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“Suicide Prevention using Social Media Mining”

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Abstract

Suicide is a major health concern worldwide, mostly in adolescents and young adults. Popping up technologies represent an encouraging approach for suicide prevention. The advancement and propagation of e-mental health interventions, incorporating social media-based methods, is an important move towards expanding adequate and convenient support for people at risk of suicide. Social media is quickly converting a vital perspective of social communication, notably amongst young people. It is plausible that social media will become important in people's commitment with mental health services in the future.

However, investigations that exist currently, unfortunately, suffer some weaknesses, and health services are not entirely harnessing available technology.

Considering all, and being clear that this research is the starting point for the doctoral thesis, a baseline system to infer whether a user has suicidal ideation or not has been implemented.

This system is composed of (1) a manual labelling system and (2) an automatic tagging system.

The manual labelling system serves to have quality data to train the automated system. These data are labelled with the help of experts in clinical psychology and mental health of the University of Oviedo. The information tagged by experts enables us to understand better the behaviour of persons with suicidal ideation and allows us to make better suggestions to the labellers.

On the other hand, the auto-tagging relies on the suicideonto ontology. Thanks to this ontology, we obtained various categories and their descriptions, and we have been able to create a baseline system that can assign different the categories to which it may belong the post.

Additionally, a possible solution to integrate the system with a web application has been designed.

As a result of this work, an article and a chapter for a book have written.

Keywords

- Suicide Prevention
- Social Media Mining
- Public Health
- Mental Health
- SuicideWatch
- Reddit
- Machine Learning
- Text analyses
- Twitter

Resumen

El suicidio es un problema de salud importante en todo el mundo, sobre todo en adolescentes y jóvenes. Las tecnologías que están apareciendo representan un enfoque esperanzador para la prevención del suicidio. El avance y la propagación de las intervenciones de salud mental incorporando métodos basados en medios sociales, son un paso importante para dar un apoyo adecuado y conveniente a las personas en riesgo de suicidio. Los medios de comunicación social se están convirtiendo rápidamente en una perspectiva vital de la comunicación social, particularmente entre los jóvenes. Es plausible que éstos medios se conviertan en una pieza importante en el compromiso de las personas con los servicios de salud mental en el futuro.

Por el momento, los servicios de salud no están aprovechando la tecnología disponible y además las investigaciones que existen en la actualidad, por desgracia, sufren algunas debilidades y no contemplan los dilemas éticos existentes.

Teniendo en consideración todo lo anterior, y teniendo claro que esta investigación es el punto de partida para la tesis doctoral, se ha implementado un sistema base para deducir si un usuario tiene ideaciones suicidas o no.

Este sistema está compuesto por (1) un sistema de etiquetado manual y (2) un sistema de etiquetado automático.

El sistema de etiquetado manual sirve para recabar datos de calidad para entrenar el Sistema automatizado. Estos datos se etiquetaron con la ayuda de expertos en psicología clínica y salud mental de la Universidad de Oviedo. La información etiquetada por expertos, nos permite entender mejor el comportamiento de las personas con ideaciones suicidas y nos permite hacer mejores sugerencias a los etiquetadores a la larga.

Por otra parte, el etiquetado automático se basa en la ontología suicideonto. Gracias a esta ontología se obtuvieron las distintas categorías y sus descripciones, y hemos sido capaces de crear un sistema base que puede asignar diferentes categorías a un post.

Además, se ha diseñado una solución para integrar el sistema con una aplicación web.

Como resultado de este trabajo, se han escrito un artículo y un capítulo para un libro.

Palabras Clave

- Prevención del suicidio
- Minería de Medios Sociales
- Salud Mental
- SuicideWatch
- Reddit
- Aprendizaje Automático
- Análisis de texto
- Twitter

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Chapter 1. Introduction

4.1. Aim and Motivation

Since the invention of the World Wide Web in 1989, the access and use of the Internet has grown exponentially, reaching almost 3.17 billion users in 2015¹. Along with the Internet, technologies such as computers, mobiles, tablets, etc., which are used to access the contents, have also evolved becoming a very important part in people's daily tasks. Nowadays, people can communicate and exchange information regardless of their geographic location or time. The term for such an exchange of ideas and information is "social media". This term is defined by Kaplan et al. (2010) as "*a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content*". Some examples of social media are Reddit, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Google+ and Instagram.

The growth of social media during the last decade has aroused great interest and, as a result, various applications have focused on analysing certain aspects of online social networks to extract and exploit information about their users. In the field of public health, the potential that have different social networks to monitor the health of the population started to be recognized (Brownstein et al., 2009; Dredze, 2012; Marathe et al., 2013). The field of suicide prevention has been no exception, and it is producing a growing amount of literature (Robinson et al. 2015). Still, and unfortunately, such researches suffer some weaknesses, namely: (1) It has not been guided by any concrete goal regarding mental health, but mostly with the purpose of determining the feasibility of automated analysis of a new data domain. (2) Thus, it has been mainly conducted by computer scientists without involving mental health professionals. (3) Because of this, it has dealt with very personal information as it was any other kind of user generated content, with little consideration of the human subjects involved.

According to the analysis carried out by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2012 every 40 seconds a person died by suicide, becoming more than 800,000 people per year. The WHO estimates that suicide is the 13th leading cause of death in the world and the third one between youth aged 15-44; and it is estimated to be a major cause of mortality during adolescence, particularly at ages 15-19. In a western society such as the United States, 13% of all deaths among youth and young adults aged 10-24 years

¹ <http://www.statista.com/statistics/273018/number-of-internet-users-worldwide/>

result from suicide (Kann et al., 2014). On top of this, research results, unfortunately, suggest a high lifetime prevalence of self-injurious behaviours in adolescents (Brunner et al., 2014).

One of the main issues in the effort to combat suicide is the difficulty in identifying exactly which at-risk individuals will commit it (Fleischmann et al., 2005). Additionally, young people rarely look for professional help. This could be related to developmental changes, increasing the sense of self-autonomy, attitudes toward adult intervention, or the inadequacy of the healthcare system (Wasserman et al., 2012).

Young people tend to consider their problems unique and therefore unsolvable by professionals, and most of the times they are reluctant to look for help in their close social circle because of the stigma of mental illness (Postuvan, 2009). But in the so-called social age—where individuals increasingly share personal information on platforms without boundaries—social media data is a promising source to focus online suicide prevention accurately to the target group. In fact, the literature about online suicide prevention evidence the lack of prevention strategies and it dictates that more attention is needed to develop and evaluate online preventative approaches (Jacob et al., 2014).

Despite the potential of existing public data, there are significant ethical questions about the appropriate use of these new data sources. A paramount example of this kind of is the so-called Samaritans Radar², a social media based ‘suicide watch’ developed by the Samaritans charity. It was an application that analysed tweets to identify whether the user had suicidal ideation or not. Users were unaware that they were being tracked, giving an excellent opportunity to bullies and aggressors to attack their victims while, at the same time, being virtually useless for any sensible supporting actions. Such an application (shortly pulled after being released) raises many questions: (1) Should not be users give consent before being tracked in social media? (2) Is it right to label someone as suicidal using open but personal information? (3) On which grounds can mental health professionals conduct research using social media data?

Taking all into consideration, and making it clear that the investigation is a work in progress oriented to the PhD thesis, the aim of this project is to provide the basis to develop a system that is able to infer whether a user has suicidal ideation or not. The system will be trained with material posted in the subreddit "r/SuicideWatch" and the evaluation will be carried out using suicide notes and letters. The system will be based on previous researches, the opinion of people from clinical psychology and mental health of the University of Oviedo and ethical dilemmas.

² <http://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/supporting-someone-online/samaritans-radar>

4.2. Objectives

The objectives of this research are the following ones:

- Take advantage of the benefits that gives the SuicideWatch subreddit for this type of research.
- Create a baseline system to tag posts manually.
- Create a baseline system to label posts automatically.
- Design a system that can be integrated with a web application.
- Write an article for a JCR magazine.

4.3. Scope

Suicide is a very serious issue. Therefore, analysing the existing constraints and ethical dilemmas, this system should be used only by qualified professionals in clinical psychology and mental health in order to monitor their patients and gain information about their mental status in real time.

Chapter 2. Related Work

4.4. Current State-Of-The-Art

The advent of social media—e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Reddit or Instagram—and their heavy use by young adults has raised concerns about the possible effects it might have on suicidal ideation and the imitation of suicidal behaviour—the so-called “Werther Effect”—. In addition to the feasibility of monitoring such media to prevent self-harming actions (including those of suicidal nature).

According to a study conducted by Dunlop et al. (2011) in which 719 people between 14 and 24 years took part, 59% of users reported to have found suicide-related content in different Internet sources. The Internet and social media provide a huge amount of information about suicide (Luxton et al., 2012) and, quite worryingly, a large part is neutral or even pro-suicide. For instance, Recupero et al. (2008) reviewed suicide-related websites that were easily found through a search engine; according to their analysis of 373 web pages, 29% were anti-suicide versus 11% pro-suicide. They argue that even though the pro-suicide content is far less frequent, it is extremely easy to reach. A similar study conducted by Biddle et al. (2010) tried to simulate the results that a person seeking about suicide methods would find using a Web search engine. To that end they used different queries and collected the top 10 results for each one, amounting 240 different web pages. According to their report, 50% of the sites were clearly pro-suicide.

In addition to the confirmation of the availability of pro-suicidal contents, there exist abundant research that seems to suggest that search trends are related to populations' rates of suicide (McCarthy, 2010; Yang et al., 2011; Page et al., 2011; Sueki, 2011; Hagihara et al., 2012; Bragazzi 2013; Gunn and Lester, 2013; Won et al., 2013; Jashinsky et al., 2014). This would suggest that search engines are an important tool for individuals with suicidal ideations and, thus they could be a vector of contagion.

More recently, some researchers have explored the opportunities that content analysis methods could offer to detect (and eventually prevent) suicidal behaviours, because as various investigations have concluded (Kaplan et al., 2010; Tausczik et al., 2010; Jarrold et al., 2011) words are important psychological signals about emotional states, intentions and motivations of people. Such studies have focused on the linguistic attributes of texts written by people communicating their suicidal thoughts using Natural Language Processing (NLP). Foundational works in the area (e.g. Pestian et al., 2008) had to rely on transcriptions of actual suicide notes. Nowadays, however, there is an increasing tendency for people to use social media to express suicidal

feelings and leave suicide notes; hence, it is technically feasible to monitor and analyse such kind of contents.

Virtually all of the current research has relied on the psycholinguistic lexicon “Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count” (LIWC) (Pennebaker et al., 2001) alone or combined with machine learning techniques.

LIWC is a text analysis tool based on the use of a dictionary containing some words and their categorization according to emotional and cognitive components. A number of studies have used LIWC to explore the evolution of the writing—and thus the state of mind—of individuals as the time to committing suicide approached (Pennebaker and Stone, 2003; Lester 2004; Barnes et al., 2007; Lester 2009; Fernández-Cabana et al., 2013; Li et al., 2014). Automating that kind of analysis is pertinent because the closer to the suicide act, indicators for positive emotions in the text surpass those of negative emotions (Keith-Spiegel and Spiegel, 1967).

With regards to those studies using machine learning methods most of them follow similar workflows: curating contents, manually labelling them, training a classifier on the labelled data, and finally using the classifier to analyse previously unseen texts. As an example, Pestian et al. (2010) analysed 66 suicide notes. 11 mental health professionals (MHP) and 30 students of psychology classified the notes manually. For the automatic classification phase, they applied a wide range of machine learning methods offered by the Weka toolset. They reported a 74.4% accuracy, overcoming both MHP (60.9% accuracy) and students (51% accuracy).

A more recent work conducted on Twitter by Abboute et al. (2014) revealed a much lower performance, ranging from 54% to 63% accuracy (achieved with a naïve Bayes classifier). Still, psychiatrists contacted by the authors of that report agreed that such kind of automatic tools could be useful to provide practical and efficient solutions for suicide prevention. It must be noted that the performance results achieved in this work are consistent with those reported by some different teams.

For instance, Desmet et al. (2014) used content from Netlog and three different classifiers to find whether out suicide-related content and suicide threats could be detected using lexical markers. For the first task (suicide-related content) the SVM classifier had a higher quality with an F-score of 85.6% and for the second task (threats) using SVM and KNN together, they achieved an F-score of 59.2%.

The so-called “Durkheim Project” shares similar works. Its collects information voluntarily shared by participants (veterans from the U.S. armed forces) on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Data is analysed by researchers at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth and cross-correlated with clinical reports about the volunteers. The main

aim is to identify in real time warning signals about suicidal behaviour. No results about the project have been published except for the pilot study (Poulin et al., 2014) which suggests a performance of about 65-67%.

In a different study Burnap et al. (2015) classified tweets according to a number of categories, namely: “Evidence of possible suicidal intent”, “Campaigning (i.e. petitions etc.)”, “Flippant reference to suicide”, “Information or support”, “Memorial or condolence”, “Reporting of suicide (not bombing)” and “None of the above”. First, they created a suicidal ideation lexicon analysing the content of different social media sites. Using that lexicon, they collected the tweets that were labelled by users of the crowd-sourcing online service “Crowdflower”³. Next, they created a set of baseline classifiers using lexical, structural, emotive and psychological features. Finally, they improved the baseline classifiers building an ensemble classifier using the Rotation Forest (RF) algorithm and a Maximum Probability voting classification decision method. That way, they achieved a mean accuracy of 72.8% for the seven classes and 69% for the class “Evidence of possible suicidal intent”.

Finally, in the work by O’Dea et al. (2015) tweets were manually labelled as “strongly concerning”, “possibly concerning” or “safe to ignore” and then used to train an SVM classifier. According to those authors, the classifier was able to label correctly 80% of the tweets, achieving similar results to those of human judges.

2.1.1 Conclusions

After reviewing the existing literature, we can say that there are mainly two types of methods: lexical analyses and machine learning.

Lexical analysis methods used lists of words in which each word is related to one emotion. One of the advantages is that these methods do not need labelled data to create lists, but suffer from the difficulty of creating one list for different scenarios. For example, lexical methods rarely support slangs used in social networks (Hu et al., 2013).

On the other hand, machine learning methods often use supervised learning techniques. These are techniques to infer a function from training data (Pang et al., 2002). The training data are collections of pairs based on an input and the desired output.

³ <https://www.crowdflower.com>

One of the advantages of these techniques is their capacity to adapt and create trained models for specific contexts and purposes. While one of its biggest drawbacks is the difficulty in obtaining labelled data. When there is a huge volume of input data, it can be costly, prohibitively expensive or even impossible to label all of them. Also, not everything in the real world has a distinctive tag; there are uncertainties and ambiguities (Pang et al., 2002).

Nevertheless, it is hard to settle if a machine learning method is better than all the lexical approaches in various situations or whether a machine learning method can achieve the equivalent level of coverage as some lexical means (Gonçalves et al., 2013).

In this project we chose to use machine learning since we count with the help of experts to label. In addition to the versatility of these techniques compared to lexical analyses.

Chapter 3. Ethical Challenges

Despite the potential of social media data, there are significant ethical questions about the appropriate use of these new data sources. A paramount example of this kind of is the so-called Samaritans Radar⁴, a social media based ‘suicide watch’ developed by the Samaritans charity. It was an application that analysed tweets to identify whether the user had suicidal ideation or not. Users were unaware that they were being tracked, giving an excellent opportunity to bullies and aggressors to attack their victims while, at the same time, being virtually useless for any sensible supporting actions. Another example is Facebook’s 2014 “emotional contagion” intervention study (Kramer et al., 2014).

These studies raise many questions: (1) Should not be users give consent before being tracked in social media? (2) Is it right to label someone as suicidal using open but personal information? (3) On which grounds can mental health professionals conduct research using social media data?

In recent years, one of the studies that raised more debate related to informed consent is the research conducted by Kramer et al. (2014) that discusses the emotional contagion through the manipulation of News Feed in Facebook. This research created a great outrage and debate⁵⁶⁷⁸ as it was carried out without the consent of 689,003 users.

This may be due to the difficulty of this type of research to obtain the consent of numerous participants. According to Hutton et al. (2015) only 5.5% (28 of 505) of articles describe the process followed to obtain user's consent, resulting in insufficient information to analyse whether the user would facilitate or not the data for such purposes. Even so, there are researches that investigated the attitude of the users towards the use of social media data (Beninger et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2015; Mikal et al., 2016).

These investigations obtained equivocal results. Beninger et al. (2014) conducted a study to explore the views of the users with respect to ethics in the use of social media as a source of data for research. They interviewed 34 participants about (1) the use of

⁴ <http://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/supporting-someone-online/samaritans-radar>

⁵ <http://www.forbes.com/sites/gregorymcneal/2014/06/28/facebook-manipulated-user-news-feeds-to-create-emotional-contagion/#27b90d1f5fd8>

⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/jun/29/facebook-users-emotions-news-feeds>

⁷ <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/06/everything-we-know-about-facebooks-secret-mood-manipulation-experiment/373648/>

⁸ http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/30/technology/facebook-tinkers-with-users-emotions-in-news-feed-experiment-stirring-outcry.html?_r=0

social media as sources of research and (2) the consequences, both good and bad, of the use of social media in research. The results obtained were not enlightening; while some participants felt that informed consent was not essential in all situations, others were of the view that, regardless of the situation the user always must be informed and must give consent to use the data. In the case of Evans et al. (2015) 1250 people between 16 and 75 years participated and 60% think that social media data should not be shared with third parties for research purposes. Although previous studies concluded that the majority of users did not agree in the use of social media data for research, in the study conducted by Mikal et al., (2016) participants expressed a positive opinion about using data from Twitter for public health surveillance.

Another issue that generates debate is whether data is public or private. Some authors (Attard & Coulson, 2012; Haigh & Jones, 2005) have concluded that if the data can be obtained without registration, these are considered public; while data protected with password are considered private (Haigh & Jones, 2005). For example, Zimmer et al. (2010) analysing Lewis et al., (2008) investigation concluded that because a user publish data in a social network, this does not entitle a researcher to use such data. In addition, most sites requiring identification to gain access have author rights, which states if data can be used for research purposes (Haigh & Jones, 2005).

Although, what happens if using public data attributes that are not explicitly indicated are discover? Are they public or private data? As Horvitz et al. (2015) states distinction gets complicated when private information can be obtained using machine learning algorithms.

Chapter 4. Description Of The System

Below are a series of sections that will explain how to implement a web application that provides a service for monitoring tweets to identify suicidal ideation based on its text content.

It is important to clarify that, since the application is not implemented, design concepts and analysis that are exposed in this project may differ from a real application. The opinion of the experts of people from clinical psychology and mental health will be critical during the design of the web application.

4.5. System Analyses

4.1.1 Definition Of The System

Based on technologies and experiments developed in previous sections, the following pages group the analysis and design of a web application, which based on earlier work, serve to provide a service that identifies suicidal ideation on Twitter.

The system should be able to display tweets identify as suicidal to users, in this case, psychologists. The user will have the possibility to sort the tweets by category and severity. It should also be capable of allowing psychologists to (1) create dashboards to track tweets of a particular user/patient who at least have a tweet classed as suicidal and (2) activate notifications to know when the user write new tweets.

The system must be able to retrieve tweets without interruption using streaming methods. In addition, it must be able to communicate with machine learning software and create classification models in real time.

4.1.2 Requirements

4.1.2.1 Functional Requirements

ID	Name	Description
RWA1	Sign in	Any user with an account in the system should be able to identify through a login form to access the web application.
RWA2	Visualizetweets	The web application must display the tweets identified as suicidal
RWA3	Sort tweets	The application must give the possibility to the user to organise tweets by

		categories or by gravity.
RWA4	Track particular users	The user must be able to follow specific users of Twitter for more detailed information.
RWA5	Unfollow specific user	The user must be able to monitor a particular user of Twitter.
RWA6	Reflect tweets of a particular user	The application will display the latest tweets in the timeline of a particular user.
RWA7	Activate notifications for specific users	The user will have the opportunity to activate notifications to be notified when a user, who is being monitored, writes a new tweet.
RWA8	Sign out	User should be able to close the session in the application through the web interface.

Table 1. Web Application's Requirements

4.1.2.2 Non-Functional Requirements

ID	Name	Description
RSS1	Uninterrupted data collection	The system shall create a constant communication flow that supplies information without interruption.
RSS2	Customizable data acquisition	The system must have with a streaming system that accepts parameters to return information in a selective way.
RSS3	Use streaming system that provides more than 1% of the available public data	To offer the best possible service, it will be necessary to work with a streaming system that can provide the widest possible data, not limiting to only 1% of the public data.

Table 2. Streaming System's Requirements

4.1.3 Proposed Architecture

This section proposes an idea of a general architecture that could have the system. This approach is in *Figure 1*.

The structure could be divided into three parts: (1) the streaming system, (2) the classification system, and (3) the web application.

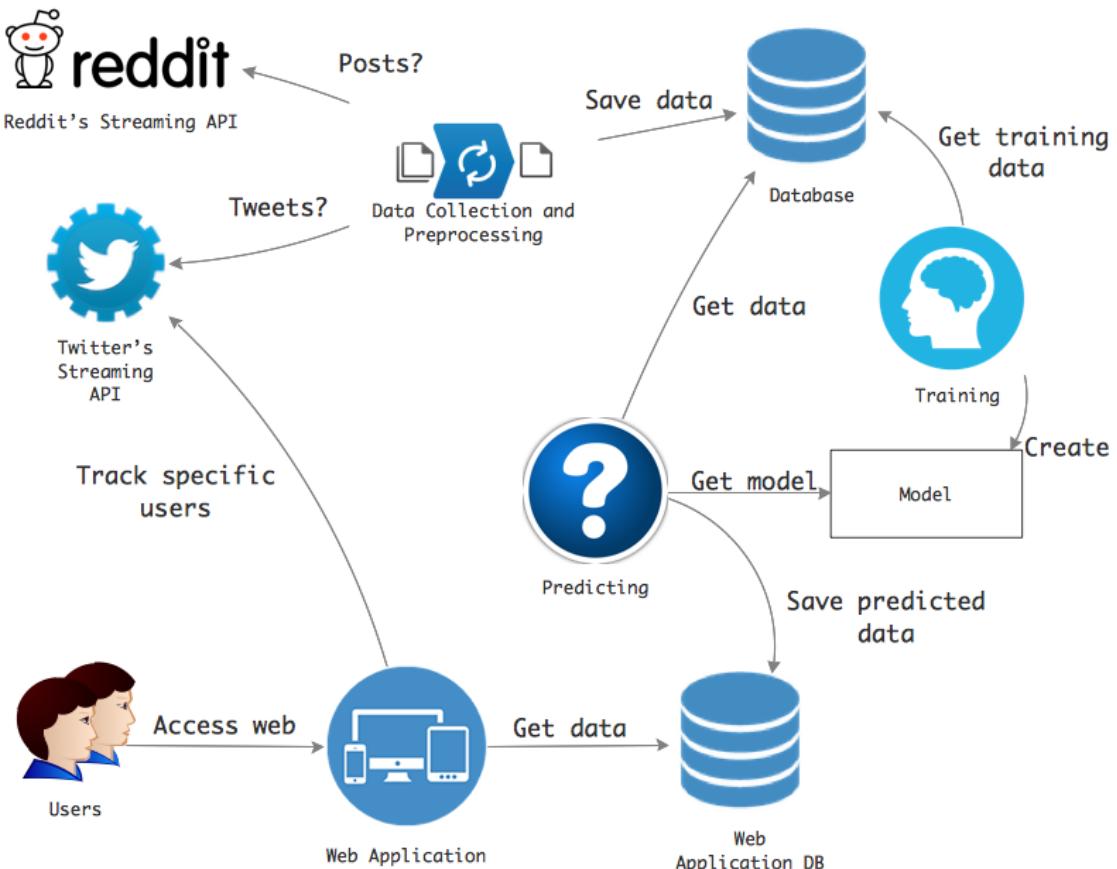


Figure 1. Architecture

4.1.3.1 Streaming System

The streaming system (**Error! Reference source not found.**) will be responsible for collecting the data needed to run the rest of the scheme. It will gather data through Twitter's and Reddit's APIs in real time and will be responsible for implementing the logic to communicate with the database that will store the posts and tweets found.

