

artist's statement

My Mother, Myself is exploration of childhood trauma I experienced at the hands of my mother and the cyclical nature of parental relationships. No one teaches us how to parent, so we pass on to our children what we learned, mostly subconsciously, from our own parents. We often don't question the techniques used to discipline us. I vowed never to be like my own mother when I became a mother at the age of nineteen, only to find my mother's yelling now channeled through my mouth, directed at my young son. Growing up, I never knew what would set my mother off. It could be a word, a glance, a touch. My sense of humor clashed with her lack of one. She was often angry with no apparent cause. The photographs in this project serve as vessels for me to visualize and process my memories of psychologically traumatic events from my childhood and of my relationship with my mother. Through this exploration of my recollections, I have realized that I am at best an unreliable narrator, trying to hold up a mirror to a memories that shift and change. In speaking with my three siblings, I have found that we don't remember the same events and the shared events we collectively remember are all colored by our own perspectives and biases. I have also come to see how my mother's parenting was shaped by her mother's, who had become neglectful and a hoarder after losing an infant son to meningitis when my mother was a young girl. And so my grandmother's trauma was passed on to my mother who passed it on to me. To change ourselves and to break the cycle of intergenerational trauma, we must first understand the generation that came before, and the events which made them who they are.