

## Mission

*Aletheia* (ah-LAY-thee-uh), which means “truth” in Greek, is a student outreach publication that strives to provide a voice for all students at Lynbrook High School. Inspired by Los Gatos High’s *Reality Check* and Monta Vista’s *Verdadera*, *Aletheia* was created to facilitate communication and overcome stigmas concerning prevalent and taboo issues within the Lynbrook community.

## About

At the beginning of the school year, the *Aletheia* staff designates a list of monthly topics pertaining to the realities of high school. Each issue comprises of firsthand experiences submitted anonymously by Lynbrook students and alumni, professional articles relating to that month’s theme, and resources compiled by the student staff. Finalized newsletters are uploaded online and emailed to Lynbrook families. Back issues can be found on our website, [www.lhsaletheia.org](http://www.lhsaletheia.org), under Archives.

The content in *Aletheia* is composed by the students of Lynbrook High School in San Jose, California. Ideas and opinions expressed within the publication are not necessarily reflected by members of the school administration or faculty.

This is the third issue of *Aletheia* for the 2014-15 school year.

## Submissions

All Lynbrook students and alumni are eligible to submit stories. We publish all submissions that adhere to our guidelines, which are posted on the website. The Aletheia staff is committed to preserving the integrity of your content and will not make any changes, with exception to certain profanity (which are asterisked-out) and basic spelling errors. We do not edit stories for grammar or syntax.

Our next topic is Abuse; submissions are due by January 25th. If you are interested in contributing, a submission box and a suggestion form for future topics are both available online.

*Expressing what  
remains unspoken.*

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Changes are hella weird, especially if you're changing from a platonic relationship to a romantic one, or back again. The first time I ever felt 100 percent broken--something weighing down my chest, nearly wanting to die--was right after I told a guy friend I wanted to try dating him (like after all the gross confessing stuff happened) and in retrospect that was probably my subconscious telling me to get the hell out of dodge, but I didn't listen. Not that changes in relationships are always bad. When you zoom out and look at your entire network of friends, gaining new acquaintances or bettering your relationship with one or two friends isn't exactly scary. Even having different people as your best friend throughout high school isn't so bad--as long as it's mutual. Changes in relationships, whether in the identities of your closest friends or in the kind of relationship you have with someone, really need to be mutual to allow for the most comfort on all sides. It's honestly very difficult for me to say that anyone I know well has changed, because changes in people occur in small increments and I'm around them too often to be able to notice those tiny changes. Like how you don't really notice that your nerdy little brother is now tall and kind of buff because you live with him all the time, but you definitely notice differences in people you haven't seen in a while. On the whole, there isn't anything inherently good or bad about change; it's just there, and how you deal with it is what determines your ultimate outcome.

*"There is nothing permanent except change."*

*-Heraclitus*

I've changed so much since freshman year, it's crazy to look back at it all. Though it was definitely a very rough path to get here.. I think i'm a better person now. And even if i didn't know what i was doing or i handled things completely wrong, i like to think that i've changed and learned from all the times i messed up badly. I always wish i could say that I embraced change but its really not the case. I know that change is inevitable and that people can use it for good or bad, but when things are going right, the last thing I want is for them to change. Everything has changed if you look back. Nothing ever stays the same. and sometimes it sucks.. but sometimes it's better and honestly, all you can do is try to find those little things that get better

because over time, things change and before you know it, everything you were trying so hard to hold on to, slips through your fingers like the last grains of sand in an hourglass.

~ ~ ~

I hate puberty

*"Things do not change; we change."*

*-Henry David Thoreau*

I was a loner in middle school. I never felt like I had true friends. People just tended to ignore me because they viewed me as shy and timid, which made it really hard for me to make friends. How was it possible for someone like me to look approachable when I had nothing to go off of? I'd try to talk to other people, but they're just too busy with their buddies, and I'd end up being ignored and go off to sitting on the ground because someone took that spot on the bench I usually sat on. I lived with that loneliness for years. And then my junior year hit. I began hanging out with a currently very good friend of mine at lunch because my old "friend" group didn't have 7th period. It really changed my life. Because her friends are my friends now, too. This helped me discover the meaning of having true friends. Some people say that you can't change your personality. I think I might have under the influence of my new friends, or I guess you could call it unlocking another side of myself. I find myself able to do things with confidence, and I'm not just "that quiet upper-classman" anymore. A certain someone described me as quiet but not shy. Which I never thought until he did. Some even think me as spontaneous, which I still think is kind of weird. I'm approached by people who I don't know, some of which who still keep coming back to me after I might have given them blank looks. Well, I'm not sure what else to write here, but even when I'm sad, I acknowledge that my life has definitely improved from what it was before. That transition from loneliness to having a unique friend group was absolutely a change I have to embrace. But a change from now... I really can't be sure. Time will change my life. I don't like staying up all night to finish my homework. I don't like doing college apps. There are plenty of things

