October 5, 2012

Kim Tranell, Health Editor

*Seventeen*

300 W. 57th St. 17th

Fl. New York, NY 10019

Dear Ms. Tranell:

Since my early teenage years, being thin was the goal of my existence. I had always been overweight, but I hadn’t paid much attention to it until I reached middle school. I was one of the thickest girls in my school, and my fellow classmates were kind enough to never let me forget it. They chanted names at me such as “Tubs” and “chunky,” toss me junk food and spread nasty rumors behind my back. I’d cry so hard that I’d start to hyperventilate. I was tired of the taunting. I was tired of the tears. I was tired of being trapped in my own personal prison of fat. In response, I had limited my food intake to six hundred calories a day, cut out pictures of Photoshopped models, and plastered the unattainable images to the top of my bunk bed. I suffered fainting spells, complete loss of self-esteem and a sharp decline in my academic performance. The torment I suffered resulted in my parents almost having to send me to an eating disorder clinic. Almost.

These accounts of my middle school and early high school experience are only tidbits. The pain, struggle, and eventual acceptance of my body are the foundations for my compelling health piece on body image. I propose writing this piece by giving a first person reflective narrative on the bullying I faced for my weight, and how I was able to love myself with the help of true friends and family. I also plan to describe in detail how low I felt, my obsession with calorie counting, and the impact I was having on my loved ones, especially my younger cousin who looked to me as a role model. In addition to the narrative, I’d like to offer three to five top tips on learning to love the skin you’re in. This way, themes and lessons that I have learned can now be used to help educate *Seventeen* readers.

After using my personal narrative to promote good physical and mental health in young female readers, I also plan to give women the tools they need to take back control of their lives in general. There are antagonists in all walks of life, whether it be in the work force, in relationships, or bullying over the internet. I plan to discuss the methods I used to retake control over my life, and how I stopped letting people wield and misshapen who I am and who I am meant to be.

The ultimate purpose of this story is to help teens that are struggling with self-acceptance by allowing them to relate to someone who has faced and beaten this personal demon. Being body conscious is one of the top health concerns of teenage females, the major audience of *Seventeen*, and readers would find this piece both insightful and inspiring. My goal is to help young women to break away the mold that society has forced them into, and *Seventeen’s* new “Body Piece Project” would help make my vision for this story a reality.

I am currently working towards my Bachelor’s degree in Broadcast Journalism with a Minor in Leadership Studies at University of Maryland, College Park. There, I have taken a course in advance narrative nonfiction, as well as a multitude of classes on diversity, sexuality and discrimination. Please feel free to contact me with any comments and questions.

Thank you for your consideration,

Your Name Here