Overlooked
By Leo Dutkewych

Explanation:
This piece conveys the anxiety developed from continuous outside pressures. Represented as cigarettes, the environmental pressures are burned into the man's face. Symbolizing the constant pressure from schoolwork, sports, parents, numerous other outside responsibilities or expectations that come along with a status quo and drive to constantly do your best. Burned into his skin, leaving a mark on the way we think and how we act. In all my drawings I try to give every element of the composition meaning. Making the person a guy was important to shed light on mental health in men as well as move away from the societal standard that “boys don’t cry”. Showing that the issue of mental health, especially with things as common as anxiety and depression, affect men and women the same and should therefore be treated the same when advertising therapy or treatment. The string of pearls symbolizes the idea that mental health often isn’t represented on the outside of someone’s everyday expression. Appearing “normal” and “healthy” like a shiny string of pearls. Though someone's inner battles or past trauma can be bottled up inside, being a completely different side to someone that goes unnoticed. Like the process of a pearl’s creation an irritant is continuously coated to form a pearl, a long and laborious process gone unnoticed to produce something looking shiny and new on the outside. The use of cigarettes shows an aspect of negative outlets many find themselves indulging in in order to deal with anxiety. Often turning to substances that calm their nerves or provide an escape from reality. Just as the man is smoking which will end up hurting his physical health just as much as the ones being put out on his skin are hurting his mental health. Finally, the background was inspired by the work of Edvard Munch. An artist from the late 1800’s who suffered from depression and anxiety, using his art as an outlet. Representing the timelessness of mental health and the fact that it is nothing new. Having gone largely unnoticed or pushed to the side by society until recently where it has been given a chance to become better understood. Showing how mental health and the stigmas surrounding it are nothing new, being a part of people’s lives for hundreds of years and posing the idea that maybe it’s time to look at it with a new perspective to better the lives of many.