In Reddit's case we will monitor and store the posts published in SuicideWatch and for Twitter tweets that contain certain words, that have been predefined previously, will be searched.

Before storing the information in the database data pre-processing will be performed. This step allows to clean, standardise, transform, etc. data to obtain the final dataset that we will use for training, eliminating irrelevant and redundant information data.

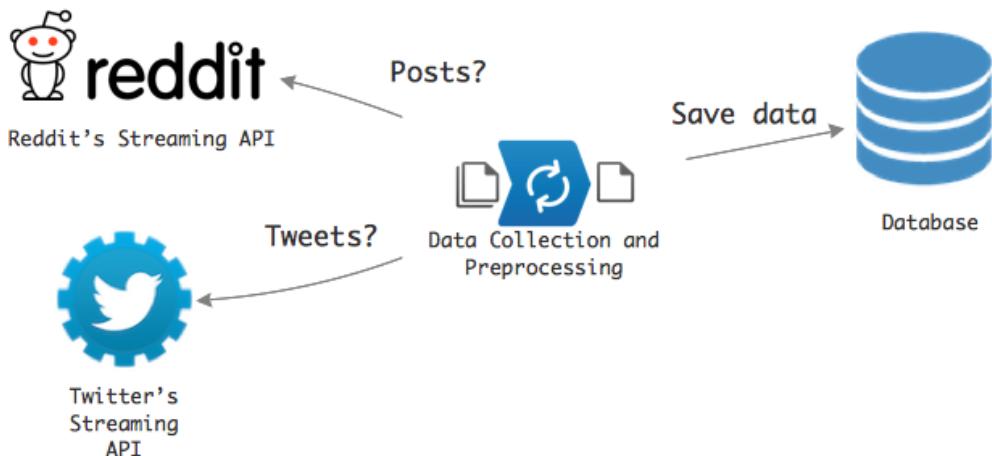


Figure 2. Streaming System

4.1.3.2 Classification System

The classification system (**Error! Reference source not found.**) will use machine learning techniques to classify tweets.

The system can be divided in two parts: (1) the training phase and (2) the prediction phase. In the training phase, the classification system takes 80% of the data that will be stored in the database to train the system and create a predictive model that will be updated in real time. In the case of the prediction phase, it will take 20% of the remaining data and classify them. Positive results will be stored in another database, which will be accessed by the web application.

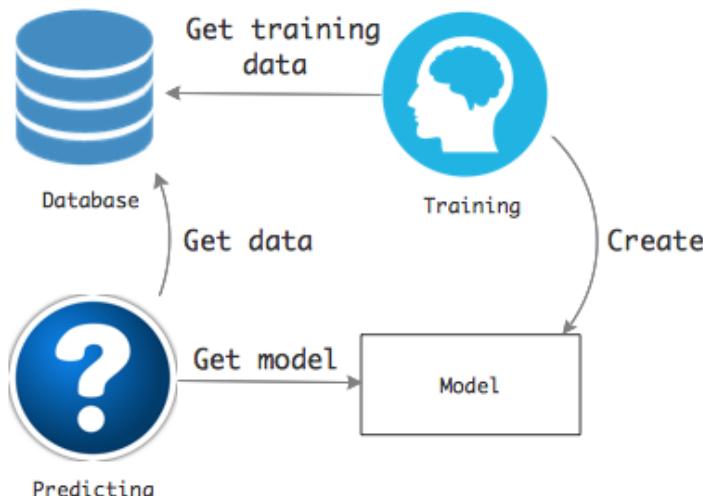


Figure 3. Classification System

4.1.3.3 Web Application

The web application is responsible for showing the tweets. To obtain the data, it will connect to the database that store classified tweets.

The application will connect to the streaming system to obtain the timeline of tweets from a particular user in real time.

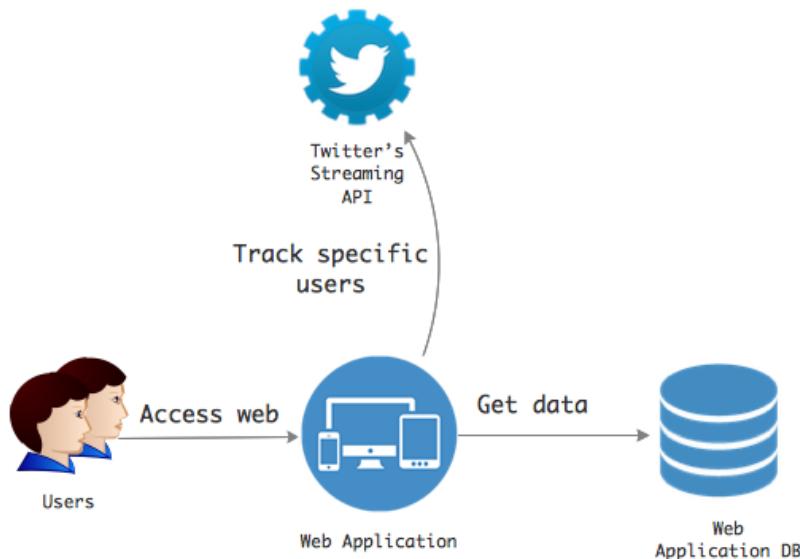


Figure 4. Web Application

4.1.4 UI Mockups

With the aim to create a fully functional and easy to use user interface, we have generated a series of mockups that could help in the final design of the application.

The main idea is to keep a user interface with little noise, showing only those basic options which the user may need to perform each action and bearing in mind that, in the future, more advanced operations could be offered.

4.1.4.1 Sign In

The application's home screen (*Figure 5*) consists of an accessible form where the user must enter his or her credentials to be able to access the application.

The application will not give the opportunity to register since it can only be used by authorised personnel, and shall not be a public use.

This screen will be displayed as the root of the web application for those users without identification in the system and as for users that attempt to access to an inner page without identification.

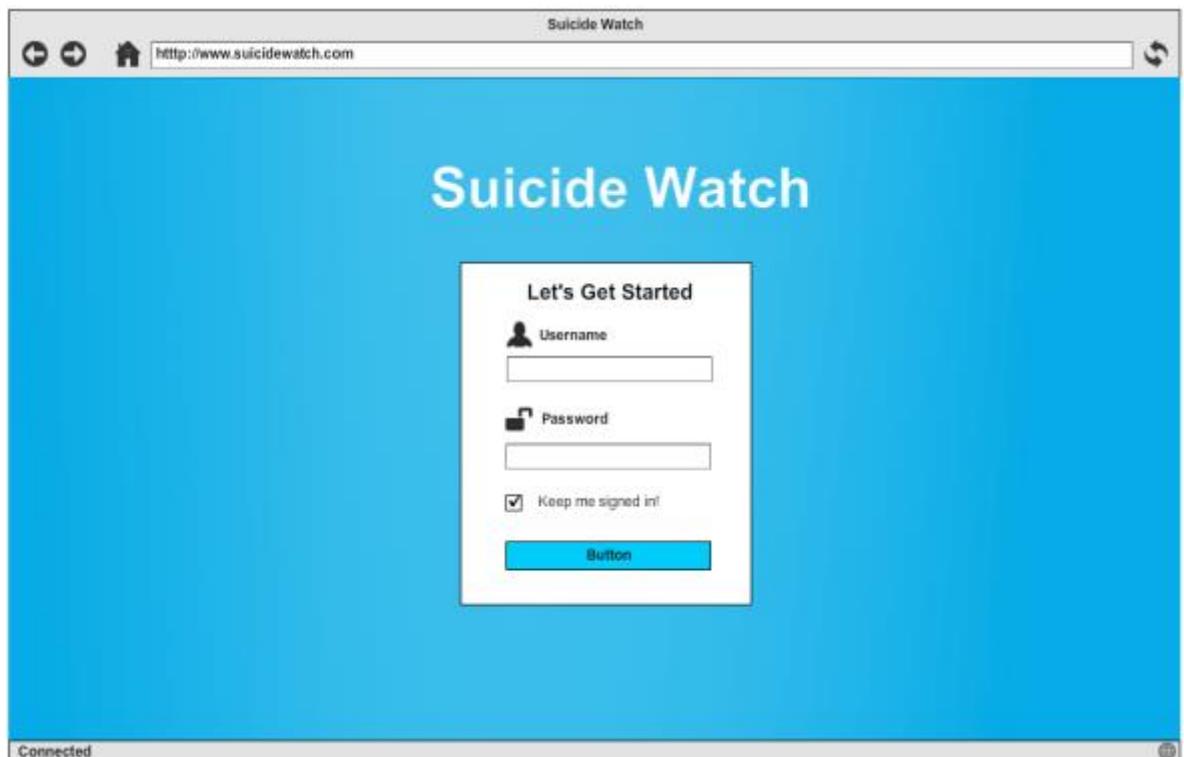


Figure 5. Sign in

4.1.4.2 Tweets From Different Users

This (*Figure 6*) will be the main page of the application once the user gets in. The start screen, which aims to display tweets from different users and notify the new tweets from monitored users, has been designed in such a way to allow browsing tweets quickly, as well as have quick access to monitored users.

The navigation bar that is in the upper part of the page contains the following options :

- Tweets: allows returning to the page that displays tweets from different users.
- Account: allows accessing to the psychologist's information.
- Sign Out: allows logging off.

The user will be able to organise tweets by category and severity. Categories will be predefined by psychologists, and the severities will be mild, moderate and grave.

The bell, which is next to the username on the right side of the page, specifies the number of tweets the user wrote since the last time that the psychologist visited the dashboard.

In the central part of the page, where the tweets are displayed, the following information is given:

- Author of the tweet (username)
- Date of the tweet
- Number of favourites
- Number of retweets
- URL of the tweet
- Categories assigned by the classification system
- Severity of the tweet (indicated by the background colour)

Just above the tweets is the button to start monitoring the user and on the left side of the page are controlled users.

The screenshot shows a web-based application titled "SUICIDE WATCH". At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for "Tweets", "Account", and "Sign Out". On the left, a sidebar titled "Users" lists three users: "@username1", "@username2", and "@username3", each with a small profile icon and a "Follow" button. The main content area displays two tweets. The first tweet, from "@username1", has an orange background and contains the text "I am going to kill myself today". It includes a table with the following data:

Author	Tweet Created on	Favorites	Retweets	URL
@username	May 16 2016	15	7	https://twitter.com/username/tweet

Below the tweet are three category buttons: "Category1", "Category2", and "Category3". The second tweet, from "@username2", has a green background and contains the text "I want to have a double suicide but I can't do it alone so it's not gonna happen.". It includes a similar table:

Author	Tweet Created on	Favorites	Retweets	URL
@username2	May 16 2016	4	2	https://twitter.com/username2/tweet

At the bottom of the main content area, there are navigation links for "Prev" and "Next" along with page numbers 1 through 10.

Figure 6. Screen showing tweets from different users

4.1.4.3 Track Specific User

The screen that displays tweets from a particular user shows more detailed information about the user than *Figure 6*. This screen shows the following data:

- Profile image
- Author of the tweet (username)
- Number of followers

- Number of followings
- Date of creation of the account
- Account's description
- Location
- Tweets timeline with:
 - Text
 - Date
 - Number of retweets
 - Number of favorites
 - Media attached to the tweet

Between *Figure 7* and *Figure 8*, there is a difference in the interface. In *Figure 7*, below the user information, there is a button that says "Follow". This button allows adding the user to the list of monitored users. In the case in which the user is already in the list (*Figure 8*), will appear the button that permits to activate the notifications and the button to stop monitoring the user.

The screenshot shows the 'SUICIDE WATCH' application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with icons for back, forward, home, and search, followed by the URL 'http://www.suicidewatch.com'. On the right side of the header are links for 'Tweets', 'Account', and 'Sign Out'. Below the header, the main content area has a blue header bar with the title 'SUICIDE WATCH'. To the left, there is a sidebar titled 'Users' containing three entries: '@username1 >', '@username2 >', and '@username3 >'. The main content area displays a user profile for '@username1'. The profile includes a placeholder profile picture, the user handle '@username1', follower count (156), following count (230), and the account creation date (Nov 29, 2010). The profile also includes a description: 'Im 17~cutter for 4years~starving myself for 3weeks now...' and a location: 'San Francisco, CA'. Below the profile is a 'Follow' button with a Twitter icon. Two tweets are displayed below the profile. The first tweet is from May 18, 2016, with the text 'I am going to kill myself today', 4 retweets, and 4 favorites. It is accompanied by a black and white photograph of a person sitting alone with the word 'HELP' written on a wall. The second tweet is identical to the first. At the bottom left of the main content area, it says 'Connected'.

Figure 7. Visualize tweets of a sepecific user(not tracked)

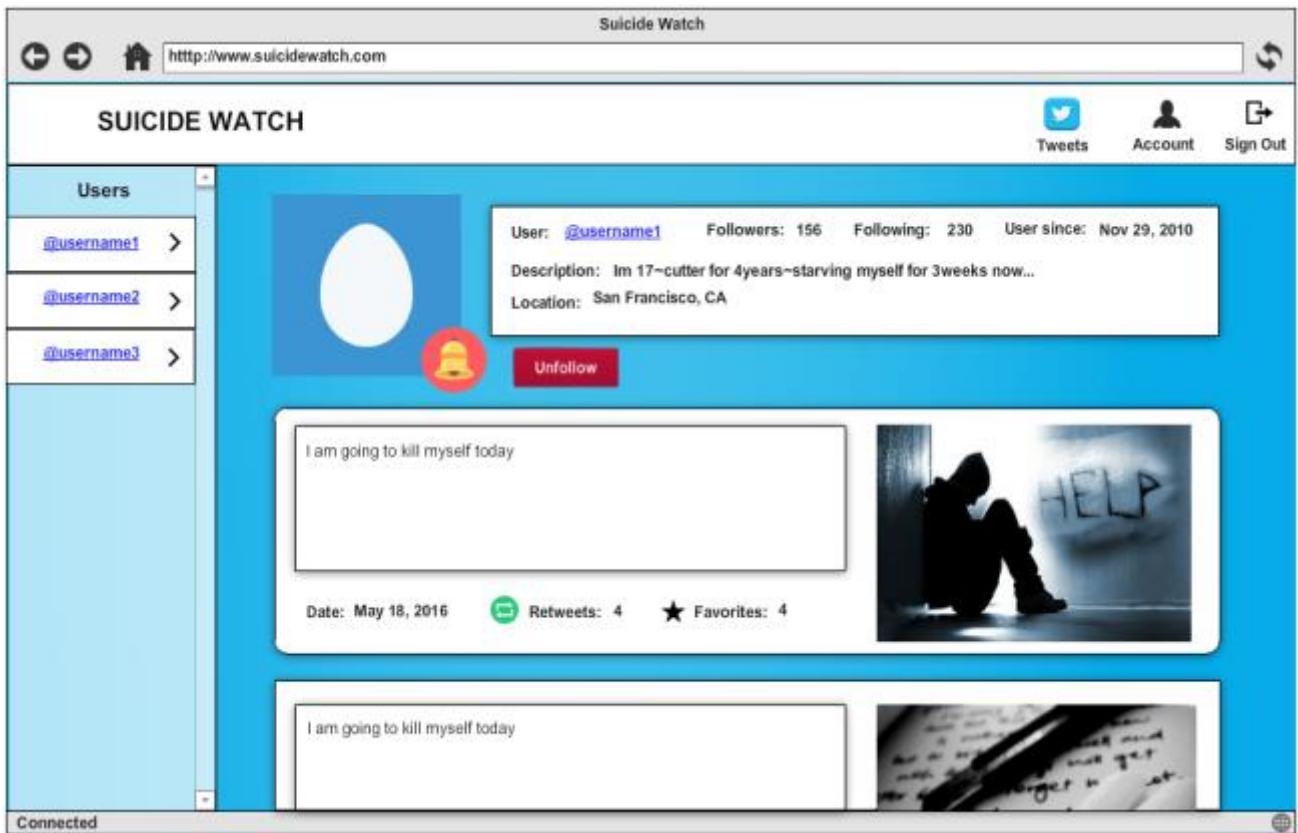


Figure 8. Visualize tweets of a sepecific user(tracked)

Chapter 5. Preliminary Results and Conclusions

It must be noted that this document describes a work still in progress, which should be largely expanded during the development of my PhD. Thus, given the available time, and that a substantial amount of it was devoted to determine the ethical challenges of this line of research and the best approach to provide a valid and useful tool for mental health professionals, only proof of concept baselines and preliminary results can be reported.

4.6. Data Acquisition and Description

The data used in this study consists of a collection of posts collected by the user "Stuck_In_The_Matrix"⁹ from Reddit. This user compiled all the posts that users published, 200 million approximately, from January 2006 to August 2015 through Reddit's API. Between 2006 and 2007 available data is incomplete because the ids used by Reddit were scattered a bit.

Reddit's posts are associated with metadata that have been vital to this investigation. Between the different metadata, the most important ones for this research are:

Attributes	Description
author	Name of the author
created	User's local time zone
created_utc	Unix time (i.e. 1467042820 -> 2016-06-27T15:53:40)
downs	Down votes of the post
num_comments	Number of comments that have the posts
score	Number of up votes minus down votes
selftext	Text of the post
title	Title of the post
ups	Up votes of the post
url	URL of the post

Table 3. Reddit's Attributes

Once obtained the necessary information, we decided to reduce the amount of Reddit's posts, since we had not sufficient means for 200 million posts. Therefore, we collected all posts belonging to the SuicideWatch subreddit. We focused on this subreddit because it is place where people can air out their issues with suicide and get support from the community. In total, we obtained a dataset with 90518 posts.

As a result of this dataset, we want to respond to the following hypotheses.

⁹https://www.reddit.com/r/datasets/comments/3mg812/full_reddit_submission_corpus_now_available/

4.7. Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis that we want to prove is the following one:

'The SuicideWatch subreddit is a representative sample of language documents related to mental and social issues that can trigger suicidal thoughts and planning. Thus, it would exhibit a vocabulary substantially different of that of the rest of Reddit'

5.1.1 Methodology

To get an answer for the hypothesis we have based on Dunning (1993) work.

The first step was to collect a second dataset. In this case, a dataset containing posts from Reddit where SuicideWatch users' posts were not present. This new dataset consists of 1% of Reddit's posts. From now on, we will refer to this dataset as "Reddit-1%".

Next, calculating the frequency of use of each word, most used words were obtained for both datasets. In this step, the following criteria were applied:

1. the word should appear at least 1 time in 1000 posts. If the appearance percentage is more than 1000, we anchored it. Example: In a dataset with 94,000 posts the words must appear at least 94 times and 230,000 times should appear in a dataset with 230 million posts. As this is a very high number is lowered to 1000 appearances.
2. the maximum number of words in the list will be 1 million sorted by descending frequency.

It was decided to limit the size of the lists to 1 million words to avoid costly executions. Finally, using the Log Likelihood Ratio (LLR) algorithm the most relevant words for both datasets were obtained. This algorithm was used because it is a statistical method that is widely used in problems where the aim is to compare two sets of data through a series of assumptions. The implementation is based on the interpretation proposed in the article Java et al. (2007).

5.1.2 Results

The firsts most important words after applying LLR are shown below.

Vocabulary
i
my
me
myself
suicidewatch
life
feel
suicide
t
anymore

Table 4. SuicideWatch relevant vocabulary

Vocabulary
com
http
tokennumber_
imgur
tokennumber_b
the
r
jpg
reddit
comments

Table 5. Reddit 1% relevant vocabulary

4.8. Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis that we want to prove is the following one:

"Users posting in the SuicideWatch subreddit would likely post in other subreddits and those could provide some additional clues to better understand their context"

5.1.3 Methodology

The methodology for this hypothesis is the same as the one described in the previous theory, but not the datasets and the parameters used. For this assumption "Reddit-1%" and "SWusers-otherfora" datasets were used. "SWusers-otherfora" was based on posts that users from SuicideWatch wrote in other subreddits. This dataset had 1.553.143 posts. In this case, instead, we compared the most relevant subreddits.

5.1.4 Results

Below are the first results of each dataset.

Subreddit	Score	Description
FreeStuffNYC	257.74430356256	Subreddit to offer free stuff in New York City.
TrendingReddits	156.45050780034	Subreddit that lists trends of the day on Reddit
depression	127.75403366539	Supportive space for anyone struggling with depression
TrendingNSFW	118.87994250568	subreddit dedicated to trending NSFW (Not safe/suitable for work) reditts

Table 6. Subreddits with SW users

Subreddit	Score	Description
Fireteams	98.276293265034	Subreddit about Destiny LFG game and Destiny clans
CookingRecipesStuff	87.105310132656	Subreddit for recipes and cooking stuff
funny	78.42055098638	Subreddit to posts funny things
gonewild	76.79157814738	Subreddit for open-minded Adult Redditors to

		exchange their nude bodies
--	--	----------------------------

Table 7. Subreddits without SW users

4.9. Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis that we want to prove is the following one:

"By focusing on the most central keywords of those endemic to the SuicideWatch subreddit we can rank posts according to the urgency of reply or intervention."

5.1.5 Methodology

5.1.5.1 Test 1

Using the results obtained in the first hypothesis for SuicideWatch dataset, we seek the central terms. To get the terms of SuicideWatch, we apply a version of PageRank algorithm (Page, 2001).

The PageRank algorithm was originally developed to identify the most relevant websites in a search. It can be considered as a technique to mark the vertices according to their importance in the overall structure of the graph. After the calculation, the final weight assigned to a node represents the proportion of time a walker randomly passes visiting that node.

In this investigation, based on the TextRank algorithm of Mihalcea et al. (2004), first assessment using a graph-based ranking model for text processing have been made, using as parameters words and the number of times that two words appeared in the same post. Additionally, to evaluate the implemented algorithm, tests using suicide notes have been made too.

5.1.5.2 Test 2

The second test consisted of evaluating an ad hoc emergency criterion. First, the posts from SuicideWatch were labelled manually as urgent or non-urgent using as parameters the medians of the score and the number of comments. If the score and the number of comments were greater than the average the post was classified as urgent, and otherwise, as non-urgent.

Then, applying the methodologies already explained above, the list of the most relevant terms was obtained, and we calculated the PageRank for each dataset.

5.1.6 Results

5.1.6.1 Results Test 1

Below are the texts of the posts that obtained best and worst PageRank scores. The texts that are too long are in annexes.

