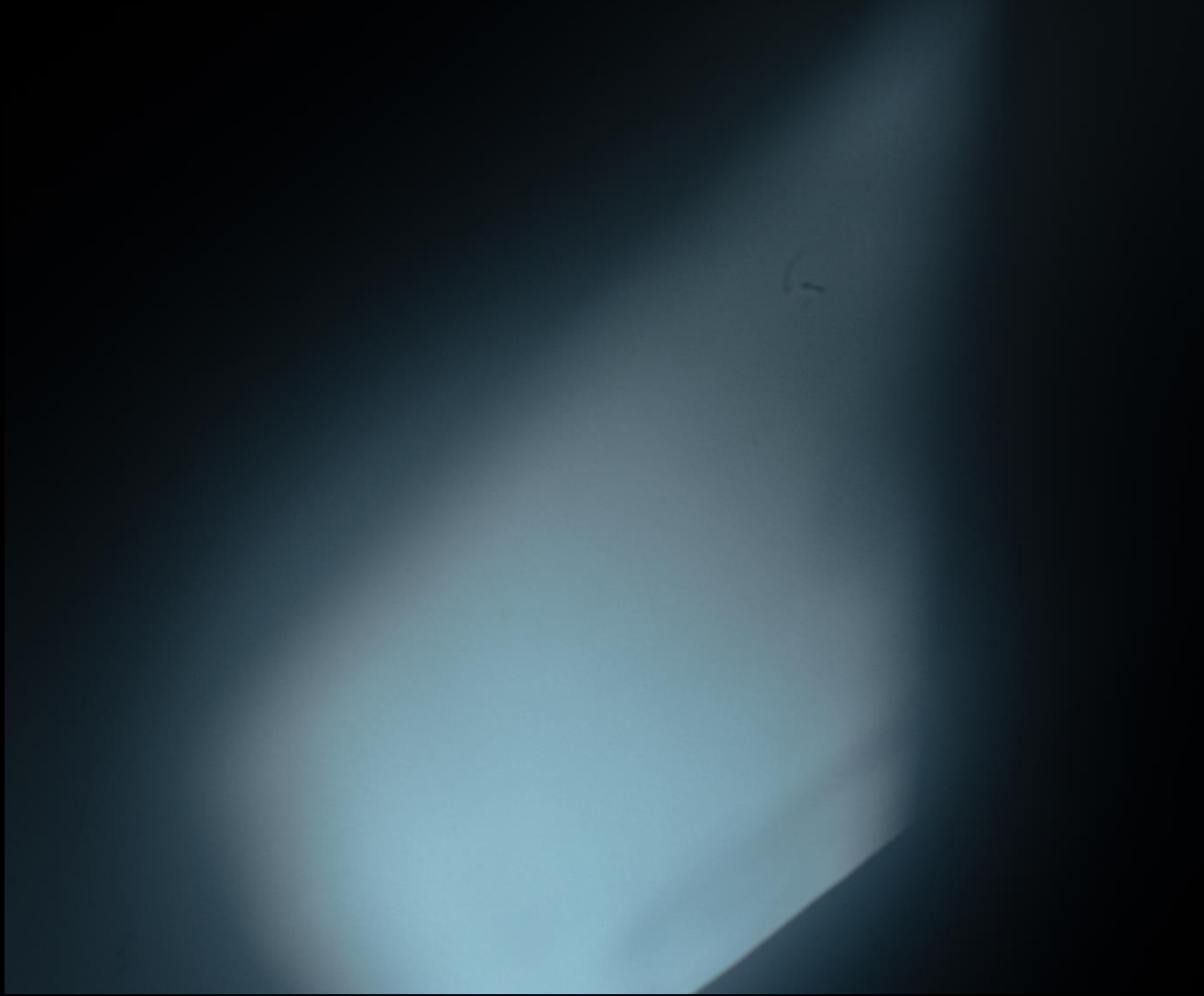


# PROPOSAL FORM



Joshua Williams

- **Mental Health-** a state of psychological and emotional well being where an individual is able to use their cognitive and emotional capabilities, meet the ordinary demand and functions in the society

# THE PROJECT

PROPOSED PROJECT NAME : I MATTER

## Key words

### A Summary of the project (100 words maximum)

- **Discovery**
  - **Performance**
  - **Abstract**
  - **Setraline**
  - **Depression**
- The outcome intended for this project is to be an exhibition and immersive experience that demonstrate my mental health, my mental health has been a key factor in my journey as an artist so therefore to end this part of my journey in my professional practice I intend to create a documentary piece on myself. I will explore different techniques and mediums when creating this documentary series to allow for one to see the world through the realities of what anxieties can do to oneself and therefore influence the creative decision.
- 

**Whats are the main risks and challenges to your project meeting its aims ? What will you do to manage these risks ? Mitigation (100 words max)**

The main challenge that my project meeting its aims faces is both the ethical concerns facing my project along with it also falling into the trap of being 'another' photographic interpretation of mental health. When we research the concept of mental health there is A sea of intepretations, there is pontential if I do not experiment enough my project could become lost in this while also not portraying the correct messages about my personal experiencethrough unqiue experimentation.

# PROVIDE A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT (250 WORDS)

When I begin to consider myself as an individual, mental health is a part of my identity and has very much become intertwined with my development as a person. This project is supposed to act as my method of communicating my reality to another viewer in a way in which they relate or feel in the way I do. When creating these works, I do not intend to make these works using methods of 'conventional 'mental health photography, rather I want to find a developmental method that breaks convention. Through this process of experimentation, I will explore analogue methods and touch upon conventional methods of photography so I can begin to take elements from each of these to find a direction for my process. I will also touch upon sound, Pinhole and practical methods of photography when considering how to form the works I Intend to create as practical explorations. The anthesis of this project is when the audience view my work, they have a connection to the image itself regardless of how the connection itself is formed between the viewer and the image as I endeavor to include traces of my struggles and coping mechanism. The abstract methods I intend to create because of experimentation are supposed to be a direct correlation of my experiences of mental health and how they have distorted my reality as a photographer and an artist but mainly as a person in life itself.

# TIMELINE

**October 2024** – Conduct Artist and theorist research to begin the framework of how to conduct practical exploration. Also begin to shoot digital and analogue to experiment with outcomes, examine how these outcomes will be interpreted and whether they will line with the concept that I am following or whether I need to find a new way to explore this subject.

**November 2024** – Begin to explore how one represent anxiety and depression and begin to select traits that I can explore photographically explore how I could begin the employ methods such as pinhole cameras as a more personalized method of shooting, so it has a closer relation to my shoot. Do a shoot using the filter I have created from my crushed sertraline and use it shoot my normal day routine but using this filter to obscure the image.

