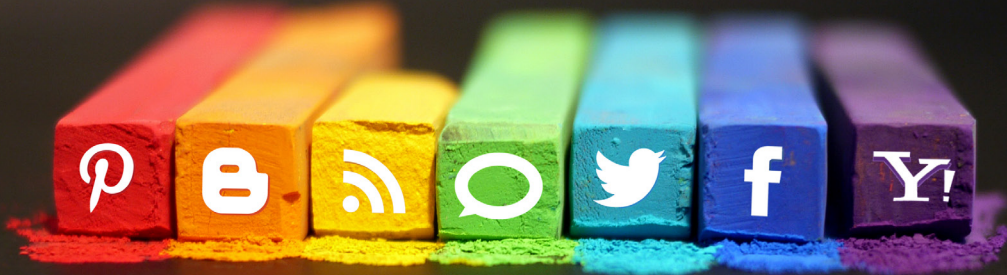
Kayleigh knows from personal experience that you can bring the happiness and strength found in your favourite music into everyday life, and has helped many people do exactly that. She is a Personal Empowerment Mentor, specializing in helping you increase your self-esteem, self-confidence and self-compassion while empowering you to discover and create your ideal life.



Special thanks to Grace Wong and Emily R for providing their stories.



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Next Issue

The "Relationship" Issue

June is all about those that are around us. Romantic, platonic, familial, we want to hear about what relationships drive your life.

Are you ridiculously close with your sister? Are there things your best friend knows that no one else does? Are you a little confused by that crush in your class?

Write about it! Draw it out! And submit!

What Would You Do?

Is there something in your life that's been nagging you for a while but you're not quite sure who to talk to?

In each issue we'll be submitting your questions to our mother/daughter team to answer.

Email us at butterflies@onethousandtrees.com or tweet us @obwoffical



Submission Guidelines

Are you Artistic?

Do you have an interest in writing?

Do you want to make the most of your life?

"On Butterfly Wings" is a newsletter for girls. We are always looking for artistic submissions from our readers expressing the issues that girls go through. Our vision is to empower girls to become strong and confident, and to create a safe place where they feel free to express themselves.

Submit your art, your poetry, your writing by emailing your work to butterflies@onethousandtrees.com

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