

## Final Paper #008-Male

Spontaneous painting has been something that has changed my outlook on my life's goals and achievements. While painting I felt a sense of relief, like a huge weight was coming off my shoulders. I was able to express myself in a way that I do not normally do. As an elementary school major, it is not required of us to take any art classes. I decided to take this class because I wanted to find new ways to be creative with my students and explore my feelings in the process. Throughout the semester, we discussed core limiting beliefs such as, "I'll never amount to anything". Acknowledging these core limiting beliefs inside us and reprogramming our minds to create affirmations instead helps us overcome many of the trials we face in our daily lives. It has helped me become more confident in myself and become the best person I can be. In this final paper we will look at various works I painted that expressed my feelings and the affirmations that surrounded each painting.

**Painting 1 "The Wolf"** is one of my favorite pieces. It was my first painting and many emotions were going through my mind at the time. As I painted, I didn't really know what the final result was going to be. The painting, in a way, painted itself. After I finished the painting, I wrote and I am piece. This helped give my painting a voice and allowed me to truly understand the feelings I was going through as I painted this piece. The story went as follows:

**Painting #1 (The Wolf)** - *I am avidly pursuing my dreams to the ends of the earth.*



"The moon is red like blood. I feel a sudden urge to run. I want to run towards it as fast as I can. I run through the forest, my feet sinking into the ground with every step leaving a trail behind me. I run until I can run no more towards this ever fixed moon. It feels so far away but yet so close. I want

to go to it but I can't. There is nowhere else I can run to. I stop and sit down feeling the earth raging beneath my feet. I feel another urge overtake me, one of rage and frustration. I let out a great howl to the moon but it never responded. I will reach the moon one day. I will find the trail that leads me there and I will reach it."

The story helped me better understand my own painting and feelings. I believe the wolf was me. It was my feelings about the situation I am in with my occupation. I am constantly following the trail that has been set forth for me as a teacher. I have reached a point in my life where I believe I am at the end of my trail, and I have become frustrated with the fact that I am unable to reach my dreams of teaching in my own classroom. I have been searching and searching, trying to get a teaching position for a long time. I also believe the red moon symbolizes my dreams of becoming a teacher and the idea that I believe I was meant to teach, that it's in my blood. I am constantly chasing and pursuing my dreams and I know that one day I will find the job of my dreams and reach that moon. The affirmation I have decided to write about this painting is *I am avidly pursuing my dreams to the ends of the earth.*

**Painting 2 "The Angel"** is a very personal piece. Before I began painting it I saw an image of an angel with giant wings and golden armor shining in the heavens. However, the angel had no face, it was just darkness. At first, I do not know exactly why I saw an image of an angel. After studying and looking at this painting for a long time I was able to discern a couple of things. Before the painting, a very close friend of mine had just undergone triple bypass surgery and I was a little frightened for his wellbeing. I am not a very religious person but the night before he went into surgery I prayed to God to see him through. The surgery ended up going very well. During the day of the painting, I thought about him and the prayer I recited to see him safely through a difficult time. I believe the angel symbolizes our need for a belief in something greater. We as human beings feel this urge to figure out the mysteries of life, where did we come from? How did we get here? Is there really a God?

**Painting #2 (The Angel)** - *I am discovering something greater in my life, something that will shatter my fears, cleanse my despair, and calm my anger.*



That night after praying I really did believe. I believed that there is something greater than us out there. It might not be God, but it could be an angel, a guardian angel. This angel could be someone who protects us from the evils in this world and guides us in the right direction. Perhaps this angel is someone we loved who passed away or even someone still with us who is close to us. The angel's face was also painted black because I think it symbolized the unknown, if we do have a guardian angel who could it be?

I felt a lot of strange emotions while painting and studying this piece. I felt a sense of curiosity. Like all human beings, I felt the need to discover something greater than us. Something that we cannot explain but we know is true. The affirmation I decided to write for this painting was *I am discovering something greater in my life, something that will shatter my fears, cleanse my despair, and calm my anger.*

**Painting #3 (Doors)** - *I am not afraid of opening up new doors and chapters to my life.*



**Painting 3 “Doors”** was one of my absolute favorite pieces. It was a piece that really spoke to how I was feeling at that time. When I painted this piece we were discussing our core limiting beliefs. My core limiting belief had to do with feeling a sense of loneliness. This painting reflected my core limiting belief. I decided to only use two colors in this painting to really bring out the contrast. As I painted I was reminded of the old saying, “when one door closes, another one opens”. I began to ask myself, what happens when the door that opens isn’t a door we want to go through or should go through? What happens when all of the doors that open are filled with danger? I began to wonder, what if we do not open any doors? We will begin to feel alone.