**December 2024** – Study my experience of reading mental health books in specific benches and capture this relationship. Also begin I use lighting kits outside so can shoot at nighttime. Also begin to review the results from my experimentation to determine which method is best to follow in the following months. continue to push with the concept of my own filter as it is a concept that has a working method.

**January 2025**– Continue reading about the relationship between mental health and imagery and how one portrays this relationship in depth in relation to my own mental health. Take all the experimentation from the first semester and begin to expand on it taking the concept of making my own filter but I larger A5 quantities

**February 2025** – Examine the outcomes from Janaurys and creating the smaller prints and see what outcome it produces, potentially begin to place the setraline in new material to see how it reacts.

**March 2025** -Begin to consider how I can form my own work in the exhibition context, discuss with Dan how to consider how I can creating a light box to display my prints in and begin to experiment with the concept and how it aligns with my work.

**April 2025** - Start to print on all paper types in these coming weeks, to examine how the colours and tablets work in each of these prints so I can begin to understand what paper type will work best. Begin to finalize my process and prefect and continuously shoot using my chosen method. Have lightbox drafts ready so I can start to cosndier any issues that may arise from this

May 2025 - Exhibition

# BUDGET

| ITEM                                        | COST                          | Pinhole Lense<br>12/17/2024 |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Kodak Gold 35mm Film x6 Roll                | £64.00                        |                             |
| Travel Costs                                | £150 Train tickets            |                             |
| Canon R6 Mark II (Sourced from canon).      | £3,500                        |                             |
| Adobe Subscription (Photography plan)       | £19.97 per month.             |                             |
| Olympus WS853 Audio recorder                | £66.00                        |                             |
| Laminate sheets                             | £5.00 per pack of 10          |                             |
| Acetate                                     | £10.00 per pack of 10         |                             |
| Printing costs (10 A5 Prints) including ink | £9.57                         |                             |
| Fellowes Ion A4 Laminator                   | £24.99 (From Argos)           |                             |
| Lightbox                                    | £500 to outsource being built |                             |
| Pinhole camera Lense                        | 17.99 (First call photo)      |                             |
|                                             |                               |                             |
| Total                                       | £ 4357.95                     |                             |
|                                             |                               |                             |
|                                             |                               |                             |

# GEORGIE WILEMAN



Georgie Wileman photography is focused, on how she represents the psychological in photography as it can be denoted from her work. Her project 'Boys do cry' explore the mental health crisis among men but glorifies their fragility and state of vulnerability on these moments, she also captures the effect that depression can have on your surroundings and the behaviors it can lead to such as closed blinds, staying in bed ect. For my own exploration and experimentation Wilemans works are a pivotal exploration for how I capture my depression and anxiety's and provides me a foundation to start experimenting with how I capture my depressive traits that I exhibit on a daily basis. Wilemans work also provides me context for how I can begin to find a way to form my work in the expansive branch that is mental health, representation in terms of mental health is a expansive topic that 'I' to provoke my voice and my struggles through.

# SOLE SATANA



The image above is from Satana's series 'a bad place' it follows her mother's anxiety and depression. This series is supposed to represent how she views the world each day, a bat inspired her project as it became trapped in her room, and she associated herself with that bat leading to this series of obscure and abstract images that feel profoundly connected to her sense of self. Satana's work identifies what I intend to explore within my works this semester I desire for my images be a lens into my struggles in the way that satana has, to demonstrate the control the anxiety and depression I feel each day has over me .

Satanas works will act a framework much like Wilemans, for how I can build a series of works intertwined with **one's** emotions and the techniques I can employ when considering these factors such as her use of self-portraiture and her obscure landscape imagery that represents the overwhelming feelings she experiences from her anxiety and depression.

# JEFF WALL – INSOMNIA

This series by Jeff Wall was done to portray the condition of insomnia that he was suffering at the time. The image in itself has a lot of content that can be denoted and connoted such as we can denote the table, the individual under the table while we can connote from the image a sense of coldness and isolation. The reason I chose to examine this image in relation to my series of work this semester is it falls in line with my works and also brought forward the connection by works have with semiotics as a theory itself. For my images to be successful like Jeff Wall's they need to have the substance there for my viewer to be able to denote and connote from my series of images related to mental health for the project itself to be successful in its relationship with my deeper personal feelings.



# HOW THE ARTISTS WILL INFORM MY WORK

Each of the artists the I have explored above have been chosen as each of them has an element that will inform my practice this semester. Walls work offers me a unique perspective into how I can use the theory of semiotics within my works as his images offer a deeper insight to mental health through the signifiers he offers through the framing while also laying bare the signified objects showing how for my images I must try follow this format in my experimentation.

Wileman's work offers a view in the the 'mundane' mental health representation rather they are what society views as the stereotypical art form. The key concepts to take away from Wileman's works are the emotions the lay behind each of the images offers access to the fragility and the vulnerability of men so therefore her work poses a key consideration for how I may personalise my works. Offering the audience a viewpoint into when I am at my most vulnerable.

Satanas works are the final cornerstone of how I will structure and compose my images alternatively, to Wileman and Walls her works are an abstract interpretation of how mental health can be perceived offering me a new alternative way of representing my mental health choosing materials or obscure landscapes that I can associate with my emotions. Satana's works offer a new route for experimentation within my works and how I can further intertwine my emotions with my surroundings when I capture it through a lens.

Each of these artist have presented a route for experimentation and concepts throughout my practice.

# JOHN SULER – PHOTOGRAPHIC PSYCHOLOGY

## IMAGE & PSYCHE

How does this text relate to my practice?

When considering how I endeavor to photograph my own mental health as an image that can be perceived in the desired way I must consider how other photographers have interpreted and therefore represented mental health in their own practice. Mental health photography can take many forms but often it is:

- Exposing
- Celebratory
- empowering
- Personal
- Uncomfortable
- Surreal

- When considering the concept of mental health and photography, often how we represent this is very often related to the individual and their psyche and the way in which they form their image is the foundation of how they allow people to interpret these images. This book by Suler delves into the idea of capturing human psychology in photography, he examines the relationship between the individuals and how we interpret a photo but focuses on the psychology of it. In one image Suler had his daughter tuck herself into her body to represent the "inner focus" and "internal struggle" just through the movements of her body, it demonstrates the semiotics in everything we do, actions and body movement can portray how we feel alone in ourselves he focuses in the of the subtle features we can bring out in an image to 'represent a feeling'. Often the surreal is used as a concept for exploring how we examine mental health in individuals, and this is something that Suler explores in his novel once again. In the image it is clearly seen that to maintain the 'human element' in the image while also representing the struggles with staying connected with oneself in life and capturing it this way clearly displays this concept.
- Suler's book, demonstrates the convoluted way one can explore the idea of psychology and photography, we as people interpret things in a certain way. The reason I started to consider this text and the relationship between psyche and image is due to how I want to create abstract image that relate to my mental health to one's psyche must be a consideration when I seek to allow people to relate to my works in an essence. <https://www.johnsuler.com/pdfs/photopsy.pdf>

# PRACTICE BASED EXPERIMENTS

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# HOW I INTERPRET MY MENTAL HEALTH



When I begin to consider where do I begin? With a topic as broad as mental health I decided to start mapping key feeling, objects or actions I conduct when I am at my worst so I can take of these words to begin the developmental process of my works.