Post
<u>Waking up every day wishing I hadn't</u>
<u>Lost my life and will to live</u>
<u>An emptiness</u>

Table 8. SW posts with Higher Pagerank

Post
The three A's of Awesome [inspiring]
Song for Feb 7th
Song for Feb 8th :)

Table 9. SW posts with Lowest Pagerank

Post
I
I think
I tried.

Table 10. SW posts with Higher Average Pagerank

Post
The three A's of Awesome [inspiring]
In Italy the number of suicides among the female population is decreasing
New flavor of bleach! Strawberry flavor! (Amanda Todd approved)

Table 11. SW posts with Lowest Average Pagerank

Below are the suicide notes that obtained best and worst PageRank scores. The texts that are too long are in annexes.

Suicide Notes
<u>Suicide-note-11</u>
<u>Suicide-note-24</u>
<u>Suicide-note-23</u>

Table 12. Suicide notes with Higher Pagerank

Suicide Notes
<u>Suicide-note-29</u>
<u>Suicide-note-41</u>

Suicide-note-42**Table 13. Suicide notes with Lowest Pagerank**

Suicide Notes
<u>Suicide-note-40</u>
<u>Suicide-note-30</u>
<u>Suicide-note-07</u>

Table 14. Suicide notes with Higher Average Pagerank

Suicide Notes
<u>Suicide-note-29</u>
<u>Suicide-note-42</u>
<u>Suicide-note-06</u>

Table 15. Suicide notes with Lowest Average Pagerank**5.1.6.2 Results Test 2**

Below are the texts that obtained best and worst PageRank scores of urgent and non-urgent posts. The texts that are too long are in annexes.

Urgent Post
<u>Waking up every day wishing I hadn't</u>
<u>Lost my life and will to live</u>
I am "weird" and "slow". Every social interaction is painfully awkward.

Table 16. Urgent posts with Higher Pagerank

Urgent Post
Song for Feb 8th :)
Hi...bye?
Conflicted

Table 17. Urgent posts with Lowest Pagerank

Urgent Post
I tried.
I quit.
I suck

Table 18. Urgent posts with Higher Average Pagerank

Urgent Post
Farvel Mia <3
Song for Feb 8th :)
Bboyer is semi-conscious!
<u>http://www.reddit.com/r/Needafriend/comments/8qwt5/bboyer/c0a5j4f</u>

Table 19. Urgent posts with Lowest Average Pagerank

Non-urgent Post
My life.
[REALLY Long Read] I have to get this off my chest to someone who cannot put me in a hospital
Each day, each hour, each minute is just torture. I want it to end...

Table 20. Non-urgent posts with Higher Pagerank

Non-urgent Post
New flavor of bleach! Strawberry flavor! (Amanda Todd approved)
Method review: Amitriptyline Cocktail
Urgent!

Table 21. Non-urgent posts with Lowest Pagerank

Non-urgent Post
I
I think
I tried.

Table 22. Non-urgent posts with Higher Average Pagerank

Non-urgent Post
In Italy the number of suicides among the female population is decreasing.
New flavor of bleach! Strawberry flavor! (Amanda Todd approved)
Mi ne volas morti solas, sed mi volas morti ĉar mi estas solas.

Table 23. Non-urgent posts with Lowest Average Pagerank

4.10. Hypothesis 4

The fourth hypothesis that we want to prove is the following one:

"By focusing on selected sets of trigger words we can tag posts according to labels taken from a curated ontology dealing with the broad topic of suicidology."

5.1.7 Methodology

For this hypothesis, we created (1) a web application to label text manually and (2) an automatic system to assign categories.

The web application displayed the text of the posts next to the author and the date of publication and asked the user to choose one of the following options:

- This post is not related with the mental health of my friend.
- This post is related with the mental health of a THIRD person.
- This post is related with the mental health of my friend but I don't know how to interpret it.
- This post is related with the mental health of my friend and I'd feel...
 - No worried at all. I'd just forget it.
 - Slightly worried but I wouldn't discuss the matter with them.
 - Midly worried. I definitely would have a chat with them.
 - Quite worried. I would not only talk to them but to their family also.
 - Very worried. I'd urge them to look for professional help.
 - Terrified. I'd fear for their life at this very moment.

This manual labelling allowed us to validate the categorization made previously between "urgent" and "non-urgent".

In the case of automatic labelling, the posts were labelled based on the categories of an ontology called SuicideOnto. From the ontology, we obtained the name and description of the category using a script. After that, we calculate the bigrams using the name and description and look for such bigrams in the post. That way we assigned the categories where the text may belong.

Once we finished with the auto-tagging, we proceeded to calculate the list of most relevant and most central words for each category using the same methodology as before. In the case of relevant terms, we did not apply PageRank. Instead, we got the most relevant terms of the category, the most relevant words of the text we were going to tag, and we compare them analysing the cosine similarity.

5.1.8 Results

Below are examples of posts labelled automatically by the system.

5.1.8.1 Anxiety

"And that eliminates just about everyone I know.

I hope I don't seem too far off the deep end if I just start to ramble / complain. I suppose the beauty of long, typed diatribes is that you can just stop reading, no?

I'm a college junior at a good school. I'm a smart girl. I like the things I do at school. I like who I get to be there. I have work to occupy myself and I succeed. I do well. I'm pacified. I've always been this way. But regardless of where I am or what I am doing, I am always grappling, to some extent, with debilitating panic problems. I've been a nervous kid all my life. My parents swear they saw it in me when I was still a toddler. I can't think of a less corny way to say this - but I'm very fragile, and years of work and a stint in therapy could not change that.

Growing up, my parents divorced early and my father moved away. When he came back to visit every few months, he kept us in the one bedroom home of his friend, where my brothers and sisters and I were around a lot of drugs and violence. When I was ten one of the men who lived there started to molest me, and this went on for several years until I ran away from and never, thankfully, had to return to that house. Since then I haven't had any real contact with my father. Last I heard he was just diagnosed with some kind of disease.

My mother is a very abrasive woman who has put a lot of pressure on me since I was very young. She has a lot of problems of her own, but now that I am home for the summer, our relationship has become so strained that I feel this terrible, pressing anxiety each time we interact. She is partial to threats and punishment surrounding my school - she'll pull me out if I don't do this, she won't pay my tuition if I keep doing x, y and z. My school is everything to me. Cliched as it may sound, I love learning and I love to work. I can't have that taken away, but her demands are impossible and the panic she has incited in me has only served to make me more difficult and disagreeable. Recently she put all of my things in a garbage bag and sent me on my way. I've been hopping from house to house around here until she comes to her senses. Every so often I'll sneak back in if I have nowhere else to go.

30+ applications later, it is seemingly impossible to get a job of any sort. I don't relate well to people and I don't have many friends in my hometown. Interacting with new people terrifies me. I usually become manic halfway through any sort of social situation and watch it crash and burn, go back home and fret over it for the next hour, wallow, all that. I'm very, very lonely. Very.

On top of my panic problem, I've got some very serious undiagnosed heart problems. I will be in testing for the next few weeks to find out the scope of all this. My mother refuses to pay for these very critical, very expensive tests. This is a dead-end situation.

I used to be a girl who loved and valued herself. I can remember feeling very beautiful, very talented, and very happy. I can remember having a tremendous capacity for joy. I have so many things I can remember wanting to do, but I feel so terribly helpless and sad all the time. Every aspect of my life is a point of worry and panic. Everything around me makes me sad, and lately I've been wondering if it would really be all that bad of a choice if I were to end it. I'm not religious. I can't conceive of any state of being or consciousness I would experience after this where I could regret having done it. I'll never even know.

Everything I love is in jeopardy. The people I love are far away from me and I may never get back to them. I don't feel some violent compulsion to kill myself, I just.. feel no motivation or

desire to keep living. I cannot fight off this thick, pervasive sadness. In fact, I don't even really know what makes me happy anymore. I wouldn't know where to begin or how to rebuild, and quite frankly I don't want to. Therapy is out of the question, my parents won't pay for it. Same with medication.

All I do is fantasize about a way out. I feel unplugged.

I want to be spoken to so badly."

5.1.8.2 Depression

"Hi Reddit,

A few months ago I signed up to do the "Out of the Darkness Overnight" which is a 20 mile walking fundraiser for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Anyway, I only have 3 more days to try and reach the goal to participate of one thousand dollars. I'm only about \$200 away, and I know that I can make this, I just need a little help. I am asking for donations , large or small, every dollar makes a difference. If 20 people donate \$10, then I will reach my goal!

I would like to let you know my story. I read SW pretty much everyday, but rarely respond because I am shy/afraid to.

I have been seeing a therapist for over a year now, and have changed very much. I haven't really made any of the physical changes I would like to make to my life, but the way I think about things is changing. I still haven't figured it all out yet, and I am still figuring out who I am, and from what I have realized, I really really like myself. It's weird to say that. Therapy has definitely helped me to notice things about myself that make me who I am, and are these really great qualities that you don't find in many people. Things that I have always felt made me weak, or a pushover, or oversensitive, or a failure, are really things that I should be proud of and embrace. I am shy, I am quiet, I am empathetic, and that's a good thing. You know?

For me, I desperately needed to go on antidepressants. I was an emotional wreck, and have been so for at least 10-15 years. Ups and downs, and panic attacks, and rage, and everything was out of control. My thoughts were so jumbled, and most of them were negative, self-demeaning thoughts. Each thought had an emotion tied to it. And I could think myself sick. So toning everything down with Zoloft was a freakin godsend.

After that, for about a year, I did what the psych. calls CBT (cognitive behavioral therapy). This is where you start to identify your negative thoughts and look at them logically. this was really hard. I like to deny things, and I really had to disagree with myself for a few months. I wrote everything down, then rationalized it, and realized that the things I believed about myself weren't true. This was so different from how it was before I started.

Then I started to try and work on my weight. This is a big deal with me, because I have been overweight all of my life. I hit a serious wall, and started skipping sessions and got into a bit of a slump.

I changed doctors, and started a new approach. I think that I have most of my negative thoughts under control now, so we went into the psychodynamic therapy, where you actually talk about your life and stuff. It's not fun. But she asks the right questions, and now since I don't have the overlying thoughts of failure, I can actually see what happened without all the negativity attached to it.

Anyway, I really want to do this walk/fundraiser so that I can help others who may have problems with depression or anxiety just like I do. I never imagined how helpful therapy could be, I wish I had started sooner. It can really change your life, and I want people to get help if they need it.

If you can help, thanks. If not, that's fine. I can pay the remaining balance on the day of the walk. I would like to be able to say that I did raise the money, rather than bail myself out. Either way, I'm going to walk, and can honestly say I did my best at fundraising.

Thanks for your support!"

5.1.8.3 Happiness

"I feel like the only way to no longer carry this pain is to die."

4.11. Conclusions about the system

After analysing the results of the hypotheses, we can say that (1) SuicideWatch is a representative sample of language documents related to mental and social issues that can trigger suicidal thoughts and (2) other subreddits, where SuicideWatch user posted, could provide some additional clues understanding their context better.

In the case of the first hypothesis, similar results of other research (Lester 2004; Li et al., 2014) have been achieved. We can observe that the high use of self-referencing pronouns might be a sign of suicidal ideation.

For the second hypothesis, even if there is just one subreddit (depression) related to mental health among the top 10, there are others about anxiety, bipolarity, child abuse, self-harm, BPD (Borderline Personality Disorder) in the list.

The third and fourth hypothesis, coinciding with papers that used machine learning techniques (Pestian et al., 2010; Abboute et al., 2014; Desmet et al., 2014; Poulin et al., 2014; Burnap et al., 2015; O'Dea et al., 2015), could be met.

Regarding the third hypothesis, must be noted that emergency ad-hoc criteria and the classification are not appropriate, and they can be only consider as a baseline whereupon a meticulous work of manual tagging is necessary to have quality data to train the system.

Last but not least, the results of the last hypothesis show that the system may be capable of tagging posts correctly, as it is the case of anxiety and depression, although being a baseline system, it is normal that there are errors, as it is the case with the example labelled as happiness.

Finally, as stated several times, it should be recalled that this system is a baseline system, and it serves to avoid the cold start problem to labellers when suggesting (better or worse) labels.

In the wake of the results, it can be concluded that a baseline system has been developed capable of detecting suicidal ideation analysing written text.

Chapter 6. Conclusions And Future Work

4.12. Conclusions

Personally, I think that the outcome of the project has been a very successful experience that has allowed me to work in areas that I did not have the opportunity to deepen previously.

The experience of working based on studies and research papers, allowed me to complete my training by adding aspects closer to the fields of R&D&I which might also pose a job opportunity in the future.

Also, the study of Reddit and the capacity to process large volumes of data through the application of more or less sophisticated algorithms has resulted in a very enriching experience within the current scope of the Master in Web Engineering.

Although I am aware that there is still a long way to go, the initial project developed supports a significant expansion and growth.

The preceding accompanies the fact of reaching the objective of the project being able to offer a baseline system to identify suicidal ideation based on the content of their publications.

In addition, a possible solution to integrate the system with a web application has been designed. This last point has also been a challenge, especially because of the complexity of designing part of a web application without having ever had the experience of working in a similar sensitive environment.

4.13. Future Work

As already specified above, this is a work in progress oriented to the PhD thesis. Therefore, looking to the future, it would be interesting to make the following improvements:

- Increase the number of posts tagged manually.
- Improve the manual labelling system adding more questions (i.e. gender, age, profession, education) to gain more information about the person that wrote the post.
- Analyze more deeply the ethical issues that surround this type of research.
- Implement a prototype of the web application.
- Use unsupervised techniques and compare the results to see which is best.

- Improve data cleaning, checking the spelling, normalising the contractions, identifying slangs, etc.
- Improve the performance baseline of the auto-tagging system
- Get text from other suicide forums as “I Want to Commit Suicide”¹⁰
- Get text from other Reddit forums as “r/depression”¹¹ to get better relevant word lists.

4.14. Dissemination Of Results

This chapter presents the publications prepared and submitted to publish in journals in the JCR (Journal Citation Reports) and book chapters.

6.1.1 An Ethical Inquiry about Youth Suicide Prevention using Social Media Mining

This is a chapter for the book "Internet Research Ethics for the Social Age: New Cases and Challenges".

On one hand, this chapter examines the current status of the investigations carried out for suicide prevention analysing written content (i.e., tweets, suicide notes, letters) and the ethical dilemmas surrounding investigations using social media mining.

The motivation for the implementation of this chapter comes after analysing different studies carried out previously and check almost none analyses ethical dilemmas that exist environment on this issue.

6.1.2 Preventing youth suicide with social media mining: current approaches, ethical challenges and a proposal for the implementation of a sensitive methodology.

This is the article that has emerged from this research work. This article explains the design that we have proposed for the web application along with the current situation of the State of the art and analysis of ethical dilemmas.

The magazine selected to published the article is Social Science Computer Review (SSCR) because it is a magazine that deals with the social impacts of new technologies. Its JCR impact index is 1,525.

¹⁰ <http://www.experienceproject.com/groups/Want-To-Commit-Suicide/190128>

¹¹ <https://www.reddit.com/r/depression/>

Chapter 7. Project Management

Throughout the development of this investigation, we have used different project management processes based on Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK). PMBOK cannot be interpreted as a methodology, rather as a guide about how to carry out the projects. Therefore, we have adjusted and combined the processes described here to adapt them to our work.

The processes of PMBOK have been used to ensure the quality of the work, minimise risks and ensure the delivery.

4.15. Processes

7.1.1 Project Life Cycle Management

This process collects the main ideas of this investigation. With the title and the description, we obtained the Project Charter.

This process ensures proper coordination of project activities such as manage the work of the project, monitor and control, carry out integrated change control and close the project or phase.

The Project Charter was sent to the Commission to get the approval and start with the investigation.

7.1.1.1 Inputs

- Statement of the project
- Document with agreements between the author and the director
- Project duration forecast

7.1.1.2 Outputs

- Project Charter

7.1.1.3 Adapted Processes

Adapted processes are: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6.

7.1.2 Project Scope Management

This process is responsible of the scope management plan, collection of requirements, definition of the scope, verify scope and control the scope.

7.1.2.1 Inputs

- Project Charter
- Requirements documentation
- Stakeholder requirements

7.1.2.2 Outputs

- Scope Management Plan
- Scope baseline
- Requirements

7.1.2.3 Adapted Processes

Adapted processes are: 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 5.6.

7.1.3 Project Time Management

Time management includes the processes required to achieve the completion of the project on time.

To make the schedule of the project Microsoft Project 2016, which is a project management software, has been used. This software was chosen since it is the most familiar regarding to its use, as has been previously used for other projects.

7.1.3.1 Inputs

- Project Charter

7.1.3.2 Outputs

- WBS
- Project's baseline timeline
- Activity list
- Milestone list
- Activities' duration
- Activities' resource requirements
- Documents' updates

7.1.3.3 Adapted Processes

Adapted processes are: 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7.

7.1.3.4 Initial Planning

EDT	Activity	Predecessor	Duration	Start	End
1	Project		91,13 days	08/01/16	16/05/16
1.1	Start of the project		1 day	08/01/16	08/01/16
1.1.1	Drafting of the Project Charter		1 day	08/01/16	08/01/16
1.2	Adaptation of the process to the project		3,5 days	09/01/16	14/01/16
1.2.1	Adaptation of the Scope Management	3	4 hours	09/01/16	09/01/16
1.2.2	Adaptation of the Time Management	3	4 hours	11/01/16	11/01/16
1.2.3	Adaptation of the Quality Management	5	4 hours	11/01/16	11/01/16
1.2.4	Adaptation of the Stakeholders Management	6	2 hours	11/01/16	11/01/16
1.2.5	Adaptation of the Communications Management	7	2 hours	11/01/16	11/01/16
1.2.6	Adaptation of the Risk Management	8	4 hours	11/01/16	12/01/16
1.2.7	Adaptation of the Integration Management	9	4 hours	11/01/16	12/01/16
1.2.8	Delivery of the documentation	11	15 mins	12/01/16	12/01/16
1.2.9	Acceptance of the deliverables	12	1,63 days	12/01/16	14/01/16
1.3	Project planning		3,75 days	12/01/16	15/01/16
1.3.1	Definition of activities	10	3 hours	12/01/16	12/01/16
1.3.2	Development of the timetable	15	4 hours	12/01/16	13/01/16
1.3.3	Estimate of costs	16	3 hours	13/01/16	13/01/16
1.3.4	Determination of the budget	17	2 hours	13/01/16	13/01/16
1.3.5	Delivery of the documentation	18	15 mins	13/01/16	13/01/16
1.3.6	Acceptance of the deliverables	19	2 days	14/01/16	15/01/16
1.4	Analysis of the project		5,72 days	12/01/16	19/01/16
1.4.1	Gathering of initial requirements	12	2 hours	12/01/16	12/01/16
1.4.2	Defining the scope	22	4 hours	12/01/16	13/01/16
1.4.3	Risk analysis	23	1 day	13/01/16	14/01/16
1.4.4	Delivery of the documentation	24	15 mins	14/01/16	14/01/16
1.4.5	Acceptance of the deliverables	25	2 days	18/01/16	19/01/16
1.5	The state of the art research		23,03 days	13/01/16	15/02/16
1.5.1	Search for articles	19	3 days	13/01/16	18/01/16
1.5.2	Analyse the articles	28	10 days	18/01/16	01/02/16

1.5.3	Search articles on ethical dilemmas	29	2 days	01/02/16	03/02/16
1.5.4	Analyse ethical dilemmas	30	5 days	03/02/16	10/02/16
1.5.5	Delivery of the documentation	31	15 mins	10/02/16	10/02/16
1.5.6	Acceptance of the deliverables	32	3 days	10/02/16	15/02/16
1.6	Design of the system		6 days	10/02/16	18/02/16
1.6.1	Definition and design of the parts of the system	32	4 hours	10/02/16	11/02/16
1.6.2	Definition of the interaction between system's parts	35	4 hours	11/02/16	11/02/16
1.6.3	Integration design	36	4 hours	11/02/16	12/02/16
1.6.4	Design of unit tests	37	4 hours	12/02/16	12/02/16
1.6.5	Defining and modelling use cases	38	0,5 days	12/02/16	15/02/16
1.6.6	Delivery of the documentation	39	15 mins	15/02/16	15/02/16
1.6.7	Acceptance of the deliverables	40	3 days	15/02/16	18/02/16
1.7	Reddit		13,03 days	15/02/16	03/03/16
1.7.1	Data		5 days	15/02/16	22/02/16
1.7.1.1	Analyse data from Reddit	40	3 days	15/02/16	18/02/16
1.7.1.2	Data cleansing	44	2 days	18/02/16	22/02/16
1.7.2	Database		8,03 days	22/02/16	03/03/16
1.7.2.1	Installation	45	3 hours	22/02/16	22/02/16
1.7.2.2	Configuration	47	5 hours	22/02/16	23/02/16
1.7.2.3	Development of unit tests	48	1 day	23/02/16	24/02/16
1.7.2.4	Data insertion	49	3 days	24/02/16	29/02/16
1.7.2.5	Delivery of the documentation	50	15 mins	29/02/16	29/02/16
1.7.2.6	Acceptance of the deliverables	51	3 days	29/02/16	03/03/16
1.8	Twitter		10,53 days	29/02/16	14/03/16
1.8.1	Data		4 days	29/02/16	04/03/16
1.8.1.1	Analyse data from Twitter	51	2 days	29/02/16	02/03/16
1.8.1.2	Data cleansing	55	2 days	02/03/16	04/03/16
1.8.2	Database		3,5 days	04/03/16	09/03/16
1.8.2.1	Installation	56	3 hours	04/03/16	04/03/16
1.8.2.2	Configuration	58	5 hours	04/03/16	07/03/16
1.8.2.3	Development of unit tests	59	1,5 days	07/03/16	08/03/16
1.8.2.4	Data insertion	60	1 day	08/03/16	09/03/16
1.8.3	Delivery of the documentation	61	15 mins	09/03/16	09/03/16

1.8.4	Acceptance of the deliverables	62	3 days	09/03/16	14/03/16
1.9	Classification		26,53 days	09/03/16	15/04/16
1.9.1	Database		3 days	09/03/16	14/03/16
1.9.1.1	Installation	62	3 hours	09/03/16	10/03/16
1.9.1.2	Configuration	66	5 hours	10/03/16	10/03/16
1.9.1.3	Development of unit tests	67	1 day	10/03/16	11/03/16
1.9.1.4	Data insertion	68	1 day	11/03/16	14/03/16
1.9.2	Algorithm		21 days	14/03/16	12/04/16
1.9.2.1	Obtaining bigrams	69	3 days	14/03/16	17/03/16
1.9.2.2	Development of text mining algorithm	71	15 days	17/03/16	07/04/16
1.9.2.3	Development of unit tests	72	3 days	07/04/16	12/04/16
1.9.3	Delivery of the documentation	73	15 mins	12/04/16	12/04/16
1.9.4	Acceptance of the deliverables	74	2,5 days	12/04/16	15/04/16
1.10	System integration		10,03 days	12/04/16	26/04/16
1.10.1	Integration of parts	74	5 days	12/04/16	19/04/16
1.10.2	Development of unit tests	77	2 days	19/04/16	21/04/16
1.10.3	Delivery of the documentation	78	15 mins	21/04/16	21/04/16
1.10.4	Acceptance of the deliverables	79	3 days	21/04/16	26/04/16
1.11	Evaluation of algorithm		11,03 days	21/04/16	06/05/16
1.11.1	Classification of the tweets	79	5 days	21/04/16	28/04/16
1.11.2	Analysis of the classification	82	3 days	28/04/16	03/05/16
1.11.3	Delivery of the documentation	83	15 mins	03/05/16	03/05/16
1.11.4	Acceptance of the deliverables	84	3 days	04/05/16	06/05/16
1.12	Completion of the project		8,13 days	04/05/16	16/05/16
1.12.1	Complete system documentation	84	5 days	04/05/16	10/05/16
1.12.2	Delivery of the documentation	87	3 days	11/05/16	13/05/16
1.12.3	Drafting of the Project Close Out Charter	88	1 hour	16/05/16	16/05/16

Table 24. Initial Planning

7.1.3.5 Analysis of the planning

Initially, we planned the project to have a period of 92 days. Due to different reasons, in the end, it took 134 days terminating the 29th of June instead of the 16th of May.

