Tell us about who you are. How would your family, friends, and/or members of your community describe you? If possible, please include something about yourself that you are most proud of and why.

My motto: staying true to myself. In middle school I held the record for wearing the same outfit eight Fridays in a row. While others were showing off their trendy clothes, I wore my signature blue tee and black shorts. Being in my own lane has always been my identity; I take pride in being different and expressing myself the way I want to, no matter of people’s opinions.

Throughout my years as a teenager, I have learned that everyone has their own roles in their surroundings, be it a community or even the world. Following a traumatic life-changinge experience with my best friend, I wanted to express myself differently by writing a book. I for made fun of for being nerdy. However, despite all the negative discouragements, I decided to listen to my heart and express myself in my own way. As a result, I felt a huge relief as I released the book. Moreover, I received good feedbacks from my friends who initially made fun of me. That moment taught me that the only opinion that mattered was mine.

I believe that there are seven billion people in the world, each of us with our own unique characteristics and ways of expression. Being myself is something that I will always be proud of and will be one of my biggest weapons going forward. I don’t care if I’m not popular, or mainstream, or famous. I want people to remember me as who I am.