# *I MATTER*

The concept for this project follows the narrative that has very much laid the foundation for what has become my creative practice. My mental health was a driver for why I started to use a camera, it was my relief from the everyday perils I faced as a result of my depression and anxieties.

This series of works is something personal for me and as a photographer my works have always been disconnected from myself rather, I have been examining other people through my works, but I want to touch on why I am photographer and how my mental health is a direct contributor to each of my series of work . In this series I will endeavor to explore all methods of photography from conceptual, digital, analogue and film I will explore all aspects of these methods of creating imagery to endeavor to see which connect with my own mental health and allow the viewer to relate to be deep sense of disappear.

Thus project is essentially for myself, it is to end this period of my works as a photographer examining the very reason I started taking photos in the first place poetically.

# ANXIOUS TRAITS

For this stage of my experimentation I wanted to endeavor in how I capture my various traits that I display when I am at my most anxious. To create these images I used an ND filter on my lens and then conducted a long exposure while my hands and legs were shaking as they do when I am anxious. This process although successful in how I can further experiment with my anxious traits it did not identify with my anxious traits as I endeavored it to the images were complimentary of these traits but to the viewer it would not properly resemble my emotions to them from these images.

This experiment was useful as it demonstrated the long exposure is not a process I will further explore in relation to this project.



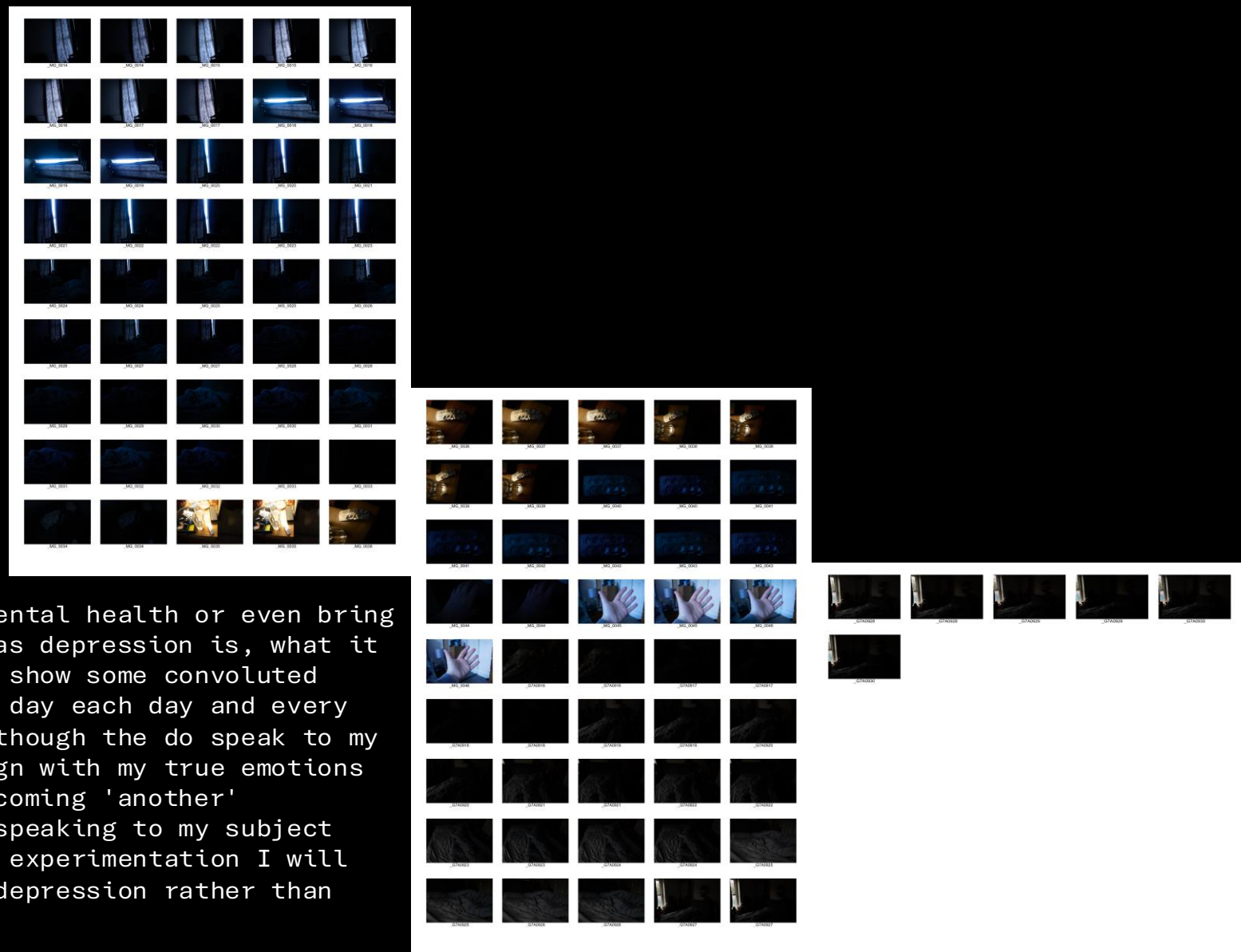
# ANXIOUS TRAITS



# DEPRESSIVE TRAITS

As apart, of my experimentation into my depression and how I represent it. I must explore my depressive traits also what I do, when I have a bad day how do I Relay that to the viewer and how do I explore this further in my day to day experiences of when I am depressed. Each of these questions I Pose will from the foundation of these experiments. These images relate the paralysis I feel some mornings and the perception of how the idea of removing the duvet cover can sometimes feel like a weight that is too much for me to even begin the day.

This project is not intended to glorify my mental health or even bring awareness, it is simply intended to show it as depression is, what it is like on a bad day, I am not attempting to show some convoluted representation it I simply my reality and my day each day and every day. These images in relation to my topic although the do speak to my subject matter, they do not represent or align with my true emotions personally. These images pose the risk of becoming 'another' interpretation of mental health rather than speaking to my subject matter as I intended so I believe for future experimentation I will look to abstract methods of representing my depression rather than allowing my images to become 'another'.



