

Never Stop Letting It Out
By Jennifer Bristol

I've seen so many blockades
That seek to slow my roll
The stop signs, the caution tape
Well, they've all got to go

The things that try so hard
To stop me in my tracks
Are the reasons I keep going far
Often never looking back

I was lucky to be given
Some creativity that boils in me
If it gets hard living
I break out my pen and write a mystery

Or maybe I invest my time
In making a little movie
One that relates my pain
But also shows I'm more than my history

If demons crop up and take hold of my mind
Something that's hard to withstand
I paint those nasty things away
My weapon is my paint splattered hand

But most of all, my soul is in music
It's a huge comfort like an auditory hug
To know other souls have felt how I do
The weight of the world; feeling swept under the rug

Playing songs that lift the heart
And open up your tear-filled eyes
The difference a really great song makes
Can revitalize a person who feels ostracized

Artistic creation keeps me going
Wraps me in canvas wings
Takes my pain and whisks it away
Until it's so small it's nothing

NAMI NJ Dara Axelrod Expressive Arts 2017 Mental Health Poetry Contest - 6th Place

The inspirational emotions it evokes
The solace that it brings
It's the best way to encourage
A wounded soul that longs to sing