The first cause of the delay was the costly execution of the data. This was a risk identified from the beginning that we knew that it was likely to happen. Even so, but we did not think that it will slow down so much the planning.

The other reason is the poor results achieved obtaining relevant diagrams. Due to this, we changed the approach, and we decided to use unigrams instead of bigrams, changing the methodology followed before.

7.1.4 Project Cost Management

This process has as purpose to manage the costs of the project. Being a Master's thesis, there are not real expenses. Even so, we simulated the management of costs through the development of a fictitious budget.

7.1.4.1 Inputs

- Project Charter
- Project's timeline
- Activity list
- Activities' duration and resources
- Milestone list
- Risk register

7.1.4.2 Outputs

- Estimated Budget

7.1.4.3 Adapted Processes

Adapted processes are: 7.2, 7.3.

7.1.4.4 Estimated Budget

To ensure a more realistic budget, we assumed that the development of the system will be carried out by a team formed by 1 Principal investigator (PI), 2 Research Assistants (RA), 3 technicians and one expert in clinical psychology. The researchers will be responsible for the part of research, analysis and design, the technicians for the development of the system and the expert will help with ethical dilemmas and tagging

systems during the development of the project. The Principal Investigator will play the role of the project leader and will monitored tasks.

To calculate the budget an amortization of 4 years has been applied for software and hardware resources. The value of the amortization has been calculated in the following way,

$$A = \frac{DT}{TD} * 100$$

where A is the value of the Amortization, DT the total duration of the project in days and TD the amount of days in 4 years. In this case, the values for these parameters are:

- DT = 91,13 days (3,04 months)
- TD = 1273 days (Removing 4 weeks of vacation and 17 holidays per year)

$$A = \frac{91,13}{1273} * 100 = 7,16\%$$

7.1.4.4.1 Software Resources

Nº	Resource	Quantity	Unit Price	Amortization	Total
1	Office 365 Personal	6	69,00 €	7.16%	29,64 €
2	Microsoft Office Project 2016	6	769,00 €	7.16%	330,30 €
3	Debian 7.7	1	- €	7.16%	- €
4	Windows 10	6	109,87 €	7.16%	47,19 €
5	Acrobat Reader	6	- €	7.16%	- €
6	Google Chrome 10.6	6	- €	7.16%	- €
7	Mongodb	1	- €	7.16%	- €
8	PyCharm	3	- €	7.16%	- €
9	Google Drive	6	- €	7.16%	- €
10	UML Software	6	- €	7.16%	- €
11	R - Data Analysis	6	- €	7.16%	- €
					407,13 €

Table 25. Software Resources Budget

7.1.4.4.2 Hardware Resources

Nº	Resource	Quantity	Unit Price	Amortization	Total
1	Virtual Machine	1	305,02 €		926,55 €
2	Database Server	1	920,53 €	7.16%	65,90 €
3	HP Pavilion All in One	6	1.499,00 €	7.16%	643,85 €
4	External Hard Drive (500GB)	6	55,00 €	7.16%	23,62 €
5	Brother DCP-J315W	1	98,57 €	7.16%	7,06 €

	1.666,98 €
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Table 26. Hardware Resources Budget**7.1.4.4.3 Personnel**

Nº	Resource	Quantity	Salary	Duration (months)	Total
1	Principal Investigator (PI)	1	2.000,00 €	3,04	6.075,33 €
2	Research Assistant (RA)	2	1.500,00 €	3,04	9.113,00 €
3	Technical Personnel	3	1.250,00 €	3,04	11.391,25 €
					26.579,58 €

Table 27. Personnel Resources Budget**7.1.4.4.4 Data**

Nº	Resource	Price
1	Reddit	0.00 €
2	Twitter	0.00 €
		0.00 €

Table 28. Data Resources Budget**7.1.4.4.5 Others**

Nº	Resource	Price
1	Subsistence	2.000,00 €
2	Travels	2.000,00 €
3	Congress	1.000,00 €
4	Publication	2.500,00 €
		7.500,00 €

Table 29. Other Resources Budget**7.1.4.4.6 Summary**

	Price
Software	407,13 €
Hardware	1.666,98 €
Personal	26.579,58 €
Data	- €
Others	7.500,00 €
Subtotal	36.153,69 €
VAT 21%	7.592,28 €
TOTAL	43.745,97 €

Table 30. Budget Summary

7.1.5 Project Communication Management

This process focuses on making sure that stakeholders are understood regarding their communications needs.

7.1.5.1 Inputs

- Project Charter
- Stakeholder register

7.1.5.2 Outputs

- Communication Management plan

7.1.5.3 Adapted Processes

Adapted processes are: 10.1, 10.2, 10.3.

7.1.6 Project Risk Management

This process aims to identify and plan the risks of the project.

Below, are the risks identified with the impact and the likelihood of their occurrence.

7.1.6.1 Inputs

- Project Charter
- Stakeholder Register
- Project's Timeline

7.1.6.2 Outputs

- Risk Register

7.1.6.3 Adapted Processes

Adapted processes are: 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 11.4, 11.5, 11.6.

7.1.6.4 Risk Register

ID	Risk	Probability	Impact				Impacto	0,40	Priority	Response
			Cost	Planning	Scope	Quality				
1	Available resources can hinder data processing.	High	Medium	Critical	High	Medium	0,63			Avoid. It is necessary to monitor the project to avoid this risk. If it's not possible, it would be preferable to reduce the scope of the project or even the quality.
2	People from psychology that help us need more time to tag the resources that estimate.	High	Medium	High	Low	High	0,39			Avoid. It is necessary to complete the project on time. If psychologists need more time the posts that are tagged are used only.
3	Insufficient labelled material.	High	High	High	Medium	Critical	0,63			Accept. The time available to carry out the project makes this risk likely to occur. We accept the risk because, during the PhD, we will increase tagged material.
4	Accept excessive specifications.	Low	High	High	High	High	0,17			Mitigate. If excessive specifications are accepted they will be ordered by priority and the less important ones will be deleted.
5	Non-fulfilment of the requirements.	Low	Medium	High	Low	High	0,17			Mitigate. Review the requirements, scope and objectives and carry out regular meetings to assess the progress of the project.
6	Poor labelling of material.	High	High	High	Medium	Critical	0,63			Accept. Since the system is a baseline system, we accept the risk of obtaining poor labelling material. The labelling will improve during the PhD.
7	Inefficient machine learning techniques.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	0,28			Mitigate. Review new techniques, make several tests and choose the one with the best performance.
8	Training on Reddit is not extrapolated to Twitter.	Low	Low	Medium	Low	High	0,17			Mitigate. Tests with suicide notes will be made to validate the training carried out with data from Reddit.
9	An optimistic planning.	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	0,28			Avoid. Have a reserve of working days to deal with complications.
10	Non-compliance of the delivery deadlines.	Medium	Low	High	Low	High	0,28			Avoid. It is necessary to monitor the project to avoid this risk. If it's not possible, it would be preferable to reduce the scope of the project or even the quality.
11	An inefficient text-mining algorithm.	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	High	0,28			Avoid. We will try to have an open algorithm source or be consultate some expert.
12	Significant errors in the definition of the project.	Low	Medium	Critical	Critical	High	0,27			Avoid. Before starting with the project, a meeting with the director will be held to determine the definition of the project.
13	Poor communication between the members of the project.	Very Low	Low	High	High	Medium	0,17			Avoid. There will be continuous communication with all interested parties to avoid misunderstandings.
14	Significant changes in the requirements of the project once started with the development.	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	0,06			Mitigate. If significant changes must be made, we will analyse the time available to carry out the project, and we will make a list of preference to comply with the most relevant requirements.

Figure 9. Risk Register

7.1.7 Project Stakeholder Management

This process focuses on developing appropriate management policies to involve stakeholders effectively during the project, based on their requirements, interests, and influence on project success.

7.1.7.1 Inputs

- Project Charter

7.1.7.2 Outputs

- Stakeholder Register

7.1.7.3 Adapted Processes

Adapted processes are: 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 13.4.

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Chapter 9. Annexes

4.16. Project Charter

9.1 Project Purpose or Justification

Since the invention of the World Wide Web in 1989, the access and use of the Internet has grown exponentially, reaching almost 3.17 billion users in 2015¹². Along with Internet, technologies such as computers, mobile, tablets, etc., which are used to access the contents, have evolved too becoming a very important part in people's daily tasks. Now more than ever, people can communicate and exchange information regardless of their geographic location or time. The term for such an exchange of ideas and information is "social media". This term is defined by Kaplan et al. [3] as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content". Some examples of social media are Reddit, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Google+ and Instagram.

Generally, it is difficult to quantify the people that access social media since new websites and applications are created every day. Focusing on social networks, which are the most common form of social media, a small idea can be made since 1.96 billion users used social networks in 2015 and this number can climb until 2.44 billion users by 2018¹³.

The exponential growth of social networks during the last decade has aroused great interest in various areas of computer science, a clear business purpose for professionals as well as a new field of research for researchers.

As a result, over the past years appeared various researches focused on studying certain aspects of social networks being able to extract information about the users using publications that those made in their profiles, because as X concludes words are important psychological signals about emotional states, intentions and motivations of people [2].

The study of suicide prevention from the content posted by users is one of them. Suicide prevention is an area comprising only a small number of studies, but having greater importance for both the leading companies such as Google, Facebook, Twitter, etc. and researchers because according to the analysis carried out by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2012 every 40 seconds died a person by suicide becoming more than 800,000 people per year. The WHO estimates that suicide is the 13th leading cause of death in the world and the second one between youth from 15 to 39 years. Even so, attempted suicide can be up to 20 times superior to deadly suicide, with an estimate of 10-20 million non-fatal suicide attempts that occur each year around the world. Existing studies are made without taking into account ethical dilemmas that entails this type of studies and professionals or experts in the area of suicide.

¹² <http://www.statista.com/statistics/273018/number-of-internet-users-worldwide/>

¹³ <http://www.statista.com/statistics/278414/number-of-worldwide-social-network-users/>

The literature on online suicide prevention evidence the lack of prevention strategies and it dictates that more attention is needed to develop and evaluate online preventative approaches [1]

This is why the aim of this project is to develop a system that is able to infer whether a user has suicidal ideation, training such system with material posted in the SuicideWatch subreddit and carrying out the evaluation using post from Twitter. The system will be based on previous researches, on the opinion of people from clinical psychology and mental health of the Ministry of health of the Principality of Asturias and ethical dilemmas.

9.2 Project Description

The main objective of the project is to develop a non-intrusive system that is capable of inferring users' suicidal ideations based on the study of their publications on Twitter. To perform this, a solution based on the studies conducted by several researchers over the past years and the opinion of several experts in clinical psychology will be implemented.

The system will perform a binary (yes or no) classification of the post through text mining. For this, the system will be trained using the post published by users on the forum or subreddit "r/SuicideWatch" of Reddit. The majority of posts are written in English and it is for this reason that the system will only operate satisfactorily with tweets written in English.

When the system detects suicidal ideation, will not go into contact with the user and if it makes any explicit action, this will only consist of reporting the need to act to a human. Another feature of the system will be to determine if "support" comments that accompany the posts are useful or not and even if they are potentially harmful.

Finally, the system must be integrated in a web application that displays the classified tweets.

9.3 Project and Product Requirements

The requirements of the project are as the following ones:

- The system must be a non-intrusive system.
- The system will make at least a binary classification (yes or no) of the posts, although the possibility of establishing degrees of confidence should not be dismissed.
- The system will only serve to post written in English.
- The post should be stored in a database after being classified.

- The system must be developed in 6 months.
- The system will be trained with Reddit data and evaluated using data from Twitter.
- Reddit data from a dataset will be processed without discarding the possibility of also get data in real time using REST service.
- Explore how to get a semi-automatic way to list words to induced suicidal ideation.
- A virtual machine will be used for the implementation of the system.
- If the system performs an action, it will only consist of reporting to a human the need to act. The system will not send automatic messages to or interact with the users.
- The system must determine if the "support" comments that accompany the post are useful or not and even if they are potentially harmful.

9.4 Acceptance Criteria

The system will be accepted if it is able to determine if a post makes reference or not to suicidal ideation with an accuracy of 80% or higher.

9.5 Initial Risks

The initial risks of this project are:

1. Assume that the domain of work can be processed automatically like others opinions about products.
2. Available resources can hinder data processing.
3. People from psychology that help us need more time to tag the resources that estimate.
4. Insufficient labelled material.
5. Accept excessive specifications.
6. Non-fulfilment of the requirements.
7. Poor labelling of material.
8. Inefficient machine learning techniques.
9. Training on Reddit is not extrapolated to Twitter.

10. An optimistic planning.
11. Non-compliance of the delivery deadlines.
12. Perform a bad design of the system or any component.
13. An inefficient text-mining algorithm.
14. Significant errors in the definition of the project.
15. Poor communication between the members of the project.
16. Significant changes in the requirements of the project once started with the development.

9.6 Project Objectives

Project Objectives	Success Criteria	Person Approving
Scope:		
Comply with the development of the following deliverables: project charter, information about investigations carried out previously, system analysis, system design, development of each part of the system and a final report of the project along with all the reports of the meetings.	Approval of all deliverables from the tutor of the project.	Tutor
Cost:		
The project should be conducted without exceeding the estimated budget	The budget should not exceed 22.290,06€. Detours will be accepted up to 7%.	Tutor
Time:		
Finish the project on established dates	Finish the project in 6 months	Tutor

Quality:		
Provide a satisfactory accuracy of detection	Achieve an accuracy equal to or greater than 80% classifying a random sample of texts previously classified by human beings. The sample will include texts with suicidal ideation and self-harm and texts that do not include them but may lead to confused the algorithm.	Tutor

9.7 Summary Milestones

Summary Milestones	Due Date
Start of the project	22/01/16
Analysis of the project	29/01/16
Adaptation of the process to the project	03/02/16
Project's Risks	08/02/16
The state of the art research	04/03/16
Design of the system	09/03/16
Reddit	15/03/16
Twitter	01/04/16
Classification	06/05/16
System integration	13/05/16
Evaluation of algorithm	27/05/16
Completion of the project	01/06/16

9.8 Estimated Budget

The estimated budget is 22.290,06€.

9.9 Project Manager Authority Level

9.9.1 Technical Decisions

Technical decisions shall be taken by Amaia Eskisabel under the supervision of the tutor of the project Daniel Gayo.

9.9.2 Conflict Resolution

Technical decisions shall be taken by Amaia Eskisabel under the supervision of the tutor of the project Daniel Gayo.

9.9.3 Escalation Path for Authority Limitations

The tutor will have the authority.

9.10 Project Charter Acceptance

Amaia Eskisabel

Daniel Gayo Avello

Project Author Signature

Project Tutor Signature

January 22, 2016

January 22, 2016

Date

Date

4.17. Paper

PREVENTING YOUTH SUICIDE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA MINING: CURRENT APPROACHES, ETHICAL CHALLENGES AND A PROPOSAL FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SENSITIVE METHODOLOGY

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ABSTRACT: The growth of social media during the last decade has aroused great interest and, as a result, various applications have focused on analysing certain aspects of online social networks to extract and exploit information about their users using Natural Language Processing (NLP) and/or Machine Learning (ML). The field of suicide prevention has been no exception and it is producing a growing amount of literature. The aim of this study is to (1) provide an overview about the current state-of-the-art in suicide prevention investigations using NLP and ML, (2) to offer a general view around the ethical dilemmas surrounding social media mining and mental health and (3) implement a sensitive methodology to develop a system that can infer suicidal ideation analysing posts content.

KEYWORDS: Suicide Prevention, Social Media Mining, Natural Language Processing, Machine Learning, Ethical challenges, Reddit.

1. Introduction

Since the invention of the World Wide Web in 1989, the access and use of the Internet has grown exponentially, reaching almost 3.17 billion users in 2015¹⁴. Along with the Internet, technologies such as computers, mobiles, tablets, etc., which are used to access the contents, have also evolved becoming a very important part in people's daily tasks. Nowadays, people can communicate and exchange information regardless of their geographic location or time. The term for such an exchange of ideas and information is "social media". This term is defined by Kaplan et al. (2010) as "*a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content*". Some

¹⁴ <http://www.statista.com/statistics/273018/number-of-internet-users-worldwide/>

examples of social media are Reddit, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Google+ and Instagram.

The growth of social media during the last decade has aroused great interest and, as a result, various applications have focused on analysing certain aspects of online social networks to extract and exploit information about their users. In the field of public health, the potential that have different social networks to monitor the health of the population started to be recognized (Brownstein et al., 2009; Dredze, 2012; Marathe et al., 2013). The field of suicide prevention has been no exception, and it is producing a growing amount of literature (Robinson et al. 2015). Still, and unfortunately, such researches suffer some weaknesses, namely: (1) It has not been guided by any concrete goal regarding mental health, but mostly with the purpose of determining the feasibility of automated analysis of a new data domain. (2) Thus, it has been mainly conducted by computer scientists without involving mental health professionals. (3) Because of this, it has dealt with very personal information as it was any other kind of user generated content, with little consideration of the human subjects involved.

According to the analysis carried out by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2012 every 40 seconds a person died by suicide, becoming more than 800,000 people per year. The WHO estimates that suicide is the 13th leading cause of death in the world and the third one between youth aged 15-44; and it is estimated to be a major cause of mortality during adolescence, particularly at ages 15-19. In a western society such as the United States, 13% of all deaths among youth and young adults aged 10-24 years result from suicide (Kann et al., 2014). On top of this, research results, unfortunately, suggest a high lifetime prevalence of self-injurious behaviours in adolescents (Brunner et al., 2014).

One of the main issues in the effort to combat suicide is the difficulty in identifying exactly which at-risk individuals will commit it (Fleischmann et al., 2005). Additionally, young people rarely look for professional help. This could be related to developmental changes, increasing the sense of self-autonomy, attitudes toward adult intervention, or the inadequacy of the healthcare system (Wasserman et al., 2012).

Young people tend to consider their problems unique and therefore unsolvable by professionals, and most of the times they are reluctant to look for help in their close social circle because of the stigma of mental illness (Postuvan, 2009). But in the so-called social age—where individuals increasingly share personal information on platforms without boundaries—social media data is a promising source to focus online suicide prevention accurately to the target group. In fact, the literature about online suicide prevention evidence the lack of prevention strategies and it dictates that more attention is needed to develop and evaluate online preventative approaches (Jacob et al., 2014).

Taking all into consideration, and making it clear that the investigation is a work in progress, the objective is to provide the basis to develop a system that is able to infer whether a user has suicidal ideation or not. The system will be trained with material posted in the subreddit "r/SuicideWatch" and the evaluation will be carried out using suicide notes and letters. The system will be based on previous researches, the opinion of people from clinical psychology and mental health of the University of Oviedo and ethical dilemmas.

This article aims to respond to the following hypotheses:

- a) The SuicideWatch subreddit is a representative sample of language documents related to mental and social issues that can trigger suicidal thoughts and planning. Thus, it would exhibit a vocabulary substantially different of that of the rest of Reddit.
- b) Users posting in the SuicideWatch subreddit would likely post in other subreddits and those could provide some additional clues to better understand their context.
- c) By focusing on the most central keywords of those endemic to the SuicideWatch subreddit we can rank posts according to the urgency of reply or intervention.
- d) By focusing on selected sets of trigger words we can tag posts according to labels taken from a curated ontology dealing with the broad topic of suicidology.

2. Current State-Of-The-Art

The advent of social media—e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Reddit or Instagram—and their heavy use by young adults has raised concerns about the possible effects it might have on suicidal ideation and the imitation of suicidal behaviour—the so-called “Werther Effect”—. In addition to the feasibility of monitoring such media to prevent self-harming actions (including those of suicidal nature).

According to a study conducted by Dunlop et al. (2011) in which 719 people between 14 and 24 years took part, 59% of users reported to have found suicide-related content in different Internet sources. The Internet and social media provide a huge amount of information about suicide (Luxton et al., 2012) and, quite worryingly, a large part is neutral or even pro-suicide. For instance, Recupero et al. (2008) reviewed suicide-related websites that were easily found through a search engine; according to their analysis of 373 web pages, 29% were anti-suicide versus 11% pro-suicide. They argue that even though the pro-suicide content is far less frequent, it is extremely easy to reach. A similar study conducted by Biddle et al. (2010) tried to simulate the results that a person seeking about suicide methods would find using a Web search engine. To that end they used different queries and collected the top 10 results for each one, amounting 240 different web pages. According to their report, 50% of the sites were clearly pro-suicide.

In addition to the confirmation of the availability of pro-suicidal contents, there exist abundant research that seems to suggest that search trends are related to populations' rates of suicide (McCarthy, 2010; Yang et al., 2011; Page et al., 2011; Sueki, 2011; Hagihara et al., 2012; Bragazzi 2013; Gunn and Lester, 2013; Won et al., 2013; Jashinsky et al., 2014). This would suggest that search engines are an important tool for individuals with suicidal ideations and, thus they could be a vector of contagion.

More recently, some researchers have explored the opportunities that content analysis methods could offer to detect (and eventually prevent) suicidal behaviours, because as various investigations have concluded (Kaplan et al., 2010; Tausczik et al., 2010; Jarrold et al., 2011) words are important psychological signals about emotional states, intentions and motivations of people. Such studies have focused on the linguistic attributes of texts written by people communicating their suicidal thoughts using Natural Language Processing (NLP). Foundational works in the area (e.g. Pestian et al., 2008) had to rely on transcriptions of actual suicide notes. Nowadays, however, there is an increasing tendency for people to use social media to express suicidal feelings and leave suicide notes; hence, it is technically feasible to monitor and analyse such kind of contents.

Virtually all of the current research has relied on the psycholinguistic lexicon "Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count" (LIWC) (Pennebaker et al., 2001) alone or combined with machine learning techniques.

LIWC is a text analysis tool based on the use of a dictionary containing some words and their categorization according to emotional and cognitive components. A number of studies have used LIWC to explore the evolution of the writing—and thus the state of mind—of individuals as the time to committing suicide approached (Pennebaker and Stone, 2003; Lester 2004; Barnes et al., 2007; Lester 2009; Fernández-Cabana et al., 2013; Li et al., 2014). Automating that kind of analysis is pertinent because the closer to the suicide act, indicators for positive emotions in the text surpass those of negative emotions (Keith-Spiegel and Spiegel, 1967).