# DEPRESSIVE TRAITS

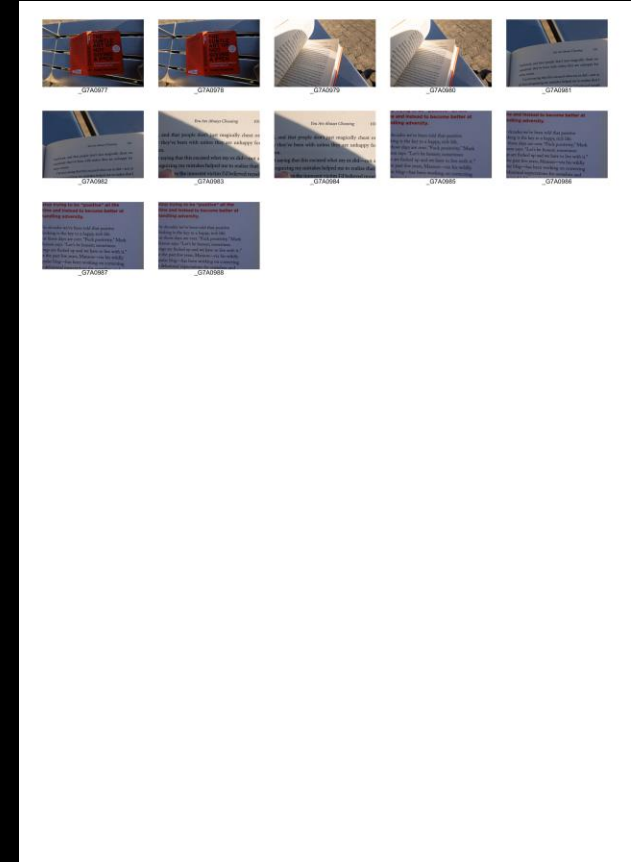
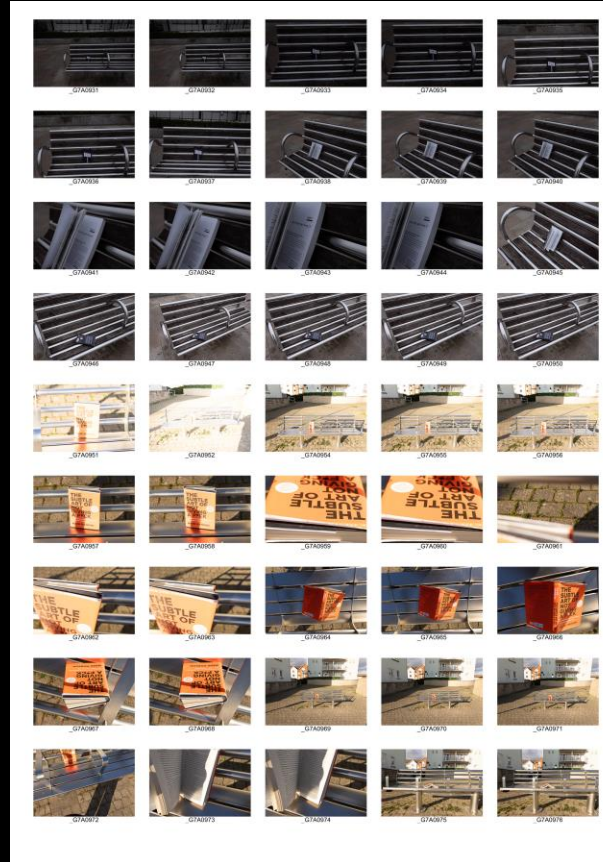


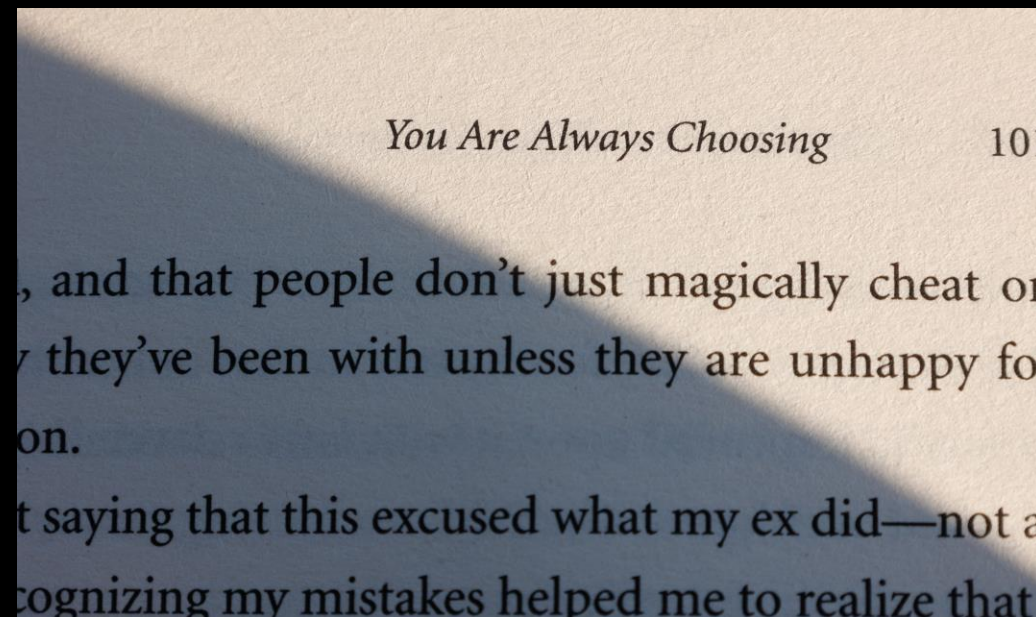
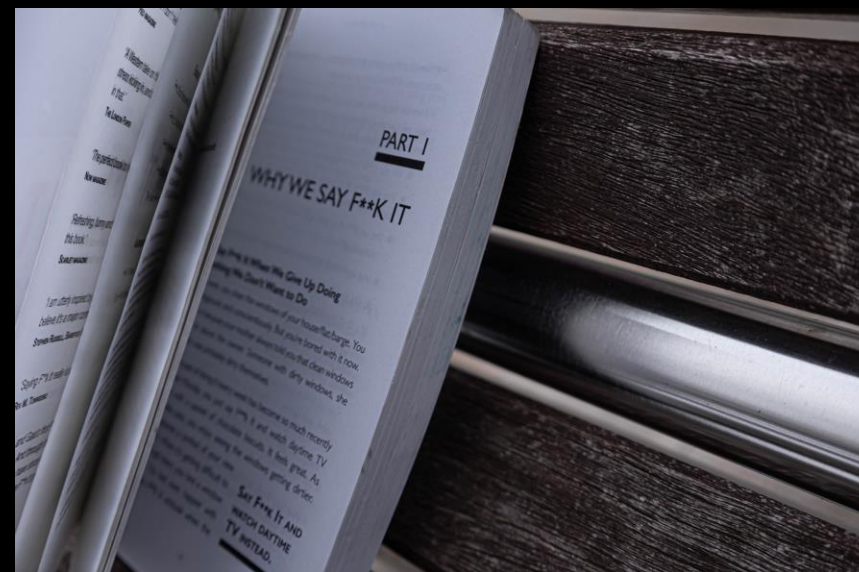
# MY RELIEF

Often when I found myself lost in my anxiety or depression, I would find myself going to the coast to read. So as a part of my shoot I have begun to explore the spaces that I inhabited when reading but rather than including myself in these images rather I have allowed the books I read in these spaces to inhabit it instead.