I don't like right now. But when all of that is over, there are so many good things that will also disappear. No more of my sport. I'd have to leave my friends for college (unless I take a gap year or something). Well, yes, I'd get the opportunity to get a fresh start, but I can't help but wonder if that would jeopardize my relationship with my current friends. This includes my boyfriend. It's not that I think he's going to leave me when I graduate, but how are we supposed to work things out? I'm still dependent on my parents, I have no idea what to do with my future, and how to plan it. I don't want things to change before I know how to handle the situation. And what did I learn from all this "change" nonsense? The meaning of life. Love. Love yourself. Love your family. Love your friends. Love that special someone. Love even strangers (not the shady type of love, of course). So please, spread the love. Don't let others feel left out, like I did once.

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I get so sick of myself when I compare my present self with who I used to be. Long gone are the days where I would remember the tiniest details of everyone I interacted with, from their names to how many times they wore a certain shirt. I used to be a wholeheartedly considerate person; always evaluating my actions through the lenses of how other people would be affected. I, however, was also painfully shy and introverted. No one noticed that I cared so much about them; they were always drawn to the loud, funny, and bold people (and unfortunately, aren't we all today?). I started realizing that I had nearly no friends, especially when I moved to America for the first time, all because I was quiet. Thus, I decided to change myself and become the extrovert ideal. I started thinking less about other people and more about how I could hold their attention (more or less, I treated them as objects that I needed to please in order to gain friends and not be lonely. I still do this to people to this day). I stopped spending my days staring at the ceiling and pondering to myself about life, and started to think of ways to improve my 'horrible' introversion. I hate how American society has it set up so that extroverts always get the upper hand. The emphasis on school participation grades, group projects, interviews, soft skills... these all are advantageous towards people who are naturally inclined to talk. I have completely uprooted

my inherent and true personality in order to be more relatable and to actually have people care about me! Ironically, in the process of changing myself, I have stopped caring about other people. Do I remember the new kid's name? Not important to hold my attention anymore, because I'm too busy exalting myself in the opinions of others so that I can bond with them. Despite my increasing inability to remember the quiet people-who I used to be...who I know are used to being forgotten all the time and go through the pang of loneliness everyday-this extrovert ideal is working. I have made numerous friends, got into summer programs, and had my first thing with a guy over simply because I started being bold. I only changed one thing about myself (it wasn't even a character thing), and now suddenly the world thinks I'm 10x more valuable. This has just taught me what a pile of BS our American values are, because my character has gotten worse, and yet I'm still more appreciated than I ever have been in my life. The sad thing is that I'll keep disregarding the quieter ones and keep up this facade because I'm too afraid of being alone again.

*"The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance."*

*-Alan Watts*

Junior year is one of the biggest changes of my life, not only because of the enormous workload, but also because of the consequences the workload has on my relationships, namely, my friendship with my best friend. Since junior year started, we've been talking less and less. Before, we would just talk for hours and hours everyday, but now we get one or two conversations a week (if i'm lucky). Before, I could always chat her whenever i had anything on my mind, but now, I'm hesitant to because I don't want to disturb her and distract her from her academics. Of course, I would never ask her to put me in front of her academics and her future but we've been drifting apart so much lately that i'm beginning to question if we're close friends anymore. Because of this, I'll always look back on junior year and hate it not because of all the AP's and SAT's, but because this is the year i lost my best friend. This is one of the biggest sources of stress in my life and i'm slipping into depression because it's all i think about.

I used to be super tight with my family. Even through all the crap, we used to be close -- at least compared with my friends' families. Then I was just hurt so much I didn't want to handle it. I became the hostile one, the one that pushed them away. I read so many books and watched so many movies about how the teenage daughter pushes away her parent until they grow up and realize it's dumb. I don't want to be that teenager in the movie, but I am. This is the only way I can let them know how much I'm hurt by them -- by hurting them back. I try to stay as neutral as I can about everything, emotionless. I just do my thing, they do theirs. If we get into arguments, the arguments go nowhere and both sides just get more hurt. It's stupid. After Sophomore year's downturn, I began to lose faith in friends, myself, and basically everyone at Lynbrook. I just assumed that everyone at Lynbrook was so self-centered and academically-focused that they wouldn't give two craps about my personal struggles or whatever, because "everybody goes through the same thing." It's Senior year, and I've learned a little bit more about myself, and have decided to open up more and give people a chance. It's been turning out alright, actually.

