

A simple picture hanging on my dorm room wall. Hung with Scotch tape, along with a few others and random posters of things I like. The small print of four by six inches, printed at a CVS in my hometown. To anyone who may come into my dorm room and look around, it may evoke a quick, “Oh, are these your friends?” and that’s about it. However, it goes much deeper than that, for me at least. The photo is pretty blurry, I think it was taken on the snapchat camera of my friend Catherine’s phone. Eight of us squeezed into a quick selfie.

My best friend Catherine holds the camera with her usual soft, friendly smile. She has on a blue dress and it brings out her bright, blue eyes. She is honestly the nicest person I know. She is always there for me no matter what, and is also my partner in crime. We do almost everything together, our families are both used to having a “third daughter”. I have spent most of my teenage years with Catherine. I have tons of other pictures with her, but this one has true meaning.

My other good friends Shane, Caroline, and Weldon are showing off some of the most genuine smiles, it almost looks like they are laughing. Shane towers over all of us, and his short, black hair stands out. He is wearing a cheetah print shirt, my favorite of his. He is the one friend that can make me laugh no matter what. He is also someone I can go to for advice all the time. Weldon is popping in on the lower right corner. He is a true friend of mine who is always down for a good time. His outer personality seems harsh and unbothered, but he really does have a soft side. Getting to know him took awhile but he is a great person. We still call each other every day for gossip, laughs, and advice. Caroline is squished in the middle, almost so much it looks like she should be in pain, but she is laughing and happy. She is another one of my really good

friends. Caroline is younger than all of us so we treat her like a little sister. I only got to know her last year but we have grown really close over that time and connect really well.

My sister, Annie, is also in the picture smirking. Her bright blonde hair and green eyes stand out. You can tell she was shoved into the picture by one of the other people (and I know she *definitely* was because she would never willingly get into it). She is three years older than me and we rarely get along. However, when we do get along for even the smallest amount of time, it is a great feeling. Whether it is her dragging me to the mall because she doesn't want to go alone or making jokes about our parents together, we do have great times. I cherish those little, rare moments with her, and this picture reminds me of one of them.

Michael stands there with his arms around me, in the left corner of the picture. His shirt is covered in beer and his hair is a mess, which honestly describes him perfectly- the life of the party. Michael is the token outgoing friend, who will speak up about anything and is always making everyone smile and laugh. He is a truly good person. He is somebody who means a lot to me, and no matter what he is always one of my best friends. The picture shows how close we are- not only physically, but also emotionally.

My mom is also squeezed into the picture, probably thrown in by one of my friends. She is honestly my best friend. I love her so much and we spend a lot of time together. My friends also love her and she is like a second mom to all of them. She hates pictures, so having her in this one around a bunch of other people I love made me really happy.

The picture was taken at my graduation party, in my backyard. All of us are enjoying ourselves and you can tell in the picture. A few of us took a quick selfie amid the chaos going on all around. This night was a really great time and one of my best memories. It was right as all of our friends were beginning to realize college was around the corner, and we would all be apart

soon. We cherished these times. I really love having this picture to remind me of the amazing times we all have spent together. Talking on group FaceTimes now that we are all hundreds of miles apart definitely does not compare to those times.

The picture symbolizes our friendships and relationships. My closest friends and family are all in one little rectangle. It is very rare to have all of the people you love all together in one tiny moment. This picture captures a specific moment in time. But, it also means a lot more to me - each of my relationships with these people, where we were then, and where we all are now. Looking at the picture on my wall, I would do anything to go back to it. However, I also like to think that we are all going different places now. And while that is sad at times, it means we are all growing, experiencing new things and places. This picture really shows how each of the individual people mean so much to me in different ways, separate ways. It also shows how they all come together to form a huge part of me. This picture hanging on my wall also symbolizes for me happiness, home, and comfort. It shows us all being a true, genuine form of ourselves in a really memorable time for me. It was only a few months ago but I look back on it like we were all these innocent, young kids having the time of our lives. It is so special to me because it captures a moment of both stability and change - we were all in Pearl River, in my backyard (a place we had a lot of great nights) but we were also gearing up to leave and not see each other for months at a time.

While it may not have seemed like a big picture-perfect moment at the time-- just a bunch of my friends and family enjoying themselves like normal-- I now look at this picture and think of it as one of my favorite memories. Perhaps a picture is really worth a thousand words.