Within this experimentation I have begun to see the potential to explore some key parts of the text within this book as there are key concepts that I have taken from these novels are a coping mechanism for myself in the moments I struggle most. So a methodology present and therefore there is potential to explore these spaces in analogue while also focusing the camera on the text in the book that has stuck with me, as a form of life lesson in essence .

Moving forward from the experimentation that I Have conducted through this methodology there is a method to be found within the books and how personal some of the text is to me, so further to this I will explore using a pinhole camera capturing key pages of the text that hold the most value to me as an individual but by using the pinhole it will maintain my narrow viewpoint of these texts and what I take from them.





# CREATING THE FILTER

- The purpose of this project is supposed to go against the conventions of what mental health photography has already established itself as. To personalise this project even further, I wanted to create filters for my works using my crushed sertraline and I create a working method to achieve this.
- -Use Acetate that is cut out in the shape of a standard 85-135mm filter.
- -Once I Have completed this process, I place the cut out acetate into a laminating sleeve and laminate it to create the filter that I can then use to cover the camera lens.
- The purpose of this method is so I can create a distortion between the viewer and the reality it is supposed to be poetic to what my realtiy has become since I started taking my Sertraline. This working method that I have create to create my works allows me to further delve into the concept of the 'abstract' way of presenting method health that goes against the current conformities that are present in society.

