

After tonight there will be points where it might feel like you can't go any further, you'll breathe in for air but you'll get water. When you're thrown into the ocean it's easy to drown. I feel like I've been drowning my whole life, but there's life preservers, I have been thrown a lot. All my brilliant teachers who have pushed me to be my best, my family who taught me to swim, and my amazing friends who help me in so many ways to just keep swimming.

There are huge waves, and they can bury you in the sea and it's really hard to swim up. But as long as you have people around you who care about you, and I mean really care about you, then you'll have no problem swimming back up to the surface. Surround yourself with those kinds of people and you won't be alone, life will be really hard, sure; But you won't be alone.

So many times in my life I've thought about giving up and letting myself drift off to shore. Last summer I lost those kinds of people that kept me afloat and I got really close to drifting off. And while I was approaching that sandy beach, floating through the glistening cyan water I saw the ocean in a different perspective.

I realized life isn't about surviving the waves, because we are the waves. Each of us gradually moves into a large beautiful crescent of water and then in our time folds onto shore having our history ripple through the ocean for the other waves to bounce off of.

We are all the ocean, all of us starting and ending in the same way. Life is not about trying to stay above water, it's about being one with the water.

So as we leave highschool and experience so many new emotions and experiences, as we go through difficult times and the happiest moments of our lives, remember the wave. Don't fight for air, take a deep breath in and remember it's all around you. If you feel alone, remember that every single one of us is a part of the ocean, so there is always going to be someone there to

care about you. Remember to take the time to feel the wind, to watch the birds soar above you, to be one with the ocean, do that and you'll never drown.