I decided to paint a young man walking on the road in this small town. He was walking past these buildings that instead of doors had open mouths with razor sharp teeth. The mouths symbolized the doors that open for us when other doors close. I decided to paint teeth on them because I felt that even though the doors are open they may lead us somewhere we might not want to go. The black and white colors really created this sense of loneliness and despair in the piece. I also painted a small door at the end of the road that did not have a mouth. It was just a regular door with a bright yellow doorknob. Where this door leads, I do not know. All I am sure about is that the door will lead to someplace different. Will this place be somewhere that is filled with doors that are inviting or doors that should remain closed? The affirmation that I decided to write for this painting is as follows: *I am not afraid of opening up new doors and chapters to my life.*

**Painting #4 (The Lion)** - *I am becoming as courageous as a lion in in my life and at trying new things.*





**Painting 4 “The Lion”** was a turning point for me in my life. This painting was inspired by the courage I felt overcoming some of my own core limiting beliefs. One of my core limiting beliefs that has stuck with me my entire life was “I will never embrace new situations.” I feel as though I can sometimes be a wallflower, someone who is afraid of talking and meeting new people. After practicing many of the exercises Professor Bello had reviewed with us in class, I feel as though I have been given this sense of confidence. Every night before I would go to sleep, I would take in what I thought were some of my core limiting beliefs and recognize them and then think of my affirmations.

The day of the painting, I had decided to paint a lion. I believe a lion symbolizes courage and conviction. The lion was my own way of stating that I am no longer the prey but the predator. I am no longer letting the bad bring me down but fighting my way up. I am no longer afraid of meeting new people. As I painted this piece, I decided to use a brighter red for the mane and yellow for the fur. These colors helped my lion really stand out and define its contours.

When I got home that day I looked at the painting again and tried to come up with an affirmation. It took me a while to think of one but when I did, I really felt a connection with it. The affirmation I came up with is: *I am becoming as courageous as a lion in in my life and at trying new things*. I decided to choose this affirmation because it symbolizes my willingness to try new things. For most of my life, I have been in a social bubble. It has taken me a while to burst out of my bubble, but I have become more socially competent. I am unafraid to approach new situations and explore who I am.

**Painting #5 (The Village)** - *I am beginning to realize that the world is constantly changing and I am accepting the change.*



**Painting 5 “The Village”** was a culminating piece that tied all of my feelings and affirmations into one painting. The painting consisted of three different structures, a mountain, a village and a forest. The painting itself takes more of a 3<sup>rd</sup> person perspective instead of a first person perspective like many of my other paintings have. As I studied this painting to find a meaning, I began to notice many similarities amongst the other paintings I had created. The mountain looked very similar to the mountain in my first painting “The Wolf”. The village looked very similar to the one I had created in my painting “Doors”. The forest could have been somewhere the lion was located. The top of the mountain may have contained the angel.

I feel as though all of my paintings have been leading up to this one, as if it had been a journey. Each painting thus far had left its own mark in this piece. For example, the mountain symbolized the wolf’s journey to the end and the village symbolized the journey of this young man through a village of turmoil. There is also a road in the painting that seems to be almost endless. It symbolizes the roads we travel as human beings. Each door next to this road is a choice we make, and each choice may have its consequence, be it good or bad.

This painting has had the biggest impact on my life. It speaks to me in a way that no other painting has. It tells me that we live in a small world. We live in a world that is surrounded by people we know and love and we should not be afraid. The affirmation that I have come up with for this painting has reflected some of these ideas. It states: *I am beginning to realize that the world is constantly changing and I am accepting the change.* The world is constantly changing and we have to accept this change in order to move on with our lives and understand that we live in a world that may be small but is also filled with love.

### **Conclusion:**

All of my paintings seem to have a certain theme or idea behind them. In this series of paintings I believe my main focus was on a journey of self-expression. These paintings allowed me to express myself in a way that I have never done before. “The Wolf” painting symbolized my journey and struggle with my current occupation. “The Angel” symbolized my journey with my discovering my own religion. The “Doors” painting symbolized my journey into the unknown. “The Lion” painting symbolized my journey into the realm of confidence. Lastly, “The Village” painting symbolized the journey into the realization that the world is ever changing and we need to accept the change in order to move on.

Each one of these paintings is a creation of my own feelings. As I painted, I looked at what I was thinking about or feeling at that time. This method of spontaneous painting really helped me relax and express my feelings. With each painting I was able to express myself in a creative and safe way. I never felt judged by my peers or ridiculed for my paintings. I always felt safe. I felt safe enough to trust my feelings and create wonderful pieces of art that stressed the importance of my voice. I feel as though I understand myself on a deeper level. I understand why I have been feeling a certain way or why I am frustrated or upset with my current job situation.

I have begun a new chapter in my life. I have started a new journey into my new life, filled with positive affirmations and feelings about myself. Now that I am better able to understand my own feelings, I believe I will be better attuned to my student’s feelings. I will be able to understand who they are and what they are feeling, to create an environment for them that is safe and comfortable. An environment where they will be able to learn without the fear of judgment or ridicule, a place they can call home.