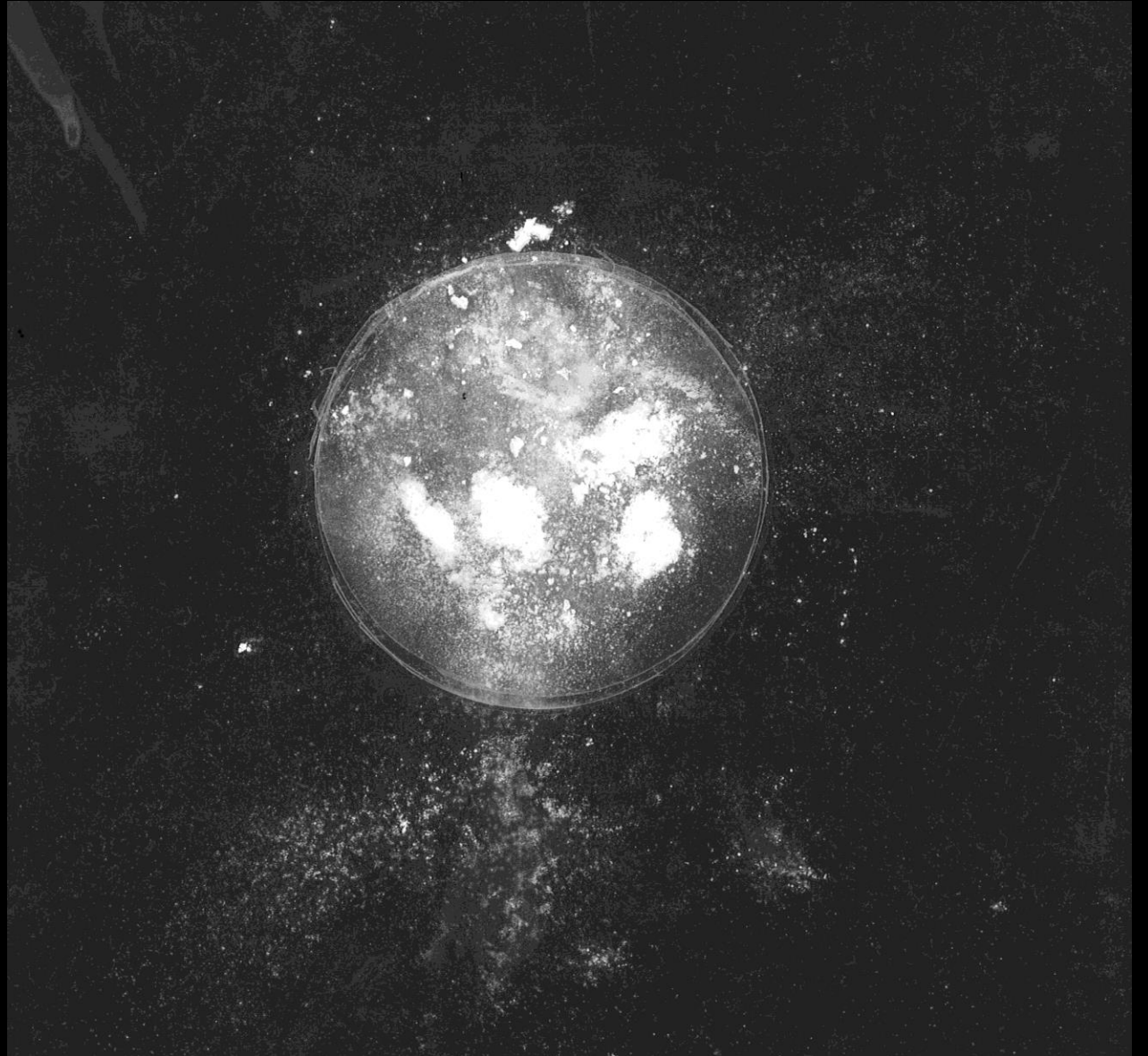


*Outcome of process*

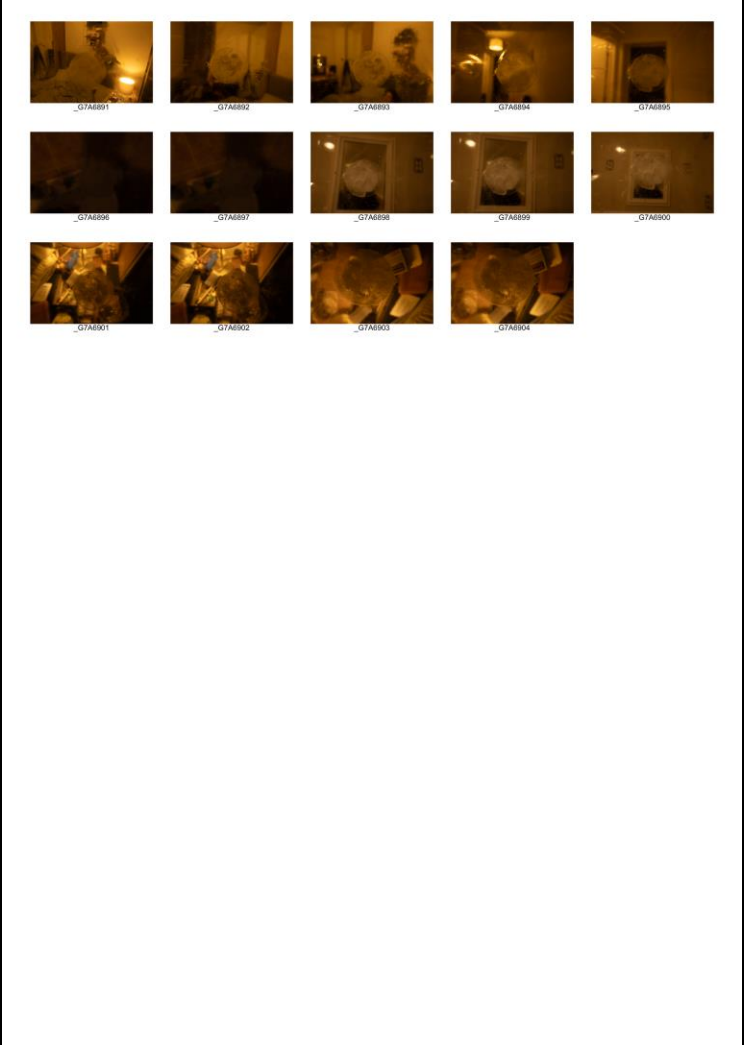
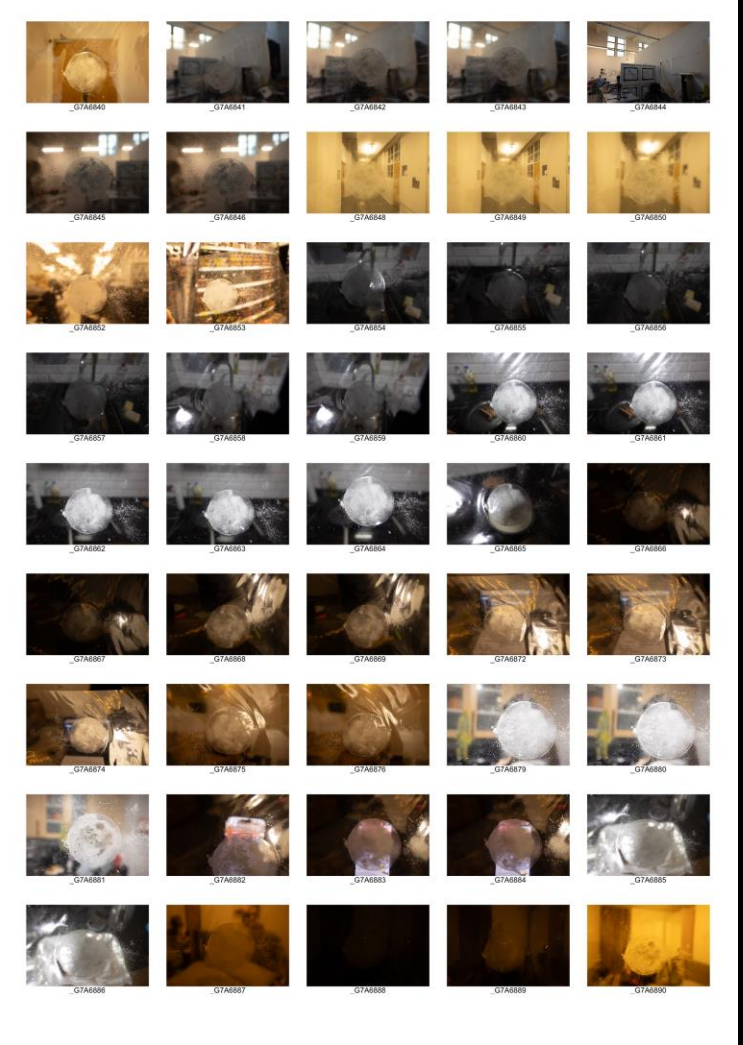
# FILTER

When I consider my depression and anxiety, I often cannot comprehend coping with this without my sertraline which is an antidepressant known as an SSRI .

So I had to consider how to I begin to explore the concept photographically, as the sertraline is now my lens without it my interpretation of the world is the weight that I cannot lift as I experienced in the summer which meant I am now on 100mg. So using acetate and laminating sheet I created this transparent filter that has my sertraline crushed to the proportion of a lens, through doing this I am going to do a shoot following my normal day but use this lens to distort my images to perhaps capture how I interpret the world through this concept.