With regards to those studies using machine learning methods most of them follow similar workflows: curating contents, manually labelling them, training a classifier on the labelled data, and finally using the classifier to analyse previously unseen texts.

As an example, Pestian et al. (2010) analysed 66 suicide notes. 11 mental health professionals (MHP) and 30 students of psychology classified the notes manually. For the automatic classification phase, they applied a wide range of machine learning methods offered by the Weka toolset. They reported a 74.4% accuracy, overcoming both MHP (60.9% accuracy) and students (51% accuracy).

A more recent work conducted on Twitter by Abboute et al. (2014) revealed a much lower performance, ranging from 54% to 63% accuracy (achieved with a naïve Bayes classifier). Still, psychiatrists contacted by the authors of that report agreed that such kind of automatic tools could be useful to provide practical and efficient solutions for suicide prevention. It must be noted that the performance results achieved in this work are consistent with those reported by some different teams.

For instance, Desmet et al. (2014) used content from Netlog and three different classifiers to find whether out suicide-related content and suicide threats could be detected using lexical markers. For the first task (suicide-related content) the SVM classifier had a higher quality with an F-score of 85.6% and for the second task (threats) using SVM and KNN together, they achieved an F-score of 59.2%.

The so-called “Durkheim Project” shares similar works. Its collects information voluntarily shared by participants (veterans from the U.S. armed forces) on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Data is analysed by researchers at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth and cross-correlated with clinical reports about the volunteers. The main aim is to identify in real time warning signals about suicidal behaviour. No results about the project have been published except for the pilot study (Poulin et al., 2014) which suggests a performance of about 65-67%.

In a different study Burnap et al. (2015) classified tweets according to a number of categories, namely: “Evidence of possible suicidal intent”, “Campaigning (i.e. petitions etc.)”, “Flippant reference to suicide”, “Information or support”, “Memorial or condolence”, “Reporting of suicide (not bombing)” and “None of the above”. First, they created a suicidal ideation lexicon analysing the content of different social media sites. Using that lexicon, they collected the tweets that were labelled by users of the crowd-sourcing online service “Crowdflower”¹⁵. Next, they created a set of baseline classifiers using lexical, structural, emotive and psychological features. Finally, they improved the baseline classifiers building an ensemble classifier using the Rotation Forest (RF) algorithm and a Maximum Probability voting classification decision method. That way, they achieved a mean accuracy of 72.8% for the seven classes and 69% for the class “Evidence of possible suicidal intent”.

Finally, in the work by O’Dea et al. (2015) tweets were manually labelled as “strongly concerning”, “possibly concerning” or “safe to ignore” and then used to train an SVM classifier. According to those authors, the classifier was able to label correctly 80% of the tweets, achieving similar results to those of human judges.

3. Ethical Challenges

¹⁵ <https://www.crowdflower.com>

Despite the potential of social media data, there are significant ethical questions about the appropriate use of these new data sources. A paramount example of this kind of is the so-called Samaritans Radar¹⁶, a social media based ‘suicide watch’ developed by the Samaritans charity. It was an application that analysed tweets to identify whether the user had suicidal ideation or not. Users were unaware that they were being tracked, giving an excellent opportunity to bullies and aggressors to attack their victims while, at the same time, being virtually useless for any sensible supporting actions. Another example is Facebook’s 2014 “emotional contagion” intervention study (Kramer et al., 2014).

These studies raise many questions: (1) Should not users give consent before being tracked in social media? (2) Is it right to label someone as suicidal using open but personal information? (3) On which grounds can mental health professionals conduct research using social media data?

In recent years, one of the studies that raised more debate related to informed consent is the research conducted by Kramer et al. (2014) that discusses the emotional contagion through the manipulation of News Feed in Facebook. This research created a great outrage and debate¹⁷¹⁸¹⁹²⁰ as it was carried out without the consent of 689,003 users.

This may be due to the difficulty of this type of research to obtain the consent of numerous participants. According to Hutton et al. (2015) only 5.5% (28 of 505) of articles describe the process followed to obtain user's consent, resulting in insufficient information to analyse whether the user would facilitate or not the data for such purposes. Even so, there are researches that investigated the attitude of the users towards the use of social media data (Beninger et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2015; Mikal et al., 2016).

These investigations obtained equivocal results. Beninger et al. (2014) conducted a study to explore the views of the users with respect to ethics in the use of social media as a source of data for research. They interviewed 34 participants about (1) the use of social media as sources of research and (2) the consequences, both good and bad, of the use of social media in research. The results obtained were not enlightening; while some participants felt that informed consent was not essential in all situations, others were of the view that, regardless of the situation the user always must be informed and must give consent to use the data. In the case of Evans et al. (2015) 1250 people

¹⁶ <http://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/supporting-someone-online/samaritans-radar>

¹⁷ <http://www.forbes.com/sites/gregorymcneal/2014/06/28/facebook-manipulated-user-news-feeds-to-create-emotional-contagion/#27b90d1f5fd8>

¹⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/jun/29/facebook-users-emotions-news-feeds>

¹⁹ <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/06/everything-we-know-about-facebooks-secret-mood-manipulation-experiment/373648/>

²⁰ http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/30/technology/facebook-tinkers-with-users-emotions-in-news-feed-experiment-stirring-outcry.html?_r=0

between 16 and 75 years participated and 60% think that social media data should not be shared with third parties for research purposes. Although previous studies concluded that the majority of users did not agree in the use of social media data for research, in the study conducted by Mikal et al., (2016) participants expressed a positive opinion about using data from Twitter for public health surveillance.

Another issue that generates debate is whether data is public or private. Some authors (Attard & Coulson, 2012; Haigh & Jones, 2005) have concluded that if the data can be obtained without registration, these are considered public; while data protected with password are considered private (Haigh & Jones, 2005). For example, Zimmer et al. (2010) analysing Lewis et al., (2008) investigation concluded that because a user publish data in a social network, this does not entitle a researcher to use such data.

In addition, most sites requiring identification to gain access have author rights, which states if data can be used for research purposes (Haigh & Jones, 2005).

Although, what happens if using public data attributes that are not explicitly indicated are discover? Are they public or private data? As Horvitz et al. (2015) states distinction gets complicated when private information can be obtained using machine learning algorithms.

4. Preliminary Results

It must be noted that this document describes a work still in progress which should be largely expanded during the development of my Ph.D. Thus, given the available time, and that a substantial amount of it was devoted to determine the ethical challenges of this line of research and the best approach to provide a valid and useful tool for mental health professionals, only proof of concept baselines and preliminary results can be reported.

4.1. Data Acquisition and Description

The data used in this study consists of a collection of posts collected by the user "Stuck_In_The_Matrix"²¹ from Reddit. This user compiled all the posts that users published, 200 million approximately, from January 2006 to August 2015 through Reddit's API. Between 2006 and 2007 available data is incomplete because the ids used by Reddit were scattered a bit.

Reddit's posts are associated with metadata that have been vital to this investigation. Between the different metadata, the most important ones for this research are:

Attributes	Description
author	Name of the author

²¹https://www.reddit.com/r/datasets/comments/3mg812/full_reddit_submission_corpus_now_available_2006/

created	User's local time zone
created_utc	Unix time (i.e. 1467042820 -> 2016-06-27T15:53:40)
downs	Down votes of the post
num_comments	Number of comments that have the posts
score	Number of up votes minus down votes
selftext	Text of the post
title	Title of the post
ups	Up votes of the post
url	URL of the post

Once obtained the necessary information, we decided to reduce the amount of Reddit's posts, since we had not sufficient means for 200 million posts. Therefore, we collected all posts belonging to the SuicideWatch subreddit. We focused on this subreddit because it is place where people can air out their issues with suicide and get support from the community. In total, we obtained a dataset with 90518 posts.

As a result of this dataset, we want to respond to the following hypotheses.

4.2. Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis that we want to prove is the following one:

"The SuicideWatch subreddit is a representative sample of language documents related to mental and social issues that can trigger suicidal thoughts and planning. Thus, it would exhibit a vocabulary substantially different of that of the rest of Reddit"

4.2.1. Methodology

To get an answer for the hypothesis we have based on Dunning (1993) work.

The first step was to collect a second dataset. In this case, a dataset containing posts from Reddit where SuicideWatch users' posts were not present. This new dataset consists of 1% of Reddit's posts. From now on, we will refer to this dataset as "Reddit-1%".

Next, calculating the frequency of use of each word, most used words were obtained for both datasets. In this step, the following criteria were applied:

3. the word should appear at least 1 time in 1000 posts. If the appearance percentage is more than 1000, we anchored it. Example: In a dataset with 94,000 posts the words must appear at least 94 times and 230,000 times should appear in a dataset with 230 million posts. As this is a very high number is lowered to 1000 appearances.
4. the maximum number of words in the list will be 1 million sorted by descending frequency.

It was decided to limit the size of the lists to 1 million words to avoid costly executions.

Finally, using the Log Likelihood Ratio (LLR) algorithm the most relevant words for both datasets were obtained. This algorithm was used because it is a statistical method that is widely used in problems where the aim is to compare two sets of data through a series of assumptions. The implementation is based on the interpretation proposed in the article (Java et al., 2007).

4.2.2. Results

The firsts most important words after applying LLR are shown below.

Vocabulary	Score
i	1062.3346816372
my	556.19765341672
me	543.71076523912
myself	530.08493138764
suicidewatch	522.25998829788
life	491.75091478651
feel	424.8342282069
suicide	409.00488180407

4.3. Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis that we want to prove is the following one:

"Users posting in the SuicideWatch subreddit would likely post in other subreddits and those could provide some additional clues to better understand their context"

4.3.1. Methodology

The methodology for this hypothesis is the same as the one described in the previous theory, but not the datasets and the parameters used. For this assumption "Reddit-1%" and "SWusers-otherfora" datasets were used. "SWusers-otherfora" was based on posts that users from SuicideWatch wrote in other subreddits. This dataset had 1.553.143 posts. In this case instead, we compared the most relevant subreddits.

4.3.2. Results

Below are the first 5 results of each dataset.

Subreddit	Score	Description
FreeStuffNYC	257.74430356256	Subreddit to offer free stuff in New York City.
TrendingReddits	156.45050780034	Subreddit that lists trends of the day on Reddit
depression	127.75403366539	Supportive space for anyone struggling with depression
TrendingNSFW	118.87994250568	subreddit dedicated to trending NSFW (Not safe/suitable for work) reditts

Subreddit	Score	Description
Fireteams	98.276293265034	Subreddit about Destiny LFG game and Destiny clans
CookingRecipesStuff	87.105310132656	Subreddit for recipes and cooking stuff
funny	78.42055098638	Subreddit to posts funny things
gonewild	76.79157814738	Subreddit for open-minded Adult Redditors to exchange their nude bodies

4.4. Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis that we want to prove is the following one:

"By focusing on the most central keywords of those endemic to the SuicideWatch subreddit we can rank posts according to the urgency of reply or intervention."

4.4.1. Methodology

4.4.1.1. Test 1

Using the results obtained in the first hypothesis for SuicideWatch dataset, we seek the central terms. To get the terms of SuicideWatch, we apply a version of PageRank algorithm (Page, 2001).

The PageRank algorithm was originally developed to identify the most relevant websites in a search. It can be considered as a technique to mark the vertices according to their importance in the overall structure of the graph. After the calculation, the final weight assigned to a node represents the proportion of time a walker randomly passes visiting that node.

In this investigation, based on the TextRank algorithm of Mihalcea et al. (2004), first assessment using a graph-based ranking model for text processing have been made, using as parameters words and the number of times that two words appeared in the same post. Additionally, to evaluate the implemented algorithm, tests using suicide notes have been made too.

4.4.1.2. Test 2

The second test consisted of evaluating an ad hoc emergency criterion. First, the posts from SuicideWatch were labelled manually as urgent or non-urgent using as parameters the medians of the score and the number of comments. If the score and the number of comments were greater than the average the post was classified as urgent, and otherwise, as non-urgent.

Then, applying the methodologies already explained above, the list of the most relevant terms was obtained, and we calculated the PageRank for each dataset.

4.4.2. Results

4.4.2.1. Results Test 1

Below are the titles of the posts that obtained best and worst PageRank scores. The texts that are too long are in annexes.

Post
Waking up every day wishing I hadn't
Lost my life and will to live
An emptyness

Post
The three A's of Awesome [inspiring]
Song for Feb 7th
Song for Feb 8th :)

Post
I
I think
I tried.

Post
The three A's of Awesome [inspiring]
In Italy the number of suicides among the female population is decreasing
New flavor of bleach! Strawberry flavor! (Amanda Todd approved)

4.4.2.2. Results Test 2

Below are the titles that obtained best and worst PageRank scores of urgent and non-urgent posts.

Urgent Post
Waking up every day wishing I hadn't
Lost my life and will to live
I am "weird" and "slow". Every social interaction is painfully awkward.

Urgent Post
Song for Feb 8th :)
Hi...bye?
Conflicted

Urgent Post
I tried.
I quit.
I suck

Urgent Post
Farvel Mia <3

Song for Feb 8th :)
Bboyer is semi-conscious!
http://www.reddit.com/r/Needafriend/comments/8qwt5/bboyer/c0a5j4f

Non-urgent Post
My life.
[REALLY Long Read] I have to get this off my chest to someone who cannot put me in a hospital
Each day, each hour, each minute is just torture. I want it to end...

Non-urgent Post
New flavor of bleach! Strawberry flavor! (Amanda Todd approved)
Method review: Amitriptyline Cocktail
Urgent!

Non-urgent Post
I
I think
I tried.

Non-urgent Post
In Italy the number of suicides among the female population is decreasing.
New flavor of bleach! Strawberry flavor! (Amanda Todd approved)
Mi ne volas morti solas, sed mi volas morti çar mi estas solas.

4.5. Hypothesis 4

The fourth hypothesis that we want to prove is the following one:

"By focusing on selected sets of trigger words we can tag posts according to labels taken from a curated ontology dealing with the broad topic of suicidology."

4.5.1. Methodology

For this hypothesis, we created (1) web application to label text manually and (2) an automatic system to assign categories.

The web application displayed the text of the posts next to the author and the date of publication and asked the user to choose one of the following options:

- This post is not related with the mental health of my friend.
- This post is related with the mental health of a THIRD person.
- This post is related with the mental health of my friend but I don't know how to interpret it.
- This post is related with the mental health of my friend and I'd feel...
 - No worried at all. I'd just forget it.
 - Slightly worried but I wouldn't discuss the matter with them.
 - Midly worried. I definitely would have a chat with them.
 - Quite worried. I would not only talk to them but to their family also.
 - Very worried. I'd urge the to look for professional help.
 - Terrified. I'd fear for their life at this very moment.

This manual labelling allowed us to validate the categorization made previously between "urgent" and "non-urgent".

In the case of automatic labelling, the posts were labelled based on the categories of an ontology called SuicideOnto. From the ontology, we obtained the name and description of the category using a script. After that, we calculate the bigrams using the name and description and look for such bigrams in the post. That way we assigned the categories where the text may belong.

Once we finished with the auto-tagging, we proceeded to calculate the list of most relevant and most central words for each category using the same methodology as before. In the case of relevant terms, we did not apply PageRank. Instead, we got the most relevant terms of the category, the most relevant words of the text we were going to tag, and we compare them analysing the cosine similarity.

4.5.2. Results

Below are examples of posts labelled automatically by the system.

Anxiety

"And that eliminates just about everyone I know.

I hope I don't seem too far off the deep end if I just start to ramble / complain. I suppose the beauty of long, typed diatribes is that you can just stop reading, no?

I'm a college junior at a good school. I'm a smart girl. I like the things I do at school. I like who I get to be there. I have work to occupy myself and I succeed. I do well. I'm pacified. I've always been this way. But regardless of where I am or what I am doing, I am always grappling, to some extent, with debilitating panic problems. I've been a nervous kid all my life. My parents swear they saw it in me when I was still a toddler. I can't think of a less corny way to say this - but I'm very fragile, and years of work and a stint in therapy could not change that.

Growing up, my parents divorced early and my father moved away. When he came back to visit every few months, he kept us in the one bedroom home of his friend, where my brothers and sisters and I were around a lot of drugs and violence. When I was ten one of the men who lived there started to molest me, and this went on for several years until I ran away from and never, thankfully, had to return to that house. Since then I haven't had any real contact with my father. Last I heard he was just diagnosed with some kind of disease.

My mother is a very abrasive woman who has put a lot of pressure on me since I was very young. She has a lot of problems of her own, but now that I am home for the summer, our relationship has become so strained that I feel this terrible, pressing anxiety each time we interact. She is partial to threats and punishment surrounding my school - she'll pull me out if I don't do this, she won't pay my tuition if I keep doing x, y and z. My school is everything to me. Cliched as it may sound, I love learning and I love to work. I can't have that taken away, but her demands are impossible and the panic she has incited in me has only served to make me more difficult and disagreeable. Recently she put all of my things in a garbage bag and sent me on my way. I've been hopping from house to house around here until she comes to her senses. Every so often I'll sneak back in if I have nowhere else to go.

30+ applications later, it is seemingly impossible to get a job of any sort. I don't relate well to people and I don't have many friends in my hometown. Interacting with new people terrifies me. I usually become manic halfway through any sort of social situation and watch it crash and burn, go back home and fret over it for the next hour, wallow, all that. I'm very, very lonely. Very.

On top of my panic problem, I've got some very serious undiagnosed heart problems. I will be in testing for the next few weeks to find out the scope of all this. My mother refuses to pay for these very critical, very expensive tests. This is a dead-end situation.

I used to be a girl who loved and valued herself. I can remember feeling very beautiful, very talented, and very happy. I can remember having a tremendous capacity for joy. I have so many things I can remember wanting to do, but I feel so terribly helpless and sad all the time. Every aspect of my life is a point of worry and panic. Everything around me makes me sad, and lately I've been wondering if it would really be all that bad of a choice if I were to end it. I'm not religious. I can't conceive of any state of being or consciousness I would experience after this where I could regret having done it. I'll never even know.

Everything I love is in jeopardy. The people I love are far away from me and I may never get back to them. I don't feel some violent compulsion to kill myself, I just .. feel no motivation or desire to keep living. I cannot fight off this thick, pervasive sadness. In fact, I don't even really know what makes me

happy anymore. I wouldn't know where to begin or how to rebuild, and quite frankly I don't want to. Therapy is out of the question, my parents won't pay for it. Same with medication.

All I do is fantasize about a way out. I feel unplugged.

I want to be spoken to so badly."

Depression

"Hi Reddit,

A few months ago I signed up to do the "Out of the Darkness Overnight" which is a 20 mile walking fundraiser for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Anyway, I only have 3 more days to try and reach the goal to participate of one thousand dollars. I'm only about \$200 away, and I know that I can make this, I just need a little help. I am asking for donations, large or small, every dollar makes a difference. If 20 people donate \$10, then I will reach my goal!

I would like to let you know my story. I read SW pretty much everyday, but rarely respond because I am shy/afraid to.

I have been seeing a therapist for over a year now, and have changed very much. I haven't really made any of the physical changes I would like to make to my life, but the way I think about things is changing. I still haven't figured it all out yet, and I am still figuring out who I am, and from what I have realized, I really really like myself. It's weird to say that. Therapy has definitely helped me to notice things about myself that make me who I am, and are these really great qualities that you don't find in many people. Things that I have always felt made me weak, or a pushover, or oversensitive, or a failure, are really things that I should be proud of and embrace. I am shy, I am quiet, I am empathetic, and that's a good thing. You know?

For me, I desperately needed to go on antidepressants. I was an emotional wreck, and have been so for at least 10-15 years. Ups and downs, and panic attacks, and rage, and everything was out of control. My thoughts were so jumbled, and most of them were negative, self-demeaning thoughts. Each thought had an emotion tied to it. And I could think myself sick. So toning everything down with Zoloft was a freakin godsend.

After that, for about a year, I did what the psych. calls CBT (cognitive behavioral therapy). This is where you start to identify your negative thoughts and look at them logically. this was really hard. I like to deny things, and I really had to disagree with myself for a few months. I wrote everything down, then rationalized it, and realized that the things I believed about myself weren't true. This was so different from how it was before I started.

Then I started to try and work on my weight. This is a big deal with me, because I have been overweight all of my life. I hit a serious wall, and started skipping sessions and got into a bit of a slump.

I changed doctors, and started a new approach. I think that I have most of my negative thoughts under control now, so we went into the psychodynamic therapy, where you actually talk about your life and stuff. It's not fun. But she asks the right questions, and now since I don't have the overlying thoughts of failure, I can actually see what happened without all the negativity attached to it.

Anyway, I really want to do this walk/fundraiser so that I can help others who may have problems with depression or anxiety just like I do. I never imagined how helpful therapy could be, I wish I had started sooner. It can really change your life, and I want people to get help if they need it.

If you can help, thanks. If not, that's fine. I can pay the remaining balance on the day of the walk. I would like to be able to say that I did raise the money, rather than bail myself out. Either way, I'm going to walk, and can honestly say I did my best at fundraising.

Thanks for your support!"

Happiness

"I feel like the only way to no longer carry this pain is to die."

5. Discussion

After analysing the results of the hypotheses, we can say that (1) SuicideWatch is a representative sample of language documents related to mental and social issues that can trigger suicidal thoughts and (2) other subreddits, where SuicideWatch user posted, could provide some additional clues understanding their context better.

In the case of the first hypothesis, similar results of other research (Lester 2004; Li et al., 2014) have been achieved. We can observe that the high use of self-referencing pronouns might be a sign of suicidal ideation.

For the second hypothesis, even if there is just one subreddit (depression) related to mental health among the top 10, there are others about anxiety, bipolarity, child abuse, self-harm, BPD (Borderline Personality Disorder) in the list.

The third and fourth hypothesis, coinciding with papers that used machine learning techniques (Pestian et al., 2010; Abboute et al., 2014; Desmet et al., 2014; Poulin et al., 2014; Burnap et al., 2015; O'Dea et al., 2015), could be met.

Regarding the third hypothesis, must be noted that emergency ad-hoc criteria and the classification are not appropriate, and they can be only consider as a baseline whereupon a meticulous work of manual tagging is necessary to have quality data to train the system.

Last but not least, the results of the last hypothesis show that the system may be capable of tagging posts correctly, as it is the case of anxiety and depression, although being a baseline system, it is normal that there are errors, as it is the case with the example labelled as happiness.

Finally, as stated several times, it should be recalled that this system is a baseline system, and it serves to avoid the cold start problem to labellers when suggesting (better or worse) labels.

In the wake of the results, it can be concluded that a system has been developed base capable of detecting ideation suicidal analysing written text.

6. Conclusions

After reviewing the existing literature, we restate the idea that social media mining is a powerful and promising tool for youth suicide prevention. As shown in prior section, current body of research shows that it is technically feasible to apply machine learning methods to social media contents in order to identify suicidal ideations.

As already specified above, this is a work in progress. Therefore, looking to the future, we intend to get more SuicideWatch posts to improve the learning phase. In addition, to improve the manual labelling system we will add new questions to gain more information about the users to better understand their behaviour.

Another task to be carried out is the integration of the system with a web application that serves to visualize information to psychologists.

