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## What Tomorrow will Bring

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“What Tomorrow will Bring”  
Marco Camacho

Life is beautiful and full of enjoyable events that can allow one to understand their meaning and strive to keep that beauty in our lives. Unfortunately, as beautiful as life can be it can equally be as cruel, filled with challenges that can change ones life in an instant and give one a different perspective on how life can be. My life changed when I was ten years old, waking up in a hospital with tubes inserted all over my body as my relatives surrounded me crying out of relief from the tragic events that had ensued three days prior while I was in a coma. The events were later explained to me how I was admitted to the hospital unresponsive and seizing to which doctors believed that I would not make it through the night, having a priest come to my room to give me my last rights. Hearing this and looking at the worried and exhausted look on my mother’s face I could tell that this was going to be something that would be a life changing event that I would not be ready for. The doctor soon after came to speak with me and helped me to understand what had happened, which in short was that I had a severe diabetic episode after contracting a virus that attacked my pancreas, and would have to now consider the course of action to take living with this disability. Obviously, this was not the ideal situation and surely was not something a ten year old needed to have told to them, that they had an incurable disease and needed to manage it for the rest of their life. This took some time to digest, which is understandable being diagnosed as a child, but has now become routine over years living with it which has been filled with equal amounts of highs and lows.

My work depicts the challenges and course of events in my life that have occurred or are prone to occurring because of the disability that I have, diabetes. The disability is not of importance to the work but rather is used as a reference to the perspective of someone living

with something that can be seen as a hinderance on their lives. Diabetes along with many other illnesses and disease are disabilities that rest underneath the surface and to any bystander you seem to be a healthy individual with no visible affliction. That of course is not the case and the realization is that everyone is dealing with something that is not physically visible whether it be an illness, disease or stresses from life. Diseases and illness I have found are one of the only things on this planet that does not discriminate as to who it can affect and how it can change the lives of anyone at any given time. This kind of change can be a traumatic experience where it affects the mental stability of the person afflicted by a said illness or disability. During this time it can cause confusion as well as anger due to the vulnerability they undergo after losing their sense of control. This leads to the person afflicted to adopt a sense of grief, similar to what is described in the Kubler-Ross model, where the afflicted starts to grieve the loss of their former selves. The final step is usually the hardest to achieve, being the afflicted accepting that there is no riddance to this added element to their lives. I consider it a difficulty because there was no choice in the matter of contracting the illness, it presented itself without warning and became a component that now needs to be treated daily to avoid an adverse reaction, which can lead anyone to having a negative outlook on their situation. Unfortunately, that is how many end up, refusing to acknowledge their illness, being left in denial, and having their illness overcome them. Many are mentally alone and afraid, believing that no one understands what they are going through and left pitying themselves cause of the unfairness of what the world presented them. Seeing others deal with their own afflictions, similar to the way I used to and sometimes still, treat mine. I decided to create work that depicted some of the challenges that I

have been presented because of my illness in hope that others can find an understanding through it and reflect on their own destructive behaviors and uncertainties.

Firstly, I would like to address the reasoning for using such a diverse sense of materials and techniques. I decided when composing the structure of my show together with its concept that the diversity of ailments and illnesses be reflected through the diversity of techniques and materials. Understanding the comparison in the simplest way that there are many forms of viral pathogens and illnesses that can form through them, where the same can go for the materials and the techniques used to form a multitude of different art works. I also anticipated this of being a versatile grouping of works for the viewer's appeal, where there was something for everyone to appreciate. Similar to life in that there is always something to be appreciative over, but also some will hold certain things in a higher appreciative value than others would.

The series begins with a grouping of works depicting my early years first being diagnosed which depict the struggles finding normalcy, dealing with traumatic events, and frustrations of managing life with a disease. The drawing entitled "What Would You Do?," depicts the event of my body succumbing to the virus that had caused it to develop diabetes which had nearly taken my life at that time of diagnosis. The decision of leaving the figure faceless was an attempt to allow the viewer to consider themselves being in the depicted predicament to gain a better understanding of the other works from my point of view as one progressed through the show.

Through observation of my daily surroundings I have found that many do not consider the elements that affect others such as daily stresses, illness, and other ailments that can complicate the ones living conditions. Of course, why would anyone even consider another's struggle with life around them when they have their own challenges to deal with? Honestly,

most days will come with their own challenges that everyone has to consider and put an effort into finding a solution for their own. The aspect that is not often considered by many is that the challenges of one could of easily been the challenges of an other. Of course, there are many factors that would need to be considered, but one inevitable fact is that if something is meant to happen then there is no sheer way of preventing it. Which in turn, choices have to be made as to how to proceed. This can be seen in the image titled "Undesirable Choices" where I first found out of my newly diagnosed condition and had to make a choice whether to proceed in the management of my illness or allow it to consume me and accept my end. Being consumed with uncertainty and what the future would have in store I was hesitant to accept my choices.