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I always thought everyone was afraid of their parents. It was only after I entered LHS that I realized that pretty much everyone had regular conversations with their parents, and actually loved them. I just assumed my parents were stricter than usual and went along with it. Sure, I never really admitted to "loving" them but that's because I didn't understand that they were abusive. My perception of my parents changed when I found out that no one else's parents told them how disgustingly ugly they were, how morbidly obese they are, and to kill themselves. After a lot of support from internet forums (I couldn't bring myself to talk to my friends or counselors) I now keep minimal contact with my parents even though we live in the same house, counting down to the day I go to college. Although this was a drastic change in my life, my life has become so much better. Granted, when I do see my parents the emotional abuse is unrelenting, but I have hardened myself to ignore their malicious words and I know that I am of worth. I think it is important for everyone to recognize that change in response to a bad thing isn't always devastating. This change in my

life stemmed from the worst thing I've had to endure, to me realizing that I am worth something and not a slave to my parents' insults.

*"Sometimes it's the smallest decisions that can change your life forever."*

*-Keri Russell*

I've changed. I've changed a lot. Or maybe I haven't changed at all. But let's just say the change is that it's not about boys anymore. Actually maybe there was never a change and it was never about boys.

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People change a lot in high school. It's pretty crazy, especially as a senior to take a step back and reflect on your classmates, who 99% at the end of 8th grade were clean from drugs and drinking. Return to the present, and I think it's safe to say that at least 20-30% of seniors have done drugs or gotten drunk at least once during high school, if not more. This number's only going to go up by second semester too, and I can only wonder how many people will go unblemished through all of college (maybe 10 people at most?) It just goes to show that Lynbrook isn't that special from the likes of Cupertino or Homestead, we're just better at hiding it from most people. People have gotten mature in many ways, but in other ways we seniors still have our immature times. Change from Lynbrook is something most seniors desire, hoping to get away from the rigor, but at the same time Lynbrook has given us a unique perspective, one accustomed to hard work and diligence as opposed to other schools

*"It's funny how day by day, nothing changes. But when you look back, everything is different."*

*-Anonymous*

I used to think that people around me will always help me under my requests; however, I learned that it was no right. No body has the duty or respon-



sibility to support you. Ever since then, I learned to be more strong, and learn more things so that I don't need others helps, yet can be able to help others. 2/3/4) I was afraid because after I changed my thought, I also changed the way how I treated my friends. I never smile or talk to them anymore, which it bothers me a lot because it does not match my optimistic personality. Luckily that people around me still treat me the same, so I change the way how I treat my friends again. I will talk to them and have fun with them, but when comes the difficulties, I will solve them myself.

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Everyone's just gotten a whole lot s\*\*\*tier. Me included.

*"Since we cannot change reality, let us change the eyes which see reality."*

*-Nikos Kazantzakis*

For most of my life, I didn't live here. I was supposed to go to Prospect, and I lived in a 'ghetto' area, with mexicans and whites. The minute I came here it all changed. compeltely. especially what i hate is how white people are treated differently and are automatically considered popular. that skews with the regulatory system of life, and it's really weird. i hate that. bc the minute you're white and you go out into the real world THEN BOOM youre normal and you're not used to it. it really messes with your brain. this place is just too freaking sheltered and i hate it. the more and more i stay here, the less i'm used to being in the real world and the change here affects me in a bad way. this place sucks.

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I love this quote from renowned psychologist Carl Rogers, "The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change." We obviously can't change all of the negative messages we get about ourselves. We can, however, learn to love and value ourselves. Our imperfections and differences do not make us unworthy. They simply make us human. I

don't need to change my own views about myself; others need to change their judgments of me.

*"Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."*

*-John F. Kennedy*

Lynbrook has taught me hate and failure. But most important of all, Lynbrook has also taught me there is no such thing as happiness.

~ ~ ~

S\*\*\*. I'm growing. What the f\*\*\* I was 10 years old and on the playground like last month. Last week was freshman year where I got my first boyfriend and tried drugs. It's also when I had a steamy hookup in the back of another boy's car for the first time. Yesterday was Sophomore year, during which I made out under the stars with that boy I knew I loved. But I managed to f\*\*\* even that up and became this rotten girl. I'm so sorry. Now I'm 16 and my life consists solely of school, homework, work, and sleep. I'm falling into an existential crisis, and I'm stuck in the stupid pot hole depression gives me occasionally. These weren't my worries as a child, or even as a pubescent teenager. I'm f\*\*\*ing old, and I'm scared as s\*\*\* to get older. I'm petrified. I used to daydream of the days when I would go to parties, learn what it feels like to get drunk, and be able to spend all my money on Reese's peanut butter cups without being scolded by my mom. But I sit at home instead of on a cute boy's lap. I cringe at the memory of the time I got so drunk I passed out on my bathroom floor and pissed myself. Oh yeah, and all my money just goes to buying weed. Change is my biggest nightmare, because I know the more time I give myself, the more I'll smear and spoil everything else.