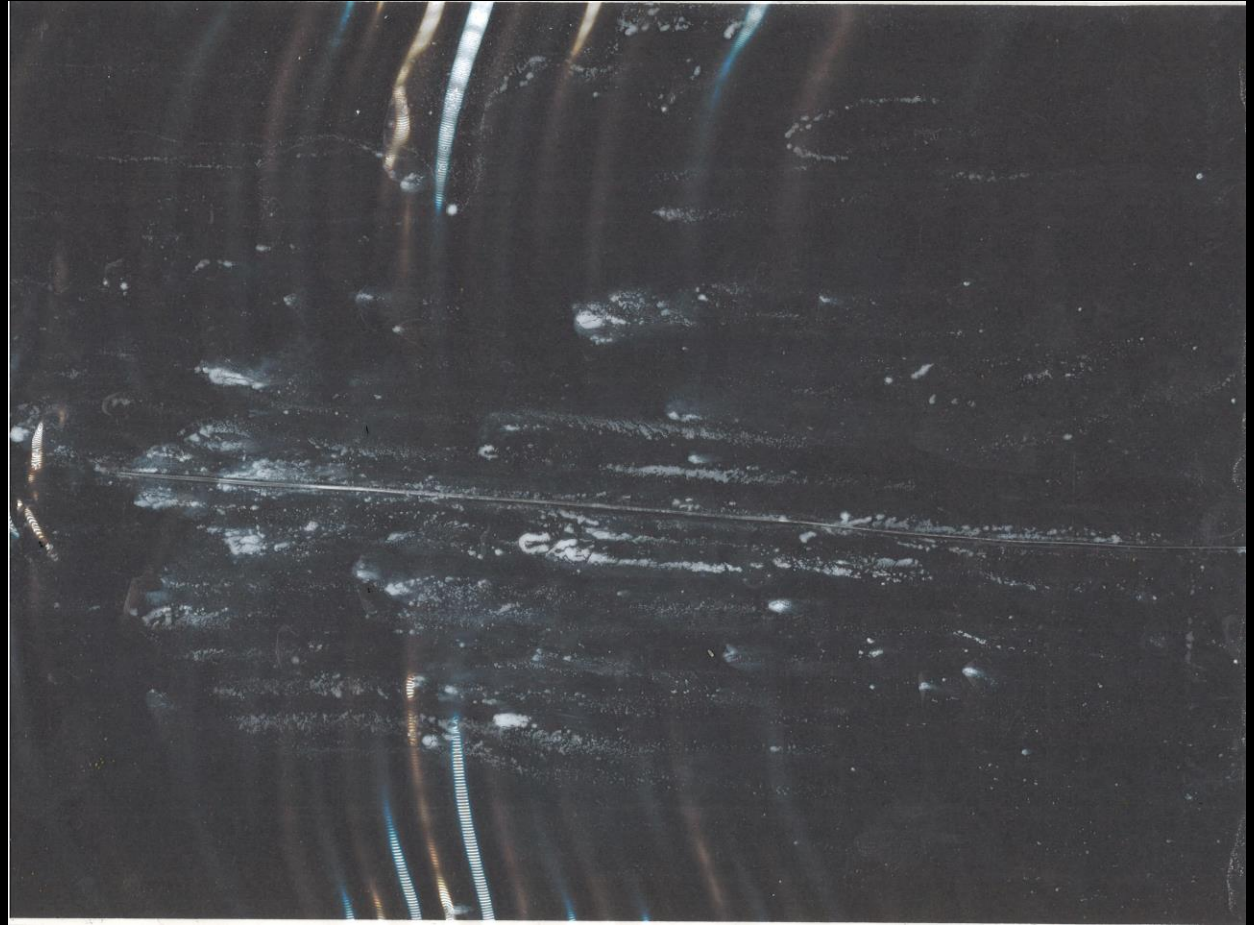
# CONTACT SHEETS





# WATER

When we consider mental health, we often attribute it to a feeling, usually low but when exploring a topic like mental health photographically the experimentation that takes place must take into consideration the idea of 'feeling 'and how it is captured visually. To expand upon this idea I have Started mixing water with my tablets as this a process that takes place in pharmacy's so they can expand the medication so it lasts longer. The reason I have chosen this as one of my experimentations as water and feeling have a symbiotic relationship, you 'feel' water each day when you touch it similiary to how I feel my depression each and every day. The process I undertook to create this print consistent on me crushing my tablets which then I added water to which was then placed into a laminating sleeve so I could create the effect as seen to right after I have scanned the image in.



# AUDIO

When exploring the idea of depression and anxiety sound and my surroundings are something that often affect my reactions and my emotions because, I find myself often overwhelmed and simply not present in many situations I am presented with due to me already becoming anxious and the noises around me enhance that feeling.. One coping mechanism I employed when I was at my lowest was to walk along the coast and just listen to the sounds that surrounded me focusing on any minor noise that may surround me.

So, to work alongside my imagery in an exhibition space I have begun to record audio in the spaces and areas that I went to, to zone out of the world that surrounds me. I have also recorded audio in the moments I feel most overwhelmed coupled with my other concept I believe audio could be a ample element to add to further my concept of connecting the audience with my emotions as often nothing can engross or envelop someone like an audio snippet can.



Anxious Moment



Costal Walk



Reading

# EXHIBITION CONCEPTS USING AI

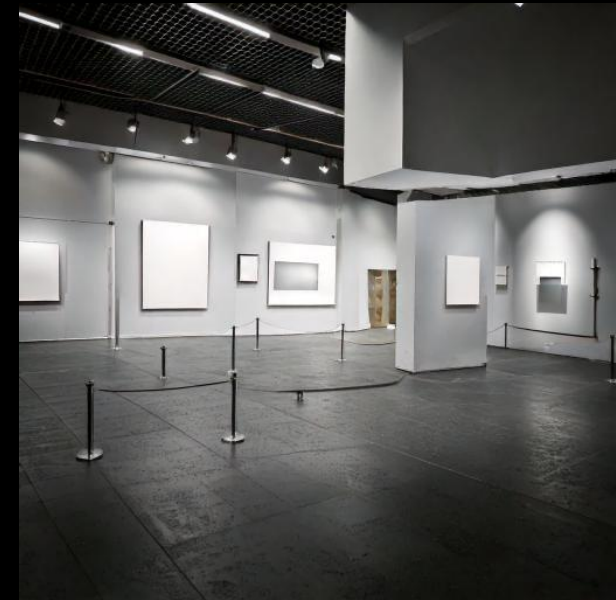
When I start to consider how this work would be interpreted in an exhibition I wanted to experiment with the concept on how AI would interpret the mental health concept I am experimenting with my work. It seems to me that AI cannot comprehend the concept of my works when translating it to an exhibition space which is poetic to me and my own journey of mental health as often when I speak to people about my mental health, they often fail to comprehend how much it weighs me down day to day and it is an interesting point that despite all its power and control over the modern day it could not comprehend my vision.

## Why have I looked at AI?

Often in society we struggle as people to perceive mental health, or we misconceive, and this is a staple for my project this semester. Exploring how an unfeeling entity in relation to mental health is an interesting research point for work this semester the representations on the right these are not representative of topic or exploration of mental health I intend to explore as the AI cannot conceive mental health regardless of how specific my briefs are for it.

## Phrases I searched

*"create a exhibition space around mental health in relation to the images attached ensuring it leaves open for interpretation for the viewer."*

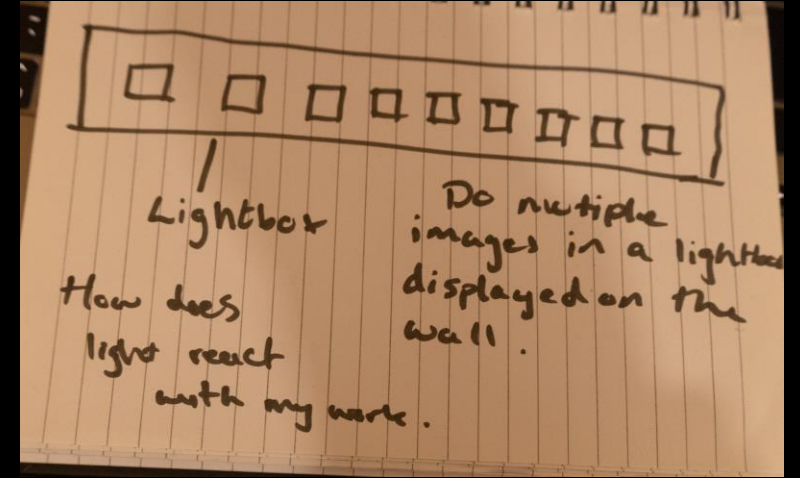


# MY PERSONAL EXHIBITION DESIGN

When I start to consider how my work will be displayed in an exhibition space, my mind drifted to 'Go home Polish' and his utilization of lightboxes within his own work.