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4.18. Book Chapter

An Ethical Inquiry about Youth Suicide Prevention using Social Media Mining
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Abstract

The growth of social media during the last decade has aroused great interest and, as a result, various applications have focused on analyzing certain aspects of online social networks to extract and exploit information about their users. The field of suicide prevention has been no exception and it is producing a growing amount of literature. Still, and rather unfortunately, such research suffers a number of weaknesses, namely: (1) It has not been guided by any concrete goal regarding mental health, but mostly with the purpose of determining the feasibility of automated analysis of a new data domain. (2) Thus, it has been mainly conducted by computer scientists without involving mental health professionals. (3) Because of this, it has dealt with very personal information as it was any other kind of user generated contents, with little consideration about the human subjects involved. (4) As a result, little attention has been paid to the underlying ethical dilemmas entailed by this type of studies and tools. A paramount example of this kind of is the so-called Samaritans Radar, a social media based ‘suicide watch’ developed by the Samaritans charity. It was an application that analyzed tweets to identify whether the user had suicidal ideation or not but without the users being informed that they were being tracked, much less by whom, giving an excellent opportunity to bullies and aggressors to attack their victims while, at the same time, being virtually useless for any sensible supporting actions. Such an application (shortly pulled after being released) raises a number of questions: (1) Should not be users give consent before being tracked in social media? (2) Is it right to label someone as suicidal using open but personal information? (3) On which grounds can mental health professionals conduct research using social media data? This case study aims to provide answers to those questions.

Keywords: Suicide prevention, social media mining, ethical issues

An Ethical Inquiry about Youth Suicide Prevention using Social Media Mining

Motivation

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2012), suicide is among the three leading causes of death among those aged 15-44; and it is estimated to be a major cause of mortality during adolescence, particularly at ages 15-19. In a western society such as the United States, 72% of all deaths among youth and young adults aged 10-24 years result from four causes: motor vehicle crashes (26%), other unintentional injuries (17%), homicide (16%), and suicide (13%) (Kann et al., 2014). On top of this, research results unfortunately suggest high lifetime prevalence of self-injurious behaviors in adolescents (Brunner et al., 2014).

Every completed suicide has a devastating effect, but when a young life is cut the shock is even greater. Suicide is a very complex phenomenon; thus, any approach to its study needs to be tailored accordingly, and Social Media Mining is one powerful but still newcomer tool for that purpose.

Needless to say, prevention is better than cure due to the nature of the suicide phenomena. However, one of the main issues in the effort to combat suicide is the difficulty in identifying exactly which at-risk individuals will commit it (Fleischmann et al., 2005). Additionally, young people rarely look for professional help. This could be related to developmental changes, increasing sense of self-autonomy, attitudes toward adult intervention, or the inadequacy of the healthcare system (Wasserman et al., 2012).

Young people tend to consider their problems unique and therefore unsolvable by professionals, and most of the times they are reluctant to look for help in their close social circle because of the stigma of mental illness (Postuvan, 2009). But in the so-called social age—where individuals increasingly share personal information on platforms without boundaries—social media data is a promising source to accurately focus suicide prevention to the target group.

It must be noted, however, that suicidal prevention may be implemented on an individual, group, or societal level; with the most effective strategies being a combination of efforts (Wasserman et al., 2009). From the societal and group point of view, some of the ethical dilemmas like the obligations of social media researchers to protect the privacy of individuals, or how to properly conduct research on minors, are routinely surpassed. From the individual point of view, it is known that an early detection of at-risk adolescents increases the chance of early intervention and diminishes the risk of recurrence and/or serious long-term consequences (Kaess et al., 2014), thereby, providing a solution to decrease the frequent false negative cases among young suicidal opportunity, and improving psychosocial outcomes among adolescents with mental health problems seems to be a compelling reason to keep on researching on social media mining approaches.

Currently, professional screening is a strategy that is often used in school-based prevention programs (Mann et al., 2005). It generally involves an initial assessment of all pupils by using a self-report questionnaire—an approach which requires a huge investment of both time and effort. Apart from that, self-report validity problems are well documented, and social media mining could be a good data source for triangulation.

Additionally, in an effort to make suicide preventive strategies effective and culturally appropriate, it is important to consider local attitudes toward suicide, and how to efficiently target suicide prevention and mental health interventions (Wasserman et al., 2012). Likewise, self-injurious behaviors prevalence as well as psychosocial correlates seems to be significantly influenced by both gender and country. These results support the need for a multidimensional approach to better understand the development of these and facilitate culturally adapted prevention/intervention (Brunner et al., 2014). All of those goals are unlikely to be achieved by traditional means; still, social media mining could be an efficient tool to “learn” from data at big scales.

Taking all of the above in consideration, we dare to say that a multidisciplinary approach to social media mining combining efforts from both mental health professionals and computer scientists, could contribute to design more effective prevention strategies with lower human, time, and economic resources than any approach taken in isolation from any of both fields.

Current state-of-the-art

The advent of social media—e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Reddit or Instagram—and their heavy use by young adults has raised concerns about the possible effects it might have on suicidal ideation, the imitation of suicidal behaviour—the so-called “Werther Effect”—in addition to the feasibility of monitoring such media to prevent self-harming actions (including those of suicidal nature).

According to a study conducted by Dunlop et al. (2011) in which 719 people between 14 and 24 years took part, 59% of users reported to have found suicide related content in different Internet sources. Actually, the Internet and social media provide a vast amount of information about suicide (Luxton et al., 2012) and, quite worryingly, a large part is neutral or even pro-suicide. For instance, Recupero et al. (2008) reviewed suicide related web sites that were easily found through a search engine; according to their analysis of 373 web pages, 29% were anti-suicide versus 11% pro-suicide. They argue that even though pro-suicide content is far less frequent it is extremely easy to reach. A similar study conducted by Biddle et al. (2010) tried to simulate the results that a person seeking about suicide methods would find using a Web search engine. To that end they used different queries and collected the top 10 results for each one, amounting 240 different web pages. According to their report 50% of the sites were clearly pro-suicide. In addition to the confirmation of the availability of pro-suicidal contents, there exist abundant research that seems to suggest that search trends are related to populations' rates of suicide (McCarthy, 2010; Yang et al., 2011; Page et al., 2011; Sueki, 2011; Hagihara et al., 2012; Bragazzi 2013; Gunn and Lester, 2013; Won et al., 2013; Jashinsky et al., 2014). This would suggest that search engines are an important tool for individuals with suicidal ideations and, thus they could be a vector of contagion.

More recently, some researchers have explored the opportunities that content analysis methods could offer to detect (and eventually prevent) suicidal behaviors. Such studies have focused on the linguistic attributes of the texts written by people communicating their suicidal thoughts. Foundational works in the area (e.g. Pestian et al., 2008) had to relied on transcriptions of actual suicide notes. Nowadays, however, there is an increasing tendency for people to use social media to express suicidal feelings and leave suicide notes; hence, it is technically feasible to monitor and analyze such kind of contents.

Virtually all of the current research has relied on the psycholinguistic lexicon "Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count" (LIWC) (Pennebaker et al., 2001) alone or combined with machine learning techniques.

LIWC is a text analysis tool that is based on the use of a dictionary containing a number of words and their categorization according to emotional and cognitive components. A number of studies have used LIWC to explore the evolution of the writing—and thus the state of mind—of individuals as the time to committing suicide approached (Pennebaker and Stone, 2003; Lester 2004; Barnes et al., 2007; Lester 2009; Fernández-Cabana et al., 2013; Li et al., 2014). Automating that kind of analysis is pertinent because the closer to the suicide act, indicators for positive emotions in the text surpass those of negative emotions (Keith-Spiegel and Spiegel, 1967).

With regards to those studies using machine learning methods most of them follow similar workflows: curating contents, manually labelling them, training a classifier on the labeled data, and finally using the classifier to analyze previously unseen texts.

As an example, Pestian et al. (2010) analysed 66 suicide notes. 11 mental health professionals (MHP) and 30 students of psychology classified the notes manually. For the automatic classification phase they applied a wide range of machine learning methods offered by the Weka toolset. They reported a 74.4% accuracy, overcoming both MHP (60.9% accuracy) and students (51% accuracy).

A more recent work conducted on Twitter by Abboute et al. (2014) revealed a much lower performance, ranging from 54% to 63% accuracy (achieved with a naïve Bayes classifier). Still, psychiatrists contacted by the authors of that report agreed that such kind of automatic tools could be useful to provide practical and efficient solutions for suicide prevention. It must be noted that the performance results achieved in this work are consistent with those reported by a number of different teams.

For instance, Desmet et al. (2014) used content from Netlog and 3 different classifiers to find whether out suicide-related content and suicide threats could be detected using lexical markers. For the first task (suicide-related content) the SVM classifier had a higher quality with a F-score of 85.6% and for the second task (threats) using together SVM and KNN achieved a F-score of 59.2%.

The so-called “Durkheim Project” shares similar works. Its collects information voluntarily shared by participants (veterans from the U.S. armed forces) on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Data is analyzed by researchers at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth and cross-correlated with clinical reports about the volunteers. The main aim is to identify in real time warning signals about suicidal behavior. No results about the project have been published except for the pilot study (Poulin et al., 2014) which suggests a performance of about 65-67%.

In a different study Burnap et al. (2015) classified tweets according to a number of categories, namely: “Evidence of possible suicidal intent”, “Campaigning (i.e. petitions etc.)”, “Flippant reference to suicide”, “Information or support”, “Memorial or condolence”, “Reporting of suicide (not bombing)” and “None of the above”. First, they created a suicidal ideation lexicon analysing the content of different social media sites. Using that lexicon they collected the tweets that were labeled by users of the crowd-sourcing online service “Crowdflower”. Next they created a set of baseline classifiers using lexical, structural, emotive and psychological features. Finally, they improved the baseline classifiers building an ensemble classifier using the Rotation Forest (RF) algorithm and a Maximum Probability voting classification decision method. That ways, they achieved a mean accuracy of 72.8% for the 7 classes and 69% for the class “Evidence of possible suicidal intent”.

Finally, in the work by O’Dea et al. (2015) tweets were manually labeled as “strongly concerning”, “possibly concerning” or “safe to ignore” and then used to train a SVM classifier. According to those authors, the classifier was able to correctly label 80% of the tweets, achieving similar results to those of human judges.

Conclusions

After reviewing the existing literature we restate the idea that social media mining is a powerful and promising tool for youth suicide prevention. As shown in prior section, current body of research shows that it is technically feasible to apply machine learning methods to social media contents in order to identify suicidal ideations. However, performance is at best 80% according to the most optimistic reports and it is probably much closer to 70% or even 65%. However, in this particular issue, technical feasibility is not what matters the most: so-called Data Science has emerged to make sense of vast amounts of data but many times their practitioners lack the skills to fully understand that data and extract value from it.

Nowadays we easily have access to free and ubiquitous data, but apart from being able to access and analyze it, we need to understand and communicate the insights we get from them. As noted before, this process has not been guided by any concrete goal regarding mental health and, thus, it is imperative to develop a multidisciplinary approach to exploit social media mining for suicide prevention.

On one hand, mental health professionals have learned and widely disseminated knowledge of the signs of suicidal risk; nevertheless, the preventive methods used by mental health services are far from perfect and, moreover, they require a huge amount of effort and time when dealing with issues where quick or immediate response is needed.

On the other hand, computer scientists have that is technically feasible to identify people at risk by mining social media data. Still, the far from perfect accuracy of current techniques imply that—should they be put into practice—resources could be squandered in cases where there is no life at risk and, much more importantly, that a number of life-threatening cases would fall in the false-negative case with dire consequences and losses of lives. However, that is just one side of the coin: Taking into account the extremely sensible material such tools and the users of those tools would be analyzing, we should be very careful about ethical and moral concerns, particularly about informed consent of the individuals producing the content.

Such dilemmas are crudely shown in the work by Gunn and Lester (2015) which focused on the tweets written by a young girl during the 24 hours preceding their suicide. Should those tweets by an identifiable person (even if using a pseudonym) be analyzed just as any other kind of digital contents such as spam, or should they deserve a higher consideration? We must not forget that we are talking about social data mining for targeting prevention, not about a finger-pointing tool like Facebook's suicide prevention feature²².

In short, social media mining can be a powerful tool and help counselors and mental health professionals; it offers them a massive arsenal of resources to help those dealing with suicidal thoughts find a solution. However, we must not just focus on purely technical issues as it has been common up to now; we must develop an interdisciplinary approach to build tools in benefit of young people, creating a new frontier of suicide prevention. Furthermore, learning from social media data may help us not only to prevent suicides but also to discover why suicide rates have increased in recent years, or to better understand the mechanisms of its contagion.

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²² <https://www.facebook.com/help/contact/305410456169423>

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4.19. Posts and Suicide Notes

9.10.1 Waking up every day wishing I hadn't

"Well, I'm feeling awful so I figured I'd let this out, even though I know it's probably not going to be well received. I've had suicidal thoughts since I was 13 years old. It wasn't a good reason. I was made fun of by all of my classmates for years. I've always been the designated "scapegoat" for as long as I remember. I was a stereotypical quiet fat kid. I was weak. I always felt unsafe. I remember getting sucker punched in the face multiple times just because people felt like it. People would always make fun of my appearance, my weight, my ugly looks, etc. It all seems like nonsense looking back, but it essentially caused me to build up an emotional shell. It wasn't the kids making fun of me that made me feel suicidal. It was my relationship with my family. I was raised by a single mother and partly my grandmother. I have an older sister. My mother was always arguing with my sister - my sister is 8 years older than me, so when I was in elementary school and middle school, she was in her "rebellious teen years". So they would always scream. Threaten to kill each other at times. It was always scary. I started developing anxiety from them that never really faded since. Any time a tense moment arises, even if it has nothing to do with me, it feels like pressure starts building up in my chest and I slowly feel like I'm causing myself to suffocate. It feels miserable. I always tried to mediate, but I was young, no one wanted to listen to me. I thought it was my sister, as I had never argued with my mother. She was always loving. But as I got older, she would become more explosive towards me - part of it was because she was a control freak. I remember one time I wanted to lay in bed with the remote - she didn't want to hear it. I had dropped it earlier and she didn't want to see it on the floor again. I had told her that I wanted to prove to her that I wouldn't do it again, but she wouldn't even give me a chance - she just started yelling at me, calling me a piece of shit, holding me down and slapping me while grabbing the remote from me. I felt so hurt - this was when I was 11 years old and I never forgave her for that. And I know I'm a terrible person, I know it's so petty. I know she didn't want to hurt me. She came to America from Ukraine for the sake of a better, less oppressed life for my sister and I. She had to work low pay jobs while supporting two kids in the high cost of living that is Brooklyn rent. The apartment itself was crap. Of course it was getting to her. I knew that - but I wanted to always be supportive. I wanted so bad to show her that I understood times were tough and that I wanted to help in any way. But she would ignore any time I wanted to "talk it out". She would instantly start blaming my qualities - "you're lazy, you're unreliable, you're ignorant", etc. And then she would deny the event altogether. I would never get any closure. And most importantly, they would repeat. It wouldn't be every day, sometimes not even every week, but the longer we went without an argument, the worse the inevitable argument was. I started developing anger issues. I would watch cartoons when I was little - I always enjoyed the feel-good cheesy moral messages they had. Be nice to everyone. Give more than you could take. I thought - "Wow, this is the kind of person I want to be. The person that makes everyone smile". But as my mother put me down, as the kids at school put me down, as the teachers put me down, as the guidance

counselors put me down, I started feeling angrier and angrier. I thought - "Why is it that the nice guy has to be hurt when the mean people get to be happy?". It made me so angry, and I just started giving up. My mother always put pressure on me to do well in school. It's understandable - she wanted me to be the best I can be, that's what she came to America for. I was always a 90 student. I'd get 95s and 100s on tests (after I learned to actually communicate in English, of course). I remember one classmate gave me an answer to a test we were taking - I already knew the answer, but I felt so upset that I was cheating, so I intentionally marked the wrong answer. That's the kid I was, that's the kid I missed being. Yet if I got a 70 on a test, I'd be yelled at, called an idiot, then compared to my sister, who was always at the top of her class. She was very smart, yet also maintained a social life, had friends, boyfriends, everything. My mother was very restrictive, but my sister was always rebelling, leaving whenever she wanted, hanging out with whoever she wanted, and still managing to do well. I resented constantly being compared to her, and I resented her for it even though it wasn't her fault, because I was the loser who was dumber and had no friends. As eighth grade came along, the arguments and the insults became worse. My mother would call me a degenerate, say that I was mental. It stung hard, because I always thought "How am I the only one with no friends? How come a girl can't look at me without laughing?" I thought, I must be dead in the head. And when she would say it, it was like she was confirming it and laughing at me for it. As the arguments got worse, I burnt out in school. I went from 90s to barely passing. And of course, this made the arguments worse, a vicious cycle. I stopped maintaining myself, didn't brush my teeth or shower. And of course, that gave kids more to make fun of me for. My mother would say how I made her depressed, how I ruined her life. I just needed her to be there for me, so that I could be there for her too. I know she didn't mean it, but the words still stung, and they still sting now. I tried being perfect for her, and I gave up. And she didn't want to accept me for that. I remember her crying when I broke a kitchen cabinet trying to reach for some ice tea with my body weight - fat kid problems. I knew why she was crying - it was symbolic to the shitty life we have, to the fact that she gave it all up and it wasn't getting her anywhere. Yet it made me feel awful, it made me feel like I was truly the one who caused all her misery. She tried breaking my Nintendo DS. I remember protecting that thing like it was my life. It was around the time when Nintendo was adding Wi-Fi to its games, so the people I would play with were the only friends I had. I didn't want to lose that. What a fucking loser, right? So she told me to get out instead. I know she didn't mean it, but I left anyway. I lived with my grandmother for a few months. She tried to be the mediator, she tried to be neutral. I appreciated that. But ultimately, her agenda was to get me to talk to my mother. It's reasonable enough - but she wouldn't actually address the problem, the arguments, the feelings of anger. No one would. I suppose it's my fault - they always asked me why I acted the way I acted - why I was so angry, why I was doing so bad in school, etc. But it's just so hard, it's just so hard to be told you're inadequate by your own family, and then have to admit to their faces that they're right. That it's not just them, that it's the whole world that's telling me that I'm a fucking loser. So I never told them about all the kids making fun of me. All the teachers singling me out and making me feel like a failure. The unsafety of being too weak to defend myself. I guess it was all pride. So they were just left to assume that I was just horrible. And I suppose I just

wanted them to "get it". I know that's completely unreasonable - how are they supposed to know what I don't tell them? I know it's stupid, but even now, I just wish they got it. I wish they knew that I was lonely. That I felt like I had no place in this world. That I wanted to kill myself. It was around that time that I got my first suicidal thoughts. I didn't know how to do it, I just wanted the pain to go away. I tried cutting myself once, but I was too scared, so it didn't do it. I would just have multiple bursts of anger meltdowns. I would start smashing the walls when no one was around, biting the computer monitor with my teeth, and then the family would come back and see a mess - and I would just deny what happened. I was doing the same thing they were doing to a problem - denying it. Eventually, my grandmother was fed up with my unwillingness to forgive my mother. She had a nervous breakdown. I thought she was going to die. She was barely breathing, laying on the bed. I was so scared. And then she said it - "You're going to a mental hospital". I was so scared. I thought my worst nightmare was finally coming true. I realized later that she was bluffing of course - but before that point, the one place I felt somewhat safe at was at home. But after that, I felt safe nowhere. I felt like I had no right to be myself anywhere. I climbed the roof of my grandmother's building a few times. She didn't know it. But I would just stare at the ground. It was only 6 floors, but I figure I wouldn't survive. But I just never had the courage to jump. I almost did one time - I was reflecting on my life and entered an uncontrollable rage. Almost jumped in the midst of it, but somehow restrained myself. Eventually, eighth grade was over. My mother would try to convince me to come back. When I'd refuse, she would tell me grandmother "Why is he such a horrible person?". I just wanted her to get it. Eventually, I caved and came back. But I never got an apology. She acted really nice to me, but my mother never apologized. She would tell me how much she missed me - throw in how it's my fault that I left. They never let me have my closure. My grandmother never talked about the mental hospital threat. My mother never talked about how much anger she caused me. I know they're the ones providing for me. They've seen things I can't even imagine now. But it's so hard to care about that when all you want to do is die. And I hated being that selfish. But I just wanted to die. Eventually, I "let it go". I acted nice - it was really awkward the first few weeks, but I settled into being with my mother and sister again. Of course, the resentment never left. The resentment for all the insults. The resentment for constantly being called inferior to my sister. And it continued to build up over the years. High school came - I started to get my life in order. I was terrified that everyone was going to be mean, that everyone was going to hate me. But that didn't happen! Some of the kids from middle school were there, but it didn't even matter. I started making friends; albeit I was always making friends with the outcasts. But it didn't matter, I had friends. I started losing weight, even took up boxing. I was finally gaining confidence and becoming my own person. Hell, a few girls even liked me! I thought that was impossible! Of course, nothing came out of any of that - but here I thought "Wow, maybe I can be happy? Maybe I can matter?". I wasn't a good student however, I guess the bad habits I developed from eighth grade - the overall lethargy with school work - carried over. But overall, my mother and I were more civil. Of course, she was still very restrictive. I had to be home by 7:00 P.M. every night, even on weekends (okay fine, I got away with the occasional 10:00 P.M. once in a while). I always followed the rules, and that pretty much got me no social life. I never

did anything. I never went to parties. I never went on late night adventures. I never got to know people better. I had a few friends, but even those friends, I barely got to spend much time with until the end of my high school career. I thought - "I'm listening to my mother, I'm following the rules, I'm great!" But arguments started developing again. My sister moved out once I got to high school, so tensions developed with my mother again. She would constantly belittle me - call me unreliable, call me an idiot, sometimes go back to calling me a degenerate. The anger issues never left, so I would blow up. I remember getting so angry, I wanted to hurt her. No, I wanted to kill her. I was sitting there, and she was just talking to my sister and her fiance. She just started talking about all of my flaws, putting me down and not giving me a chance to defend myself. It's so petty looking back, but it hurt so much. It made me feel like such a failure, and like I would never be given a chance to redeem myself. I just wanted to watch her suffer. Our arguments got worse and worse again. No closure with any of them, of course. Eventually, I graduated high school. Things were getting rough for my mother at that time. Financials were getting really tight for her, she even had to file for bankruptcy. But she would never admit it, even when I called her out on it. She denied all her issues, instead telling me "why don't you actually do well in school instead?". She was right, but she made me feel worthless doing so. Like I was incompetent, like I couldn't help. Our arguments continued. I remember one got so bad, I didn't speak to her for 3 days. So she got me some shitty t-shirts that weren't even my size. I was so angry - she couldn't just say sorry? Yet I felt bad, I know this was her way of apologizing. It was terrible, but it was her way. So I accepted the shirts, and we moved on. But we didn't. I never got the closure, so the anger just kept piling. My mother was experiencing pain for quite some time, so she finally got herself tested. Turns out it was a tumor. I remember she hid the secret from me for days, and didn't bring it out until we were arguing. She said "thanks for ruining my mood, by the way I have a tumor and this is how you treat me?". I was so upset - I know I should've been sad and supportive, yet all I could think about was how terrible it was that she used it as a way to guilt me. Russian jewish people, they know how to guilt you. As an interesting aside, I'm sure my broken russian and overall reliance on english probably made our relationship that much more strained. I always knew what she was saying, but I'm sure she wasn't always getting the "full picture" of what I was saying. Maybe if she knew, it would've helped. But even when someone else tried to mediate and translate, she wouldn't change. It was always me changing. And I slowly began to lose myself as a person, all the things I loved, all of my interests. My mother and I got into another bad argument. It was a stupid argument, I totally provoked it - she was saying something very racist and I disapproved. She didn't hate other races, but she didn't want much to do with them either, and it always made me uncomfortable. So here I was, trying to change her viewpoints like the jerk I was /am. Eventually, it led to a completely unrelated argument that involved her putting me down and trying to restrain me from leaving the house. I had to leave the house. I was getting so angry. But I never left without her permission. But I was so angry. So I just bolted through her. But she wouldn't budge. So I ended up tearing some skin on her palm. Nothing to major, but I remember hearing the sound of the tear and her scream. And then the subsequent "LOOK WHAT YOU DID TO ME. YOU KEEP HURTING ME". And I just ran back into my room. I started crying while yelling into a pillow. She

