



## MC Angel resource

Thanks for watching Shauna O’Briain AKA MC Angel on [Game Changers: True Stories](#). If you were inspired by Shauna’s story, you’ll love reading this chapter from her book, *Moments of Significance* (OWN IT!, 2018).

### Pre-reading activity

These five difficult words and phrases appear in the text you are about to read.

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|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Perspective</b></p> <p>The way in which you look at something.</p>                | <p><b>Expressing yourself</b></p> <p>Communicating who you are and what you feel.</p> | <p><b>Ripple effect</b></p> <p>Something which happens and leads to more things happening (like when a pebble drops in water and makes ripples).</p> |
| <p><b>Collective consciousness</b></p> <p>Thinking and feeling together as a group.</p> | <p><b>Poetess</b></p> <p>A female person who writes poetry.</p>                       |  |

Fill in the gaps using the words above (once each).

- Shauna believes that humans are more wise if they think together as a group. She believes in a collective consciousness.
- Writing poetry, making music and painting are all ways of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Shauna is a woman who writes poetry: she is a \_\_\_\_\_.
- If you are kind to people, then they start to be kind to others. Your kind actions have a sort of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Some things in life can be bad if you look at them one way, and good if you look at them from another \_\_\_\_\_.

### Read the chapter (over the page)

## Poetry Is More Than Life To Me

Poetry and expression saved my life and gave me perspective and love for myself. All those years of being a teenager, hating life, wanting to die and wondering how I was ever going to get out of the dark places: that seemed a lifetime ago.

It all changed when I reached my twenties, and started getting into performance art. Writing my experiences down, sharing them and receiving applause – just the clapping of hands switched my vibration, turned my frown upside down. I am passionate about sharing the beautiful wisdom I have been so blessed to find, to share it with other young people, sharing what was my fate, and the negative mind-set I was once in.

Expressing oneself is so important: to release, to feel, to be heard and to be valued. As humans we're all trying to find our place, to understand who we are. I grew up in public, on mics and with audiences I aired my life and received love back.

Red Jen believing in me created a massive ripple effect 'cause I shared that love and belief with so many other young people as a result. I ran a poetry event called 'Lyrically Challenged' at Passing Clouds, a well-known venue in Dalston which like so many other important London venues, was recently closed down (despite our protests). Each month, I challenged two poets to write a new piece on a theme set by me. One month the challenge was to write a piece on human trafficking. It all took place in the upstairs of Passing Clouds, its wooden floors stripped bare, with fairy lights all over the place; a bar that looked like a ship; sofas everywhere and a homely atmosphere.

To run a poetry event is to give people a voice, to let them be heard in a safe environment; to let them grow with love and without judgement. Words are power and collectively, when we join our minds together, we create a revolution. Collective consciousness is strength: bringing poets and free thinkers together changes our world; we feel the force of life and the force of our oneness, which is shared with so many people.

Sometimes I see life as a crossroads: I can walk down the street and see a shadow of myself, a ghost of who I could have been, walking parallel to me on the streets of London. I see a homeless girl, lost out of her mind on the roads tryna find her soul through drugs. And I walk in real life next to her, an MC, a poetess, an actress living a life with beautiful people. I feel grateful every day that I found this place, this wonderful world filled with magic, I'm still living in the blocks but I'm out of the cage.

London and life: a heaven or hell, depending on the glasses we wear for the day. I choose to see the love and beauty. Poetry and self-expression are the tools for me to find those things, to find that heaven; so poetry is more than words: it is my healer, it is my mother and father; it is love in my veins. I give thanks.

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## Questions

1. Highlight the words 'expressing oneself' in the article.
2. Shauna gives four reasons why you should 'express' yourself. List them:
  - **To release**
  - To \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_



Looking

Do you think writing poetry is important for Shauna?

Yes

No

What did you read in the text to make you **infer** this?

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Inferring

Why do **you** think self-expression is important?

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Thinking

## Challenge

Write your own poem, which expresses something about you.

If you're stuck, perhaps start with one of these titles:

- My journey
- Telling my story
- Life through my eyes
- Where I want to go
- My life lessons