I believe the concept of using a A3 or Mutiple A4 lightboxes to display my works would coincide with my works well as each of the works that I will be showing in the exhibition will be a light into my own mental health essentially guiding the viewer through my struggles. While also the lightboxes as a practical exploration for displaying my work as I want people to have a relation and understanding to the themes and emotions, I am tackling within my own mental health so by using the lightboxes to display my work it will act as a sort of comforting visual so people come and view my works in the exhibition itself.

I will endeavor to examine how my work reacts to a lightbox to see whether that this is a concept that will aesthetically add to my project or whether as is the case at times, it will actually draw away from my intended meanings.

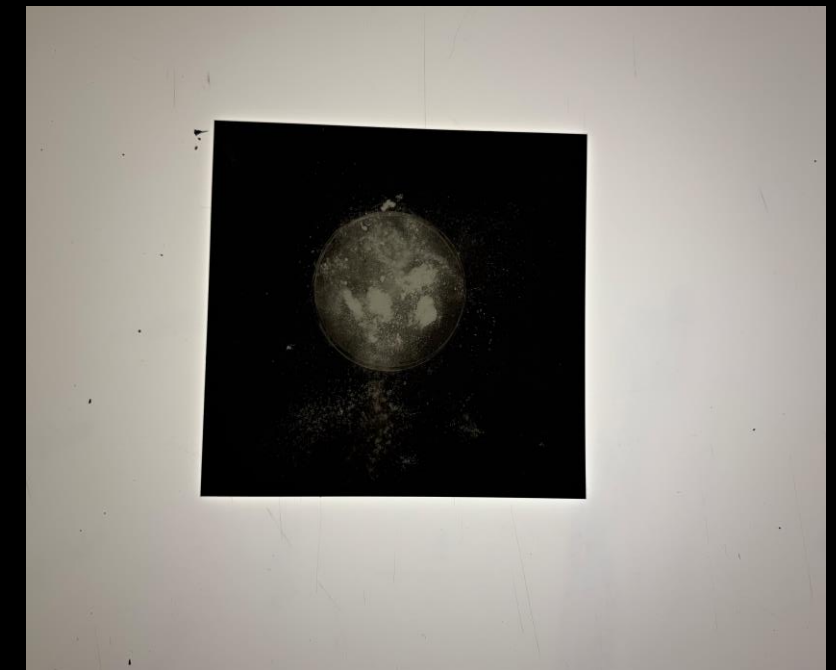
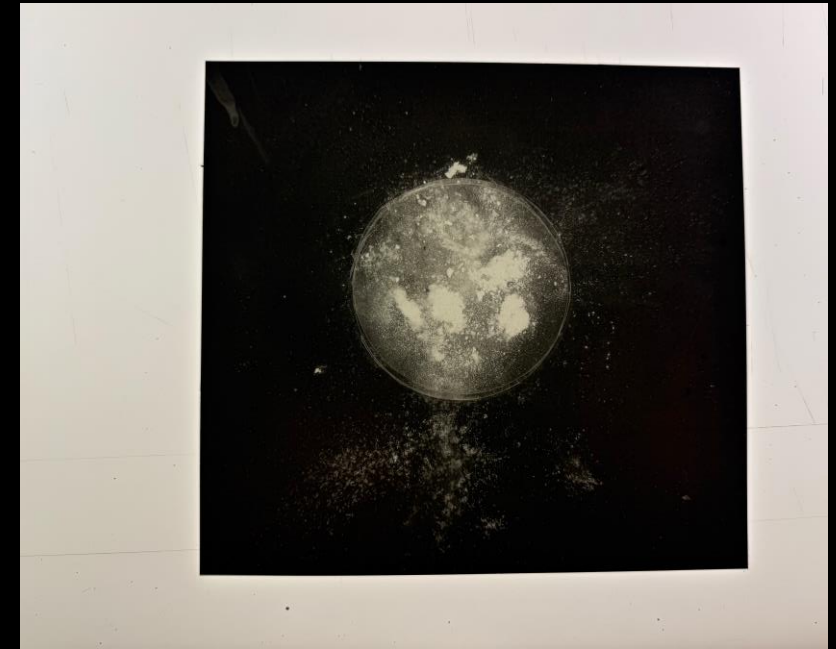


# LIGHTBOX

This slide further explores the previous considerations for my exhibition design.

When I begin to consider how I would display these images in an exhibition space, I believe there is not a more appropriate apparatus than a lightbox. The light box itself offers a formal method to displaying these images, when you consider the potential in relation to the works being created the black and white and the lightbox used as a border around these images offers a balance to the composition of the image while also evoking a professional aesthetic. Another consideration that can be viewed when considering methods of displaying my works is a lightbox has a reflection of reality in the modern context, it is a reflection of our everyday lives as you will view a screen at least once a day and my themes are supposed to follow my everyday struggles with anxiety.

I believe through the experimentation for a lightbox to be successful I would not only need to further experiment with paper type but also a larger number of images.



# PINHOLE CAMERA

When I start to consider how I best represent the novels I choose to read and how I view them poetically a pinhole camera speaks most to my subject matter.

The method of using a pinhole camera to capture the key pages or phrases from this novel although conceptually the idea had substance through experimentation and the results on the right the concept was not successful. These images do not speak to the subject matter as intended although they do pose some questions (What is written ?) they do not speak to the overall project in a successful way as intended.

To refine this process and allow it to become 'successful' I could look to create my own pinhole camera using a box and light sensitive paper. By using this method, the process speak to the subject matter more which is my mental health as I will be personally developing the image at every stage if I was to further explore this concept.



This is a concept of what my  
exhibition could look like using AI to  
generate the image and place it to  
give across the premise.



DESCRIBE THE DEVELOPMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES, EXPERIMENTS AND PROCESSES YOU HAVE UNDERTAKEN, WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF THEM, AND HOW WILL YOU USE THEM TO SUPPORT YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT? (200 WORDS MAX)

The photographic techniques I have explored through my experimentation in this project although the results as an image itself were successful, they did not speak to my subject matter. The Depressive traits and anxious traits were not a successful working process that I could develop further rather I the image would just be repetitive and there is no process there to further explore this concept without falling into the sea of representations of mental health photography that are already present. A working process I have found this experimentation though is through my work in relation to my filter using my sertraline to create it. This process speak to my subject and my current reality more clearly than the conformities of mental health representations it allows me an opportunity to develop this process through further experimentation with the filter itself or alternatively using it as an object itself to display. Using this filter as an object to display in my exhibition could offer a unique perspective into my mental health giving a new element to these representations through an abstract form. The idea of physical will support me in further exploration but all of these processes have been key for the development.