followed, of course, and kept yelling at me. I called my grandmother - I told her how much I wanted my mother to die. How much I hated her and wish nothing but eternal pain for her. Eventually, I left the house. Without her permission. It was big for me, I've never done that before. I turned off my phone. Came home, we didn't talk to each other for a bit. We eventually "made up", a.k.a. the usual ignoring anything happened. My mother's condition became worse. We found out she had stage 4 colorectal cancer. It was at this point when I started realizing how much resentment I had for my mother. I had to be supportive, but I couldn't bring myself to do it. When she would cry, I couldn't hug her. My body felt so repulsed by her, her voice, her skin, everything. I didn't want to touch her, yet I still felt so awful. My sister knew, and asked me to be more supportive, more emotional. I told my sister how I felt, how it was hard with the way I felt for her. She told me to bury my feelings and pretend. I know she meant well, but this made the world I was living in seem that much more hopeless. My friends from high school abandoned me. I had no friends. I had no interests career wise. I had no interests hobby wise. Everything I did, I lost interest in. And now I had to be nice to the person I hated most. I faked it for a bit. But eventually, I blew up. I had a breakdown. I started feeling like the world was closing in. It felt like I was suffocating. The feeling came back - I wanted to kill myself again. And I just laid their, in my underwear on the floor throwing things around. And my mother came in, yelling at me, calling me an animal. I was so vulnerable at that moment - I just wanted to feel like I wasn't along, that she truly was there for me, that she would finally accept me for who I was. But she let me down. I almost killed myself that weekend. I still wish I had. My mother and I stopped talking permanently. I stopped abiding by her rules. I stopped talking to the rest of my family. I disconnected myself. I stayed out as late as I wanted. We didn't talk for two and a half years - from the second half of my freshmen year of college all the way to the second half of my junior year. My sister and I never talked - I avoided her. I was always afraid of her. She's generally rational, but she explodes when she can't tolerate something. She'll scream, she'll curse. She was always the one that everyone had to be careful around. The family always said "you just have to be on her good side". I always thought "Why do I have to adapt to her? Why can't she adapt to the rest of us?" It made me angry, and at the same time scared of her. I felt like I couldn't talk to her about my feelings. I admitted to her that I was depressed previously - but we never talked about it, nothing came out of it. My grandmother would constantly remind me how terrible the world was - "Nobody in your life cares about you, your family is all you have. Nobody will ever care about you". I know she meant well by that, she didn't mean to say that I was worthless. But she didn't get why that bothered me so much - my mother's condition was terminal, my grandmother was in her 80s, and I don't feel comfortable being around my sister. My family was dying, and I was supposed to deal with the fact that they're all I have? What happens when my mother dies? When my grandmother dies? My sister and I get along well when distant, but things always got bad when we spent too much time together. It all meant that I was soon going to have nothing and no one. I wanted my grandmother to tell me that this world is full of love, that people can care, but that the family care too. I know that would've been an idealistic lie, but I just needed to hear it. I just needed hope. Yet they kept taking it away, albeit with good reason. My mother would always say "Your GPA is so high, just be smart and come back to the

family". Again, same issue as before, I was as stubborn as her, I wanted closure but she refused to "get it". Those two years of not talking to my family were the best in my life. I was doing incredibly well at school. I finally picked a career path I was passionate about - it wouldn't make an incredible amount of money, but I truly believed I could make a difference. I started developing a tiny bit of a social life, though I still felt like an outcast. I guess I just hated the fact that everyone around me had the chance to experience their 20s without worry, without sadness. I know that's not completely true, everyone around us is going through something at any point. But I just hated seeing the external appearance of their well being. I was always jealous. But at least I was moving forward. I still had plenty of arguments with my mother. She would call me a degenerate. She would call me a piece of shit. At that point, she did have good reason. I became a dick. I ignored everything she would say, would play guitar loudly at night. But as wrong as I knew I was, I was adamant. I wanted her to finally sit down and talk it out with me. We had moments in between those two years where the relationship seemed to be getting better. I'd let her hug me, though I still wouldn't say a word to her. But I'd become angry thinking back to all the things she said and did to me. They're not horrible thinking back, yet the anger kept building, so true resolutions never happened. But many, I still remember Spring 2012 - the best time of my life. I had a job, I was in school, I figured out what I wanted to be, had friends, playing Legend of Zelda Skyward Sword, and, while not strong, my relationship with my mother was making progress from us yelling and cursing at each other. Life was everything it needed to be. But it didn't last. My mother and I began arguing again and the distance increased again. I kept feeling jaded towards everyone around me due to things that were out of their control, and I never mentioned it because I knew it was unfair to blame them for being happy. I became more depressed. The suicidal thoughts continued, even though I had all I needed. Every day, while watching the train arrive, I'd get a tugging urge to jump. I just wanted to do it. To end it. Some days it felt so real, like I could really do it, like I would do it and I might not be able to stop myself. I was scared. Eventually, the news came. I found out she was dying in a week. I remember that week. All of my friends were really supportive, my sister and grandmother were really supportive as well and gave me my space. I remember visiting her that week. We finally spoke together again. We put our differences aside. And at that moment, while laying in that bed looking like a skeleton, watching the cycle of life take its toll on her too early, she said the words I wanted to hear for the past 10 years of my life. "I love you and I will always support you no matter what you want to do. I just want you to continue to love this family and be a part of it". That was all I wanted to hear. For all of my life. And here I was, getting it at the last moment. It was the epitome of bittersweet. I remember trying to do it all. Visiting her, studying for my organic chemistry and microbiology tests, attending class. I kept everyone updated. But I was always sad. I let some of my sadness seep out in the form of texts, but I was overall very restrictive of my emotions. My friends were freaking out, I could tell. They wanted to be there for me, but they didn't know how to act. So I just acted like I was fine, like I was going to be okay. But it made me bitter. My mother passed away. I was in class when I found out. I had an organic chemistry test that day. I remember leaving the hospital and hugging her. I said my last words to her - "I'm going to change the world". I whispered it right into her ear. She probably didn't hear it - she

was in a coma at that point, eyeballs rolled upwards. She probably didn't hear it, but I can always imagine she did. It was tough for me. I thought I was going to be there for her when she passed. I just needed to get through one more class that day, and I would go straight to the hospital. Then I received the text - "Mom passed away". I still have that text saved in an old phone that's no longer in use. I still look at it sometimes. I still look at the texts from my friends trying to make me feel better. I remember coming to the hospital, seeing her lifeless body. I just sat there while everyone was frantically trying to finalize the funeral arrangements; nurses were saying "we'll give you this amount of time, but we can't keep her there much longer". People were offering their condolences. None of it mattered. I was on the 10th or 11th floor of that hospital, and I just kept looking at my mother's body, and then at the window of her room. And I kept thinking "Just do it, just jump. Just die, for me. Please". I didn't. I still remember that day - it's all so vivid. It was chilly at 4:00 a.m., but the sunrise after was so beautiful. I still remember traveling from the hospital at 4 in the morning to get my materials and get to class. I still remember telling my organic chemistry professor that "I might have to drop because of family issues". The professor knew I was doing very well and advised me to say. I'm thankful for that. I remember finding out about my mother's passing and telling my lab professor - "I can't come to lab today." "Why?" "There's been a death in the family" "Oh no..." "Yeah, my mom died" "Oh no..." It was so surreal. I was acting normal, yet not at the same time. I hadn't slept in over 24 hours. No tears were coming out, but all of my words were rushed, with a bit of panting. The weather at that point was so beautiful. It felt like the perfect late spring/early summer day. It was warm, with a soothing breeze, the sun was up, no clouds. I remember the train ride to the hospital. I was listening to my favorite musician, Paul Gilbert. I remember the first and only song to come up - "Disco Trip". It's such a weird song, and it didn't have much to do with my situation, yet it felt so right for the moment. I remember my iPod dying and leaving the train a few stops early to look for an outlet to charge it. Because I needed to listen to music. I needed to hear my emotions. I had gone crazy. I was searching for an outlet instead of going to the hospital. I gave up after coming to my senses. I almost lost it again - I wanted to yell to the whole subway car "My mother just died", but I restrained myself. I didn't want to ruin their days. As I walked to the hospital, the weather became chillier. I only had a t-shirt on, so I was feeling cold. It became cloudier as well. Eventually, during the ride home, a huge thunder storm came out of nowhere. It was like the progression of the weather perfectly mirrored my own emotional status. I remember getting phone calls and texts - people wanted to know how I was doing. I just wanted to tell them - "I want to kill myself". But I didn't. I just told them all I was fine, don't worry about me. I told them not to visit. I didn't tell them about the funeral. I didn't want them to go through the trouble for me. I remember wanting the opposite. I wanted everyone to come there for me. To hug me. To let me cry. But I just couldn't bring myself to do that to anyone. So I came home to my apartment. I was going to pick up some clothes to stay with my grandmother and sister, but I didn't. I just jumped on the bed and went to sleep alone. And I will never forget that moment. The feeling of loneliness. The feeling of anger. The feeling of worthlessness. Wishing everyone was there waiting for me, wishing everyone was their hugging me. Knowing that I was the one who kept my shield up, but wishing they would break it down. I know it's

unreasonable to blame anyone. And yet, that moment of loneliness is with me every day. The next day was surreal. The weather was nice, and it had that amazing smell of trees after a rain shower, it was beautiful. And I was depressed. And I hated it. The weather was perfect, yet I resented it. I hated watching other families playing on the grass, couples kiss and laugh together, friends getting together, all while I was miserable. I remember the funeral. I was in front with my family, but I was sitting in a different bench. I remember all of my relatives, as well as my grandmother's and sister's friends were there. I was sitting there alone. I felt lonely. I felt isolated. I wished my friends somehow found out about this, that they called every connection they could find to find out about this. I just wanted them their. It felt so lonely seeing all of those people there for my family. They were there for me too, but I didn't know them. It felt like nothing. I just wanted the people I loved there. But I know I can't blame them. I'm the one who had to open up but couldn't. I'm the one who refuses to be vulnerable, because I had being vulnerable. I hate getting hurt. I just wanted to kill myself. I was quiet, but everyone was there for me. Everyone talked to me, told me they were there for me, that I should let out my feelings. But how can I? How can I just throw out that bomb shell? How can you do that to someone? Tell them that you want to kill yourself. How can I ruin someone's day that much more? So I kept it in. My friends all wanted to see me. I told them about the funeral and they, of course, were angry at me for not telling them about it. I know I was in the wrong there, but I suppose I just don't feel like I'm worth spending their time over. I guess, even though I wanted them there and they wanted to be there, all of those years, being called worthless, being called a failure, the self loathing was always there. I hated it. All of my friends, they were there for me, but they tried to make everything normal. They wanted everything to be okay for me. But I wanted them to be sad. I wanted them to cry with me. I wanted them to give me a reason to open up, to say I wanted to kill myself. Yet, as the weeks went by, everyone kept treating me like everything was normal. Jokes, board games, etc. I hated it. It felt like I missed my opportunity to loathe. I would hint that I felt awful, but would never provide any idea of just how awful. I would avoid hangouts, but I wouldn't talk about why, only that I felt bad. I'm still close with my friends, but I resent them. Seeing them smile. Seeing them happy. I hate it. When they complain about their difficulties. Their drama with their families. When they complain about having to work a few extra hours for money. I hate it all. Every single thing, because I hate the fact that I went through all of this. The fact that I've always wanted to make people happy. Yet the world was taking away my happiness. And I was watching everyone else enjoy my happiness. It felt like I was a fool for trying, for caring. I remember studying for my microbiology exam 4 days after my mother's passing. I remember my sister finding out what my ultimate career path decision was. She was disappointed. She kept trying to convince me otherwise. I know she meant well. I know she wanted to take over the duties of caregiver, so she wouldn't let down my mother. She meant well and her advice was justified. But I wasn't thinking about being practical. I wasn't thinking about money. I was thinking about becoming a Dietitian. It was the one thing keeping me sane. It was the one goal I had. It was the one thing keeping me from killing myself. Every night, when I would lose hope, the idea of helping people in a way I felt passionate about would bring me right back. And yet, here she was, telling me not to do it. She meant well, it was all love. Yet, she was taking away

the one thing keeping my from suicide. But how do you tell someone that? How do you say "Stop looking out for me, it's making me want to kill myself". Aside from the fact that no one will ever take that seriously, it's implying that they mean harm as well, when they clearly don't. So I just stood my ground. Other people would tell me not to do it as well. Some would belittle me, call me an idiot even. I kept with it anyway. Yet, the feelings of inferiority stayed. All these difference people with careers that save lives, they all kept telling me that I was wasting my time. And I just felt like I couldn't do it. Like the promise I made to change the world was gone. I knew it was ridiculous, I knew it was nonsense. But I wanted to try anyway, to change the world through my passion. Yet, as people kept digging away at me, I lost the confidence and the motivation. I lost interest in becoming a dietitian. Not because I didn't want to do it. Not because I wasn't actually interested in it. But because I felt like a waste of space, like an idiot, like everyone was laughing at me for working so hard only to make half the money as the same people who worked half as hard as me, have happier lives than me, look better than me, etc. But I graduated with my degree in Nutrition anyway. Yet I wasn't proud. Everyone was congratulating me. Everyone told me how incredible it was that I did. I graduated in 4 years, despite all that had happened, with a 3.92 GPA. Yet I wasn't proud. I felt like a joke, and I didn't want anyone to see me. To see that I graduated in such a worthless specialty, only to have to move away to complete an internship so that I could officially work in that specialty. I had been waiting for years. I had been excited. Yet, my excitement had finally been drained. And here I am, sitting here. My plan for years was to become a Dietitian and then a Doctor. I wanted to change the world by combining the mindset of the two. I didn't want anyone to know that I wanted to become a Doctor as well, as I didn't want anyone to know if I had failed. Yet as I felt more inferior to others, I started leaking the truth. And then the pressure increased. And now I'm sitting here. I should be studying, yet the suicidal thoughts are still there. They exist every day. The feeling of inferiority. The feeling of anger. The feeling of resentment. I still feel angry at my mother, despite our closure. I still feel angry at my grandmother for denying every argument she had with me, despite the fact that she is always supporting me in my endeavors. I still feel angry at my sister, at my friends, at the world, for being everything I want to be. And I know every life is different, every life is difficult, yet it just doesn't matter to me. When the lethargy sinks, justifications don't matter. I find it so hard to study - I keep getting angry at how hard I work. I hate it when people see me. I hate it when they see my stupid, disgusting face. When they see my stupid, idiotic walk. When they see my stupid, idiotic clothes. When they find out about my stupid, idiotic career. When they find out how little money I make. Money doesn't matter to me, yet I still feel so sub par making less of it. I feel like my worth is judged by my paycheck, even though I know it isn't true. Yet, the feeling is still there. But the irony is, I'd have nothing to do with the money. I have no more interests. Nothing excites me anymore. I pretend to put on a smile, but it's all fake. I know nobody judges my appearance the way they do in my mind. I know it's all in my head, yet my conscious mind overtakes all reality. I know that I have great qualities. I know the world isn't all bad, that not everyone is judgmental, that I'm not inferior. But the thoughts prevail always, and the feeling of anxiety, the feeling of suffocation is always present. I can't study. I feel so much pressure to do well now, even though nobody cares.

It was so nice when I had a goal. It was amazing when I was excited about my career. When I could go to bed and drive away all of the suicidal thoughts by thinking about how amazing I will become. But it's gone. I know I can do a lot of good. I know I can help. But I will always feel inferior. I've never had a significant other. Hell, the closest I've ever been to anything was kissing a girl who laughed at me and then rejected me for not having enough experience. The irony; I didn't have enough experience because I spent my years building my self esteem up, and then building my sanity up when it crashed due to the depression of my mother's ordeal. Yet there I was, thinking that all of this was meant to make me stronger, but instead, all of my past had only come back to bite me in the future. I know this is petty, high school complaining at this point. But the issue isn't the rejection, the issue is the feeling of constant inferiority. The feeling that I don't deserve anyone. That I don't deserve anything. The feeling that I want to kill myself, yet can't tell anyone because I'm too afraid of seeming broken. I've always tried proving everyone wrong. That I'm not an idiot, that I'm not mental, that I'm not a degenerate, that I am more than just a son that ruined his mother's life. Yet, I've lost my bearing. I feel defeated. I no longer care to prove any one wrong, instead accepting it all. I know it's wrong, yet it's all my conscious allows me to believe. I can't fall asleep without a night time sleep aid anymore. I no longer have anything to keep the suicidal thoughts away at night. I just wish I was never born. I finally started opening up about my depression to my grandmother. She's supportive. She's always listening to me, hearing me out, always there for me. Yet I can tell I'm hurting her. She lost her daughter, now all she has left is my sister and I. All she has left is making sure that we're happy. Yet I'm taking that away from her. I can't help but feel that the world would have been better if I had never been born. If I had died instead of my mother. I wake up every day angry, and only get angrier as the day goes on. I take the sleep aid pills, which calm me down to the point of lethargy. That lethargy is the best I feel every day. Yet I can't take it during the day, because I can't function. Nothing excites me anymore. Nothing makes me smile. Talking to friends, playing video games, learning, working out, playing guitar. All of the things that made me happy don't anymore. New challenges don't work either. I just wish I was never born. I have suicidal thoughts daily, but I don't want to kill myself. I don't plan to. I do still have a glimmer of hope that I can do it, that I can be happy and help make others happy. But the hope gets smaller and smaller every day. I know what you all want to say. I know the advice. I don't want to be told to act a certain way. I don't want to be told to be more open with my feelings. I don't want to be told to see a psychiatrist. I don't want to be told that I'm too young, that I have yet to actually experience life, that there's so much more beauty in this world, that there are good people and good things as well. I understand all of that already. I just want to type my feelings out and receive some support. I know that's too much to ask for, and this wall of text is inconvenient as is, but thank you anyway. Maybe one day, I'll grow up."

9.10.2 Lost my life and my will to live

"My name is Sam. I'm 24 years old and on September 1st, 2014 my girlfriend of 9 months broke up with me and I've never been the same since. Now I get it, this happens to everyone and nobody likes it right? Well yeah it does, but every case is different and people deal with it and react to it differently. Here you will find my personal story and why this experience has cut me so deeply.

It all starts as far back as when I was 7 years old. In grade 2, I was just like any normal kid, I was energetic, mischievous and generally a happy little boy. I have memories of me playing around and making jokes and doing silly things with girls and boys alike. I enjoyed the attention and being accepted in that way made me happy. Come Grade 3 and a lot of things change. Around this time, my situation at home wasn't the greatest. My dad was angry, my parents would yell, fight, and argue right in front of me and my dad would take a lot of his frustrations out on me. I distinctly remember being fearful of my dad because I knew the next physical attack on me could be at any moment. He would hit me with belts...we had a lot of them around the house. The flick of his wrist was enough to make me bleed. I remember going around the house and hiding every belt I could find so he couldn't use them on me...not that it made a difference. Being pulled up by the ear and thrown into a wall is just as painful really.

So I'm afraid of my dad at home, I listen to my parents argue all the time and I try to lock myself in my room hoping that my dad can't find a key to unlock it. At school, I find that I'm thrust into a classroom where I know nobody from my previous year and I'm left to fend for myself. I don't cope particularly well. I'm mostly a loner in class and I just keep to myself. I did actually make one friend. His name was Aaron. This friend meant a lot to me, he was my only ally in and out of class and he would often bring lunch money to school with him whereas I always brought my own lunchbox. This was cool because from time to time he would offer to buy me an ice cream with his spare money, and me being the little kid that I was, that was an amazing offer. The problem, however, is that he would always be the one paying for me. Eventually it got to the point where he grew a dislike for me saying "oh I see your just using me for my money". Of course, I felt guilty for 'taking his money' but it really wasn't my intention. I could never repay the favour because I never had money with me and even if I did, I was too shy and nervous to buy one anyway! Our friendship broke and I was alone. I became increasingly anxious around people and retreated inward. I'm sure my home situation had something to do with these feelings as well.

So I go through most of my primary school life feeling really out of place and awkward. I met a couple of good friends (that are still my friends today) but the social anxiety just grew stronger and stronger. In 2003 I started high school. The higher demand of responsibility that came with high school was not something I welcomed. People around me were maturing, becoming increasingly independent and self-sufficient but I stayed the same. I was still that scared little kid inside that had their mum make lunch for me every morning. I really felt like I did not belong even more and me being overweight certainly didn't help – especially when it came to Phys Ed. I hated this class. It was headed up by an old-school sociopathic Asian dictator that used fear as a tool to deter students from misbehaving in his class. I would always be late to class because we had

to get changed in the change rooms before coming in and...in these change rooms I was bullied. People would kick my door in while I was changing, lock me inside and whatever else they could do to make my life miserable. I was already a nervous wreck in a normal class room but Phys Ed change rooms were hell.

Of course, my lovely Phys Ed teacher would use his cruel tactic to single me out in front of everyone for being late to class and would get me to stand up holding my heavy bag while everyone else would sit down and watch me. On the off chance I wasn't late to class, I sucked at sports anyway and the idea of playing in a 'team sport' out on the field (sometimes shirtless) where you demonstrated your physical strengths and qualities was basically my worst nightmare. I despised this class.

Luckily, the bullying didn't last long. Some of them left the school and I guess the others just found some new targets to harass. I managed to cope though. I started up an online MMORPG that was totally awesome. I've always been a smart guy and this game rewarded intelligence and perseverance and being in an ONLINE gaming environment back in 2003 was the most amazing thing in the world. It was the one thing I looked forward to doing each day. I was exceedingly good at it and I found a lot of self-worth and satisfaction through playing this game. I played it constantly every day after school. It was my escape.

With this coping mechanism though, came a dependence. I didn't go to school excursions, the river cruise, the school ball. I didn't make new friends male or female, I didn't hang out after school, and I was still an anxious mess in any scenario that anyone my age would find completely normal. And when I say anxious, I mean "I feel like I'm going to vomit, I'm shaking and I can't speak" type of anxious...and this would occur simply by the thought of having to buy something from the lunch lady. Clearly I was not normal and did not fit in. I knew that, I had accepted it would always be this way and I was fine with it because I had this game that made me happy so who cares right? Besides, on the outside I managed to fake my way through pretty well, I definitely hid my anxiety quite well even though I was dying inside.