Knowing that the years ahead would be filled with even more challenges, having to stay focused on keeping my blood sugars under control, injecting myself with medication that is keeping me alive, all the while trying to find myself and figure out where I fit in in society. These feelings of uncertainty can be seen depicted in a series of small lithographic prints that resemble black and white photographs that act as mementos of specific events that me and many juvenile diabetics have faced. These images were meant to share an understanding of some challenges someone with diabetes would face such as blood sugar drops while sleeping that could lead to death, understanding you are now different compared to everyone else than you once were, and the destructive behavior that is sometimes caused by the pent up frustration and imbalances that diabetes sometimes may cause. This series of events were meant to lead others to understanding a different perspective about the disease. You could go about and read up about this in medical journals and doctoral publication based on

endocrinological studies, but the theory and study used in those publications usually lack the sense of empathy that you would usually get by talking to someone afflicted by it.

Even without doing extensive research on the topic of diabetes and understanding the complications and personal experiences from primary sources there is the chance that the topic will come up in the media especially within the last ten years. Making the news streams more often than not has been the topic of the gouged list prices that the medical supply companies have set for their products. The fact that the price of a vial of insulin is obscene and unless you have proper insurance it can be almost unobtainable. This was my realization one summer when, unbeknownst to me, my insurance was terminated for some unknown reason while I went for my monthly prescriptions and to my amazement the total for two vials of insulin was \$758. This amount of insulin would have only been able to cover me for about a month, if utilized efficiently and rationed, but without any kind of assistance this was impossible to even consider in a monthly budget. This is sometimes the reality of people that rely on medication to sustain their health where they have to figure it out and hope for the best at times when the unforeseen future can really test your resilience. "Unfortunate Struggles" depicts the moment when I was denied my medication due to my insurance expiring without notice, forcing me to figure out how to pay or obtain my insulin at the time. The unfortunate truth is many do not get the assistance that they need to obtain their medication damaging their organs and sometimes facing their end. This reality does not get the exposure that it deserves and many victims suffer from this broken medical system that is established where the pharmaceutical companies can price medication that is in demand at an inflated rate knowing that it is needed to sustain patient's health to then supply that demand. There has been efforts made by companies and

law officials to battle against this kind of unethical behavior, but damage has already been done to a substantial number of families that either did not get their medication in time or have had to ration it to try and make it till they could get an adequate amount to take their proper dosage. Things are not ideal in the slightest, but luckily progress is being made to assist with prescription costs and confront the unethical behavior of the pharmaceutical market in the US.

Acknowledgment and understanding the complication as well as the privileges dealt to oneself in life is one of the most important things to promoting growth. Everyone will be dealt their own challenges that they have to face as they continue on in life. Understanding that things can always get worse before they get better is a step in recognizing and appreciating the privileges that one is given. One can be diagnosed with a life changing disability, yes it will be tough and prove challenging, but at the very least you get to create a life worth living. Recognizing these traits can make all the difference on ones outlook on life which may help to promoting growth and pushing forward till they find where they belong in life. "Me and My Monster" is a woodblock print depicting the acceptance of one's "metaphorical monster," being the disability or illness that one was presented with. Understanding that this is something you have to acknowledge and deal with everyday along with the many challenges that life will present you. Such a thing is noted in the poem "Invictus" by William Ernest Henley where he states:

"It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishment the scroll.  
I am the master of my fate:  
I am the Captain of my soul."

My take on that is no matter what life shoves your way you are the only one who can decide your path in life and no matter the difficulty you get to decide the outcome. Being that William Ernest Henley was afflicted with tuberculosis of the bone and had to have his leg amputated below the knee at twelve years old. He understood the difficulty that life could present to you at any given time, but only you have the choice to see your life through and progress through the difficulties. "Me and My Monster" relates to this in the way that the monster is not the one in control. The figure pulling the monster along in it's cart, identifying as a person afflicted, is in control of their path ahead of them.

Being able to have a chance at life and seeing what the future could have in store is a gift that one should treasure since no one realizes how short of an existence we really have on this earth. Tomorrow is an exciting experience, that most get to see, where no one knows what tomorrow will bring. Of course, it may present challenges that test how you will react to it. How will you decide to confront those challenges is all up to each individual presented with their challenges, no matter the circumstance. You may hate the challenge presented and it may change your life like a disability or illness. Only you are able to recognize what needs to be done to remedy it and decide how to confront it. Pitying yourself does no good and only halts the progress that may occur. You get to decide how you want to live a life worth living because you get to see tomorrow. Not everyone is presented that gift and is why you should cherish what you have and try to appreciate the little things in life. Taking the good with the bad for all that it is worth and try to see things through to witness the outcome and recognize life as it is happening. Sure distractions and exterior elements may vary, but progress can always be made to achieve your ideal life. How one would proceed in doing so is up to each individual and how

much drive they have to achieving it. Who knows what tomorrow will bring for us, but whatever it may be we get to decide how to see it through.

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