Stressed out

" Go to sleep!"" I can't, Mom! I have to study for this Biology test tomorrow!" It is currently two o'clock in the morning and I am still up. I have not gotten even a second of sleep so far. And I probably will not get any sleep at all tonight because of this test because I have to know all of the information perfectly.

I cannot mess up on even one fact. Because then I will not get a perfect score on the test. School is no longer just a place where everyone is happy and excited to learn. That is not the case anymore among my friends and I. It is a competition to see who can be the best student and earn the highest grades.

Personally, I do not enjoy the competition. Why make something so cutthroat when it does not need to be that way? Why not just learn for the sake of learning? Why not just enjoy school and be happy instead of constantly being stressed about it and becoming depressed? I do not remember school always being like this. I used to love attending school. Every day that I would come home I would look forward to what new information I would learn the following day. All of my friends were the same way. Everyone was excited for what a new day would bring at school.

Everyone would come in with cheerful faces and leave with slight sighs that an amazing day at school had come to an end. Ever since I entered high school, though, that dynamic has changed. College is on the forefront of everyone's minds and they do everything in order to impress the college of their dreams. I have sadly done this as well. Everyone is freaking out about their futures and what their futures will bring while at the same time,

ignoring the amazing events that are happening to them at this very moment. Half of the people in my grade do not even enjoy the extracurricular activities that they participate in; they just do them so that a college will like what they read on that person's resume.

What has happened to doing something because you enjoy it and want to pursue it, not someone else? It is your life and you should live it the way that you want to, not someone else. I personally have some friends who only see their classmates as competition, not friends. Every time I spend time with them, the main topic of discussion is about school. After every test the first words out of their mouths are " So, what did you get?". They have no time to spend some time with friends because they are constantly studying for an upcoming test. They are always trying to bribe the teachers to give them a good recommendation for college.

They are constantly stressed. If they get even just a point lower than they wanted to they get livid because they feel that it ruins their once perfect GPA. But does it really? Is school really worth all of the stress that comes along with it? I certainly do not believe that colleges aim to force this mentality on teenagers. Colleges just want to have well-rounded, intelligent individuals who have the potential to better the world. Yet, the mentality still seems to find its way into teenagers' minds and makes them incredibly stressed. My question is: how and why is this the case?