

# Thankful from Within

By Mikaela Woods



*Thankful.* It is an understatement; I owe myself a lot. I am not really sure that I ever had one real friend who stuck around through it all with me. It can feel overwhelming when you feel surrounded by people who tend to be two faced and immature. The fear of betrayal makes it hard for me to build connections with others as well as friendships. I went through so much trauma since 8th grade; losing and changing friends impacts the way I move now. I have grown so much as a person.

*Picked myself up.* At the end of the day, I'm the one who picked myself up through all the struggles and hard times. I wiped my own tears and hugged myself when I needed a hug. I am the one who told myself everything would be okay. No one else was there for me. There was no one I could trust. I sat there and gave myself advice. I live by my own advice. I am so much more positive and stronger now than I was before. I'm always looking out, not just for myself, but others as well. I always have a smile on my face and compliment others. I am always listening and talking because I never got that and I know how it feels to not have that in life. No one will ever care for me the way I can for myself.



*Opened up my eyes.* I have taught myself so much. My eyes are always opened and my guard is never down. I know my worth. My ultimate inspiration comes from my Momma though. She raised me to be independent and to never depend on anyone. She always pushed me throughout highschool and made sure I was on my feet. I always looked up to her as a kid; I saw what she went through when I was growing up and whatever she went through she got through it with or without a man. Over the summer I spent so much time with myself.



*Beginning to heal.* I focused on myself and entered my healing stage. I was going on late night drives blasting music to get things off my mind, with the windows down. It felt like freeing. I went to a few beaches to tan, swim, and admire nature. Being at the beach was my peace. Laying on a soft towel, turning over on my back, tanning and waiting for the ice cream truck are all things that made me happy and thankful for the realization that maybe being by myself sometimes is good for me. Maybe in life it is not the friends we have or the money or the car we drive that brings us happiness. People and objects come and go. Maybe it is when we appreciate who we are and how far we've come that truly is what life is about.



*That's what life is all about.*