



## MEGAN NGUYEN last thoughts even i have an eating disorder

When growing up lead to gaining weight, I was afraid that I was suddenly losing my beauty so I decided to lose weight in order to be pretty again. To do so, a few grapes and strawberries was what I called a healthy lunch. I patted myself on the back for what I didn't realize was such a dangerous habit, and instead saw it as strength in willpower and successful dieting.

While this was going on, I increasingly obsessed over my calorie intake and my weight, and I meticulously planned out exactly what and when my next snack or meal would be in the day. At one point, I would consume precisely 167 calories before 3:00 p.m., and that's when my body lost its energy to get me through the day. By the time I reached bed, my head rung and my limbs ached. My stomach roared at me to nourish myself. This terrorizing pain obliterated all notions of what I thought was "healthy." With a lot of trust and fear, I told my best friend who lives in California.

My eyes were already open to how detrimental my eating disorder was, but she opened my eyes to the idea of positive body image. Clearly, eating disorders are bad. That's what people learn in health, but how someone sees themselves is the true fault. It is easier said than done to ignore the set laws of beauty, I would know. I don't scorn society now, and I definitely don't hate the lithe, small bodies it values, but I now notice other people.

Their bodies. Their acceptance and their confidence. My new goal was to have that, and no longer to be thin. That mindset led me a recovery that still continues today. But it's something- it's the hope of coping with the problem in order to lead a truly healthy life. If I could, I would alter the mindsets of everyone who suffers from their own body negativity, but society still looms. I ask those who suffer, as I did, to love everyone, to value their bodies, and perhaps that could teach them to love themselves. My last thought is to those who are afraid to speak. I regret that I never seeked out professional help. Your journey does not have to be so hard because it's real even if you say it out loud, and saying out loud makes recovery more possible than if otherwise. To those who have not suffered, support one another. To those that have suffered- that are suffering- good luck, you are an extraordinarily stunning mark upon this world.



## MAGGIE FOA win some, lose most on the brink

I would like to start buying Red Rocks tickets for this summer. The lineup is already incredible: The Avett Brothers, The Head and the Heart and Trampled by Turtles. The only problem: I have no idea what my life is going to be like this coming August.

It's very strange to think that the fate of my future is in the hands of an admissions committee made of people I've never, and likely will never meet. I think a lot of seniors are in this same position. Someone, somewhere, is judging everything we've done in high school and deciding whether or not it is good enough for their campus.

We are very very lucky to be facing this decision. Only 7% of people in the world go to college, meaning that 92% of Arapahoe students are in that lucky boat. Nonetheless, it is stressful. I am most concerned about the interaction of self and surroundings. Someone somewhere said that, "the thumbprint of culture appears in the mind of the individual." Put simply, wherever you are will profoundly influence who you are. Whatever choice I (we) make now at least partially dictates everything else. If I stay in CO, I will likely grow more passionate about the outdoors, if I moved to the city I will likely be deeply involved in activism. If our lives are only a series of choices, this is the first one. This choice sets the precedent for all the others. I don't know who or what I want to be yet.

It's a beautiful choice to have. The amount of work my parents, my school, my community, and my past self have put into having this choice is not lost on me. But this work seems only to add to the pressure of making this good.