

In summer 2017, I left the place I used to live since I was born, took the longest flight I ever had, and went to the opposite side of the world. That was Montreal, a place I had never been to, and I went there for my Ph.D. study. In the second month, I started to feel lost, lonely, insecure, anxious and depressed.

One day, as usual, I was taking a bus to school. In a moment, I saw myself separated from my physical body, I looked at myself sitting and surrounded by the other passenger. The bus was so quiet, I had a feeling that the bus could be just disappeared in the earth at any moment and I did not care if I would be dead immediately, in the next moment. Over the next days, I started to cry when I woke up, when I ate and when I tried to sleep. I knew that I was suffering in kind of a depressive state which has happened to me twice a long time ago. Eventually, I took a year of medical leave from the school and went back to Hong Kong. I did get better somehow, but many times, I kept asking myself the questions: *What is the meaning of life? What do I want to achieve in my life? Am I really satisfied with life in Hong Kong, being taken good care of by my husband and my family, and just working as a housewife in my future? If not, what else could or should I do?*

First Artwork on Return: MyDiary

In December 2018, I decided to return to Montreal for the winter 2019, to redo all the things again, to experience the same pain that I had been going through, to take this chance to understand myself, my doubts, and my psychological weakness. I want to make some changes; I want to build a stronger Janice; I have no idea if I can really make some changes, but I *wanna* try.

Things are boring. Life is meaningless. BUT perhaps life is important, everything matters.

I feel unsatisfactory about my life. I tend to remember and focus on the bad things that happened to me. I love to blame myself. I have thousands of things to criticize myself: not being good enough in my life, my job or my study. It seems so easy to forget so much effort I actually put in each thing, even if it is just tiny. I just focus on how I am not doing good enough, how bad is my life.

I AM SUFFERING.

Now is time to do something for yourself.

I make this tiny diary, to record things, record every effort I put into my daily life. To tell myself, to give evidence showing I am not wasting time doing nothing in Montreal. I am doing something, it may be a little bit slow but steady in progress. They maybe just some little, tiny things, BUT they DO MATTER for me.

So let's mark things down to give myself a written record of my 4 months Montreal life.

This written diary could be a little bit different from an ordinary one. I am not going to write in a narrative, story style, preserving moments that happen each day. Instead, it is a point form recording what I have done or accomplished, to remind myself of the effort I put in everyday, a way to stop myself blaming myself for doing nothing/ doing not enough at midnight while I am lying on my bed.

I want this diary to fill my emptiness while staying in Montreal. I create a blank, white webpage, and by filling it with every daily entry, to make the whole webpage full and colorful, I wish I could get a sense of fulfillment. The color of every entry is different and is come from the LGBT flag color as I am living in Gay village right now.

Though this diary is presented in a digital way, handwriting does matter in this work. I believe the best way of writing a diary is still the handwriting work in a book before everyday bedtime. So I literally write in every night, take photos of every entry, trace the handwriting and then post it on the webpage.