## Kathy White

### MFT

Kathy White is in private practice in San Jose where she provides counseling services to a variety of clients including teens and their families. For more information visit [www.kathywhitemft.com](http://www.kathywhitemft.com).

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What would it be like in a world without change? Now that's a disturbing question. Lost possibilities. No growth. Being stuck.

As a Marriage and Family Therapist I am in the business of change, and so I am biased. But hear me out. Like I've said hundreds of times to myself and to others, change requires work. Seriously. If nothing changes, then nothing changes. It sounds redundant, even silly, but it's the truth. If I want something different, something must change in order to achieve my desired goal. And yet change can be elusive, difficult, even mind boggling.

Here are a few definitions of the word change:

- to make the form, nature, content, future course of something different from what it is or from what it would be if left alone;
- to transform or convert;
- to give or get smaller money in exchange for;
- to become different; to become altered or modified;
- to pass gradually into; to transfer between trains or other conveyances;
- to change one's clothes;
- the passing from one place, state, form, or phase to another;
- a variation or deviation;
- a harmonic progression from one tonality to another; modulation.

Harriet Lerner's bestseller, *The Dance of Anger*, gives us an interesting view of change. While the context of the book is about relationships, please indulge me with a brief excerpt:

Even rats in a maze learn to vary their behavior if they keep hitting a dead end. Why in the world, then, do we behave less intelligently than laboratory animals? The answer by now may be obvious. Repeating the same old fights protect us from the anxieties we are bound to experience when we make a change. Ineffective fighting allows us to stop the clock when our efforts to achieve greater clarity become too threatening. Sometimes staying stuck is what we need to do until the time comes when we are confident that it is safe to get unstuck.

From this description of change, or the lack thereof, we can begin to make some sense of the process of change. It's scary to change from what we have come to know so well, the habits we have incorporated into our relationships and practices. There's an unknown factor with change. It's risky.

A little analysis of our current behavior that we want to change might be helpful. Start by looking at the current behavior, thought or feeling that you are considering changing. Ask yourself, "How does the current behavior benefit me?" I know, it's counter intuitive. But if we can identify the behavior we want to change, and look at it honestly, we might be able to discover the benefit. That benefit is important, as it keeps us in our old ways. Or said another way, it gets in the way of change.

Here's an example. Let's say that I want to become more physically active. So I evaluate my current level of physical activity, and realize it is less than I

want it to be. So before I jump into goal setting regarding my desired change, I take a step back and look at what I am doing currently.

So let's say I come home from school or work exhausted, and I soon find myself in front of one of any the various screens available – television screens, computer screens, phone screens. Before I know it, I've been there for well over an hour. I get a little stressed because I have homework to do, or chores or whatever. There can be a variety of benefits to this hour-plus of supposedly wasted time. It could be beneficial to simply have a break between school and homework, get something to eat, get out of chores or avoid a difficult conversation. I'm sure there are many other examples of such benefits. Let's go with needing a break between school and homework for this example. That's legitimate.

I also need to consider the costs of taking a break after school or work. Such costs might include becoming distracted, difficulty focusing, forgetting to return a text to a friend or family member or simply losing track of time. Possibly the break costs more than is apparent on the surface. I need to weigh the costs and benefits of taking a break after work or school in order to make an informed decision. By the way, weighing the costs and benefits of any behavior, thought or feeling is an individual determination.

Look at the benefits. For one person it would be very beneficial to take a break in order to get something to eat. For another person it would be to check in with a friend before doing homework. It also might help to consider how the day of the week or other obligations would also influence the degree of benefit.

Look at the costs. For one person it would be costly to take a break before homework or chores, such as being an older sibling who has been given the responsibility of overseeing a younger sibling getting home from school. For another person it would be more costly to go straight to homework, as possibly by waiting for a parent to get home would be more efficient.

Give it a try. Give it some time to consider the costs and the benefits. There might be some hidden costs or benefits, so give it some time to gather a more complete list. Comparing the costs and benefits of a potential change is one way to make a more informed decision.

Oh by the way, trying to change someone else doesn't usually work out so well. You'll have much better results looking at yourself

## Additional Resources

### Feeling Good

*By David D. Burns, M.D.*

### Get Out of My Life, but first could you drive me and Cheryl to the mall?

*By Anthony E. Wolf, PhD*

### How to Talk So Teens Will Listen and Listen So Teens Will Talk

*By Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish*

### Reviving Ophelia

*By Mary Pipher, PhD*

### The Dance of Anger

*By Harriet Lerner, PhD*