

# Joy Beyond Myself

“What happens if joy is not separate from pain? What if joy and pain are fundamentally tangled up with one another? Or even more to the point, what if joy is not only entangled with pain, or suffering, or sorrow, but is also what emerges from how we care for each other through those things? What if joy, instead of refuge or relief from heartbreak, is what efflorescence from us as we help each other carry our heartbreaks?”

— Ross Gay, *Inciting Joy: Essays*

**Moments of Joy** are rarely written about, so I want to capture moments of joy in other people's lives through writing. I aim to interview a variety of people to hear stories of small moments of joy within the harder parts of their individual lives.

# Why this project is important to me

When talking about joy, I find that people often think it has to overshadow all the harder parts of life. Similar to Ross Gay, I think moments of joy coexist within trauma, hardship, and struggles in our everyday lives. I wrote about a moment of joy in my life, and now I am interested in capturing those moments for others.

# Why others might be drawn?

Moments of joy may look different for everyone, but joy captured in a realistic way is a universal feeling. Similar to Humans Of New York, this project would aim to reveal parts of people that you might not know at first glance or even after a first conversation. There is so much we don't know about each other's lives and stories, so I think this project would draw people in to learn about each other.

# Sample

# Vision Moving Forward

Want to choose who I would want to interview

I would still need to narrow down who it is that I am interested in writing about.  
Friends? Classmates?  
People walking by me on the street?

What exact style of writing?  
Could I change it up maybe

Need to decide if I would want to do each one in the same way I wrote mine or I could change the structure. Could format it as stories, essays, quotes etc.

Want to do more research on joy itself

Already did some for my topic research but would love to do more to have a better understanding of how to approach the project

Really interested in creating a series or collection

Would love to ultimately tie these to portraits of people and create a collection of moments of joy from people

## Conclusion

Researching and writing about joy this semester has been a wonderful reminder that lightness can still exist within dark times, even if it may not be the first thing you jump to write about. To remember that joy still exists within that is a huge gift.