In the last decade there have been an increasing number of photographic essays that depict mental illness narratives. This suggests that there is an urgent need to find visual and textual language to communicate these experiences, as well as to seek a wider audience and recognition. The chapter will focus on American photographer’s Lisa Lindvay’s ongoing series Hold Together (initiated 2006), which is made up of intimate portraits of her family members affected by her mother’s mental illness. I am concerned with four major questions: How do the photographs construct experiences and effects of mental illness? How do the photographic representations disclose new realities and challenge assumptions? What kind of emotions are communicated (effect), and evoked and stimulated through the photographs (affect) in this project? I will re-examine the potential of photographs to communicate lived realities and explore the role of emotions in shaping viewers’ opinions about mental health. My reading and analysis of Lindvay’s project will be informed by some of the writings by Roland Barthes, particularly his concept of ‘the third meaning’, Julia Kristeva and Sianne Ngai (‘minor affects’), and builds upon growing body of research on photography, feeling and performativity.