

Recovery

"You smell like a bonfire" is something I hear a lot when the weather is nice. A combination of not wanting to do laundry and having one solitary cozy shacket inevitably leaves me smelling like tree sap more often than not in the fall. To me, a bonfire means a couple of good things have come together that day. To have time to get firewood, make several attempts to light it, and enjoy a few hours in nature with friends has become a deeply cherished set of circumstances as a supposedly functioning adult.

It's around the bonfire that I can relax and be present with the people I love. In the moment, I feel the warmth of the fire as the sun hides below the distant landscape, taste the creamy mush of a marshmallow sandwiched between graham crackers, smell hot dogs roasting away, and listen to the rustle of leaves as the fire melts the rope entangled in the tug-of-war between medicine's demands and our self-preservation. Once the fire is roaring and I'm wrapped in a cozy blanket and the medical student version of Catholic guilt melts away, I feel my mind making its voyage back from the hospital to my body.