High school ends in 2007. Best day ever right? Well yeah it was! No more Phys Ed, no more in-class essays or speeches. In my mind this meant I could play this MMORPG all day every day and I wouldn't have to be afraid of anything anymore. So that's what I did. I played the game at least 12 hours a day for an entire year, I pretty much didn't leave the house unless I absolutely had to. Throughout the year, my mum would express concern that I was getting overweight, pale skinned and all that kind of stuff and my dad would call me lazy and tell me to study something or get a job. He had no idea that the thought of either one of those was like signing a death warrant to me, he just perceived it as laziness.

So after that year passes, I am pretty much forced to do something by my parents and I sort of start to acknowledge that my current lifestyle cannot possibly last forever. I study a double major in Mathematics and Computer Science. I'm good at both subjects, always have been. I got the top student award for Calculus for my year group and I've been playing games/using computers since as far back as I can remember! I am not good at socializing however, I am still that scared little boy inside. I don't have my drivers licence and I have no idea how to take a train or a bus. My mum would pick me up and drop me off at uni. If she couldn't take me for some reason then I would simply

skip class. The idea of getting there myself was not an option to consider. Actually scratch that. I just stopped going to class altogether. What was the point? Most lectures were recorded and posted online and for those that weren't, I had google to learn from. I'm smart enough to make my way through my classes this way and it saves me on travel time/money, it doesn't inconvenience my mum and I don't have to put myself in an anxiety provoking environment. Sounds like win-win-win to me. I went through my whole course this way, I never made an acquaintance, let-alone a friend.

My whole life story changes drastically near the end of 2011. At this point I've played this MMORPG for at least 8 years, and its actually starting to get boring. I push the games limits by hacking/exploiting it in an attempt to keep the game interesting but I eventually get caught and all my accounts are banned permanently. I lose EVERYTHING. Honestly, I didn't even really care. The game was boring anyway. The thing I didn't expect though was that I suddenly had SO MUCH time on my hands and I had nothing to fill it with. I was bored out of my mind. I started spending all day on my laptop learning new things and new skills just for the sake of it. I taught myself the piano, learnt about human psychology and medication, physics, new programming techniques, random nature facts, nutrition, exercise routines. I even had a phase where I learned about all the infamous serial killers of the past.

It really hit home though when I started reading about university/college life and how most people say its one of the best times of their lives. Its where people make fun memories, lifelong friends, have awesome parties with people, meet their potential life partners and what not. I didn't do any of that...hell I didn't know where the library was. It was a wake-up call. "You are different from everyone else. You have not experienced life, you don't fit in and you are nobody". I fell into a very deep depression. I wanted to kill myself, I had nothing to live for and any attempt at change was blocked by soul crushing anxiety.

An old high school friend's birthday ticks by and I take a look on Facebook. He gets a long list of "Happy Birthday" messages from so many different people. My birthday is a couple of days later...I get about 6 messages from people I haven't seen in years. I'm certain they only posted in the first place because FB makes them aware that my birthday was that day. I don't care about FB likes or anything like that but this response (or lack of) was a pretty clear reflection of my loneliness. My 22nd birthday was one of the worst days of my life. All it did was remind me how alone I am and how time is running out. I decide that I need to make a change and that I cannot live on like this. I also decide to make this change naturally, without synthetic drugs and other 'quick fixes'. I read everything there is to know about depression, suicide and social anxiety. I came across a social anxiety forum and made an account there.

I learn that Social Anxiety is actually a recognised mental illness of which treatment is available! I start seeing a counselor at my university and I begin making progress. Small steps at first but eventually onto bigger things. I begin an exercise and diet routine and stick to it like glue. I feel like I'm slowly becoming 'normal' – the end goal of mine. I frequent the SA forum often, keeping up to date with others peoples trials and tribulations and one day I run into this girl in the chat group. She messages me, her name is Kat. She is from the same city as me and we instantly hit it off. Something about this girl is special, I can't put my finger on it but I always enjoy talking with her. She

understands anxiety, she has her own struggles with it so we can relate with that. She says shes hosting a bowling meetup and invites me to come along on December 8, 2012. I'm hesitant about going...I've never been bowling and I'm sure I'll screw everything up somehow. With the support of my counselor I eventually build up the courage to go.

I get there early. Kat turns up a little late and we greet each other. She organises us in a bunch of different groups (there's like 30 of us) and I'm put in a different group from her. That's okay, I'd have liked to be in the same group as her but my main goal here is to tackle social anxiety and meet new people! The bowling goes okay, I'm pretty bad at it but at least I didn't make a fool of myself and I didn't come last. When everyone is finished, Kat comes up to me and asks if I would like to come to a post-bowling dinner meetup with everyone. I decline because my parents are coming to pick me up at any moment and I've had enough exposure treatment for the day anyway! I also find out that she has her boyfriend with her. It doesn't bother me much, I'm not looking for a girlfriend, the only thing that bothers me is that its another reflection of something I'm missing in my life – A relationship. I go home proud of my achievement. I talk to Kat online a bit and she says she wished she had the chance to talk to me more. I feel the same.

After this bowling meet, we start to chat a lot. She invites me to a lot of events she has with her own friends and I'm really scared about attending. I barely know this girl, and walking into a party environment completely by myself where I am unfamiliar with everyone there is pretty much the peak of fear for me. I do end up going to a Christmas and New Years party (I'd normally just be home sleeping) and despite the challenge, I really started to feel like I was branching myself into a new friend group. I'm being accepted and I'm slowly learning the 'normal' things people do out in the world. I have my first hangover ever and even get my licence so that I can drive places myself! I'm definitely making some real progress here. Early 2013, me and Kat are talking online for hours almost every day up until the early hours of the morning. We talk about our struggles with anxiety, our morals, our view on life and other things. She starts telling me stories about how people have wronged her in the past and she tells me I'm her best friend and that she feels like she can say anything to me. I feel the same way and I start liking this girl...a lot. The highlight of my day is the conversation I get to have with her. I can see this getting problematic though. I can't have her, shes in a long-term relationship already and I don't want to get in the way of that. I don't tell her my feelings and I just try to be the best friend I can be.

October 7, 2013. I get a message saying she has broken up with her boyfriend. I feel sad for her knowing that she broke up but a part of me feels guilty because I feel I might have been part of the cause for it. She tells me that she is okay with the breakup and that it was mutual. I get no impression that I had caused it in any way. We go on talking as normal but then a month later, November 16, she drunk texts me and asks me outright if I like her. I tell her I do. She kind of gets angry at me for not having said something sooner but I felt that it wasn't my place to say anything while she was still recovering from her recent breakup. She says that she likes the fact that I have feelings for her but that she might not feel the same. She says she is a 'terrible' person with 'disordered thinking', that she might be 'using me' and that she 'hurts everyone she gets close to'. I don't believe her. I've known this girl for close to a year by this point and I

don't think shes terrible at all. I look past it and see it as her having low self-esteem after her breakup.

December 1, 2013. One of the best days of my life. It is the day me and her become 'official'. Its exciting. I have a girlfriend...Wait what? I actually have a girlfriend? Not only do I have a girlfriend but its Kat, the girl I've been interested in for almost a year. We get along great, it's the best ever. I feel energized, I feel invincible, I have no anxiety – nothing can stop me. I apply for jobs, I attend interviews like a confident young man with his girl by his side to back him up. I feel accepted and supported. I am incredibly happy on a level I didn't even know was possible. My entire outlook on life and the world around me is completely different. I have something to live for and I wake up in the morning looking forward to each day. We text each other constantly and we are working great together without any arguments, everything is perfect and my feelings for her are only getting stronger. Then...January 25 comes along. Its her Birthday. She holds a birthday party at a place in the city with her friends and naturally, I'm there with her. The idea is to finish up at the place we're at and then walk to another location in the city. She leaves the first place abruptly, without really telling anyone that she had gone. I am by her side the whole time but I do find her actions strange. It's just me, Kat and Davo - one of her best friends. She starts venting to me "how could my friends abandon me on my birthday?". I'm in an awkward position here because I want to support her and make her feel better but I also think that the way she left was strange behaviour and was certainly her fault. She is upset for the rest of the night and is crying most of the time. Its sad for me too because I want her to have an amazing birthday, not a sad one. This strange behaviour becomes a recurring theme that continues to damage our relationship.

On February 13, one day before Valentine's day (a day we were looking forward to), she says she wants to break up with me. I don't understand. We had no arguments, no disagreements or fall-outs with one another and everything seemed to be going great. She gives no real reason other than "I don't think we can work together". I'm crushed obviously. Stupidly of me, I choose to hang out with her on Valentines day anyway. I'm with her and our friends and I burst into tears. I cant stop crying. She is 2 metres away from me showing no emotion. She isn't crying, in fact, shes drinking and having fun. I don't understand how she can be so cold and without emotion? I cry the entire night, tears running down my cheek for at least 6 hours. To make matters worse, Davo is hurling comments toward me saying that "she has divorced me" to really drive home the idea that I am no longer her boyfriend. Kat lets it happen without saying or doing anything and I just have to sit there and take it. Worse still, the next day, Davo asks me for my help to get him to hook up with Kat...maybe its just me, but is this insanely insensitive or what? I suppose it kind of makes sense. This Davo fellow has been jealous of me since the day he met me and has constantly insulted me and shut me down in conversation at any chance he's got through my entire relationship with Kat. She never stood up for me.

A couple of days go by and she later messages me saying that she misses me and wants to give us another shot. I tell her that the breakup has hurt me badly and that it might take a while for things to go back to normal. Eventually, things do. I am happy with her, she is happy with me and goes on to say that I am "Gods gift to her" and that "You are

the best boyfriend ever". I kind of really was. I would do anything for this girl. I would stand up for her if someone made her uncomfortable, I gave her my full attention when she was talking, I helped her with her homework (I even learnt some of her course content in my own time so I could help her better), I'd give her massages in a candle lit room when she was feeling stressed, I gave her surprises on special dates and I even wrote poetry for her. She is my world and I would do anything to make her happy. I told her I loved her, she told me she loved me. Things were great again. Kat Loves Me.

I invited her into a group of friends of mine that I had been weaving in and out of since 2008. It was the Super Smash Brothers fighting game community. I had made a lot of friends there over the years and it was always difficult for me to go to a lot of the gaming events because of my anxiety. I did make friends here though and I felt that they were mostly a bunch of kind hearted nerdy guys that shared a similar interest of mine. Well, my only interest really. I invited Kat into the group because I wanted her to meet my friends who were some awesome people. She didn't have that many friends of her own you see and I felt sorry for her being mistreated by other people in the past and knew she didn't have to worry about that with this group.

She is nervous at first but she quickly becomes part of the Smash Bros family. I love having her here with me, it makes me so happy to be able to share this with her. The problem is...her strange behaviour continues. One day, I am trying to teach her the basic controls of Smash so that she can start getting into the tournament scene. Naturally, I am patient. I'm a patient guy, especially with my girlfriend. I tell her that a large part of the game is about making good decisions and that in order to improve your skill, you need to be conscious of what your thinking about as you play the game. Suddenly, and without warning, she becomes visibly upset. She is angry and frustrated with me because apparently my tone of voice has changed and I have become aggressive. I tell her that I didn't change my voice and that I'm not angry or upset and that I have no reason to be aggressive. I'm just teaching her how to play the game, why would I get aggressive?

We argue back and forth with her saying "I wouldn't feel this way if it didn't happen and your invalidating my feelings". All I can say is "I'm sorry you feel upset and that you feel that way but I swear I didn't get aggressive. I have no reason to! Are you sure you weren't just frustrated at the game and your taking it out on me?" The argument ends without any nice conclusion. I start to doubt myself, thinking that maybe my tone of voice is changing without me realising it. I've never heard anyone say this to me before but who knows, it could be true. I'm always looking toward self improvement.

A couple of weeks later, we have a similar training session but this time I make a conscious effort to think about what I'm going to say next and how I'm going to deliver it. I don't want the same thing as last time to happen again. Despite my efforts, she says the same as before. She starts crying saying I'm aggressive and I'm sitting there utterly convinced I've done nothing wrong. I'm stuck because I want to resolve this issue but I can't just apologise for doing nothing. Its dishonest to myself. Besides, she has told me she has disordered thinking and I've seen it by this point more than once (her ex-bf and others have told her the same) so I figure she would at least be open to the idea that maybe shes not seeing things clearly. Apparently not. So I don't really know what to do

other than express concern that shes not seeing things the way they really happened. I'm convinced her frustration at the game has been deflected onto me.

I encounter more of this strange behaviour as time goes on. One time we go to a Subway store and she says the person serving her should be fired because she had to say she wanted her bun "toasted" twice. Another time she asks a passing waitress at a different store if they were closing up. The waitress doesn't hear her (Kat didn't get her attention) and we leave with Kat saying she never wants to go that store again because of the terrible service. Theres another time where she asks me the same question 5 times in a row, I answer it multiple times and then she breaks down in tears saying I wont answer her question. I recount word-for-word my answer to her question and she says she has no recollection of me ever saying anything like it. This was the weirdest experience I ever had with anyone in my life and it still blows my mind that this actually happened.

With every incident, I feel like I'm stuck no matter which path I take. I try to highlight the logical fallacy with her perception of events and how they are uncharacteristic of me, someone who loves her, and that her emotions are very likely caused by her mental disorders. SHE has told me in the past that she thinks she has Bipolar / General Anxiety / Depression / Narcissistic Personality Disorder and that she wants my help with overcoming these issue but every time these incidents occur, she's in denial and thinks everything is my fault. She refuses to accept the possibility that what I'm saying might actually be the truth and that I'm saying it out of concern and love. After every incident, there is usually a period of the Silent Treatment. She pretends I don't exist, avoids eye contact and stops texting me throughout the day. I feel terrible when she does this. "What have I done to deserve this? I just want to love this girl, why does she treat me this way?". I feel rejected and alone. I have my birthday party with her and our smash friends and we have a great night, easily my best birthday ever. The next morning she goes totally silent on me. I try to hug her, I try to ask whats wrong and she gives me absolutely nothing back. Her body language and lack of interest in my presence prompts me to think that she must be upset with me - probably because of something that happened the night before. I ask if she would prefer me to give her space and if it would be better if I went home and she responds with "do whatever you want". She then stands in the rain in her pyjamas while I pack up my things. On the way out, I ask once more if she would like me to leave and she says the same "do whatever you want". I take this as a sign that she wants me to get away from her so I get in my car and drive home (45 min drive).

As I'm driving, she texts me saying that she wasn't angry with me but that she was upset with an argument she had with her parents 3 days earlier. She claims I should have known that already even though she never told me anything. I tried to tell her that from my perspective, it looked like she was upset with me and that I was just trying to do my best to find out what was going on and support her. She says "I should know her better" and that she "doesn't have to tell me everything" and that me leaving her house was a selfish choice on my part. I wanted to spend the weekend together with her, not drive away from her. I don't know how she can say I was being selfish? She ignored me for over a week after this incident.

I have another similar incident where I am playing in a Smash Bros tournament and I am in the Grand Finals. She is with me but she isn't feeling too well. When she asks me to take her home, I pause the game I am playing and try to figure out what the best course of action is. "Can she wait till the tournament is over?", "Is she comfortable getting a lift home with someone else?", "Can she take public transport?". When I realise the only suitable option is for me to take her home myself, I quickly forfeit my place in the tournament. I let everyone know that her health was more important to me than some game tournament and that I was sorry I had to drop out. I didn't even take the prize for 2nd place, I had totally forgotten about it! I walk out with her, give her my jacket (it was winter) and take her home.

I drop her off, asking if she wants me to stay with her and she says she'll be fine. She later tells me that those couple of seconds where I paused the game made her feel like I was hesitating and that I personally made her feel like a burden on everyone. I tried to tell her that I wasn't hesitating and that I was just trying to figure out what to do next and that I didn't feel like she appreciated the personal sacrifice I just made in her best interest but she just wouldn't acknowledge it. I told her that it wasn't her fault or my fault that she was feeling sick and that it was just bad luck and that its not fair to place that feeling of being a burden on me. She says I'm invalidating her feelings and I feel like she is being unappreciative.

This stuff would just keep happening. She would groan and move my hands away from her when I would try to hug her and she would never approach me or show me any kind of respect or attention and it reaches the point where I can't take it anymore. I give her an ultimatum. I meet with her in person and I tell her that even though I am in love with her, unless she PROMISES to do 3 things, I cannot be her boyfriend any longer.

See a Psychologist See a Doctor Never pretend I don't exist ever again

She agrees. I don't believe her at first but I push the issue and make a point that I need to be SURE. I simply cannot take the risk that she will treat me like trash again. She breaks down in tears and convinces me that she is very sorry about how cruel she has been to me and that she promises she will never do it to me again. She says she'll make it up to me. I give her a chance to make good on these promises. I still LOVE this girl with all my heart and I never want to lose her but she can't continue to treat me this way. I don't deserve it.

About 2 months go by and nothing has changed. She hasn't seen a psych or a doctor and there have been moments where she just blatantly ignores me. One time we leave in separate cars after going to the casino together (I taught her how to play blackjack and we enjoyed playing it together) and she doesn't even say goodbye to me, she just walks away. She even goes on to tell me that she wants my permission to hook up with other guys WHILE we are still in a relationship. She would hang it over my head saying "if you can't make me happy, I'll just find someone else". We have a trip planned to travel interstate for a major Smash Brothers tournament and we are going together. The first day we get there she is already distant, she doesn't seem like she even wants me around her. On that night, I try and get close to her. She pushes me away and avoids eye contact.

This is it. Breaking point. Here we are together in a different state for a major tournament with our friends who I had trained (I'm pretty good at the game so I

prepared people for the tournament) and shes acting cold on me again. I get out of the bed of the five star hotel room I have booked for us and I sleep on the couch crying by myself. She does nothing, she just sleeps and takes the bed for herself. The next morning I tell her I'm upset with her and all she says is "I know". She doesn't apologise or try to make things right, in fact, she just continues her avoidant behaviour. This just hurts me more.

We go through the trip as two individuals who happen to be sharing a room. At one point I'm crying in the hotel room with her and she gets up and leaves for about 3 hours. I have no idea where she is or when she will come back. She is just gone. I eventually muster up the courage to speak to her asking "how can she do this to me again and how could she break her promise" and she flips the question back onto ME. She says how can I "ignore her like this". The lack of empathy for my hurt feelings astounds me but I still try to set things right so that the rest of our trip isn't in shambles but she is not interested. She says "I don't need to talk to you" and avoids conversation. Shes visibly upset, I give her a tablet to calm her nerves down. I manage to put on the 'happy face' throughout the tournament. Nobody had any idea what I was going through as I tend to keep my problems to myself. I also had severe stomach cramps throughout all of the days on top of everything else that was going on.

On the day we go back home, I am crying the whole time. I cry for 2 hours in the hotel lobby and she sits 2 chairs away from me playing on her phone the entire time. I have tissues all around me. She is not emotional or empathic, she simply doesn't care. At the airport gateway in front of hundreds of strangers, she tells me she wants to break up with me and that shes sure that's what she wants. I am crushed and I take 3 sleeping tablets on the plane back home. A couple of days later I contact her again telling her that I miss her. We talk for a bit and she says she is on the fence about dumping me, claiming that she still has feelings for me. I tell her I'll give her time and space if that's what she needs.

About 2 weeks later, she messages me saying she is very ill. She says it takes all of her energy to move and that she needs to do something ASAP or she might catch a disease. I offer to come over and give her some tablets and some company to make her feel better. I mean, it's the least I could do for someone suffering alone in their bedroom! She says she doesn't want my help but I feel like it's the right thing to do. I drive to her place (took an hour to get there) and keep her updated on much longer until I'm there. When I arrive I find shes not home. I spend the next hour trying to contact her and she doesn't respond. I message her friends/family to try find out whats happening and nobody answers.

Eventually she calls me and says that shes out and that she wont be home all night. In the background I can hear some kind of party music. I don't understand, ISN'T SHE REALLY REALLY SICK AND DOESNT SHE KNOW I'M COMING OVER? I tell her that I'll have a nap at her place (since I dont want to drive all the way back after just getting there) until she comes home. 15 minutes later she comes back home and is telling me to get out. She says I am invading her privacy and that she is furious with me. She says I have serious issues. Oh and she doesn't look the slightest bit sick either. I try to talk to her but she just says "I don't need to talk to you, get out". She storms out of the house, I tell her mum what just happened and her mum says she'll intercede on my

behalf when Kat calms down. Me and her mum know that Kat can be difficult to deal with, I always got the impression that she was hoping I could help Kat in a way that she couldn't. After speaking with her mum, I shake her hand thanking her for her hospitality and I leave.

I try to contact her at some point after this but she is resistant. She wont let me speak with her at all as if I've done something unforgivable. She gets up and walks away from me while I'm speaking to her. She tells our mutual friends that I have been abusive to her, controlling, manipulative, forceful, disrespectful to her parents and that she is scared of me. She even goes to lengths to bring up personal stuff about my life that was meant to be private in order to destroy my friendship with them. She succeeds. Nobody is interested in what I have to say. I have a panic attack and am rushed to hospital in fear of a heart attack. Kat knows I'm in hospital but does not visit or message me. She doesn't care.

I eventually manage to call her on the phone and I ask her how she could say these things about me and how she could break the promises she made. In regards to the promises, she says "I'm allowed to change my mind". I ask her about our trip interstate and how she could ignore my feelings and pretend like I don't exist and she says "Its not my responsibility if you want to feel that way and I wont do shit all for that. I should have just done the whole trip by myself". I ask about me being in hospital and she says "We've broken up so its none of my business anymore". At the end of the phone call she promises that she will leave the Smash Bros community alone out of respect for me since I belong there and its something I introduced her to.

I don't contact her at all for 2 months after this. By this point I'm already in therapy and have been taking antidepressants for major depression. I've overdosed once and I continue to think about suicide every day. Everything restarts when she turns up to a Smash Bros event as though nothing has happened. Not only that, but shes hanging around all the friends I introduced her to and they are acting like nothing has happened. In fact shes been telling them lies about me being abusive and they believe it! I approach her asking "What are you doing here? You said you wouldn't come to these anymore". My (her?) friends back her up, telling me to fuck off and get out. I do so willingly after expressing my discontent with her presence. Following this, I am banned from attending any events held by certain people and nobody is interested in hearing my side of the story. I am blocked, banned and cast away.

I try to contact her to sort all this out and instead she says I'm harassing her to my group of friends on facebook and actively finds ways to damage my image. She continues to destroy my reputation and people go along with it because she plays the role of 'victim' in front of them. She cries, and they come to her defense, just as I did when I first started getting to know her. She even claims that I broke into her house! I have been trying to diffuse the situation with little success. There are people in the community that know me better and have taken the time to listen to my side of the story and they have been very supportive. It's good to know at least some people have some respect for me and I would feel much worse without them. While I would have liked to keep all of this to myself as I had done with the previous breakups (I didn't even tell my parents or siblings), she has now put me in a position of defense and has accused me of

being something I am not. I now feel the need to defend my reputation and open the doors to the truth.

I have recently found out that Kat is now DATING Travis, someone I have known for 5 years and someone who defended her at the smash event. Shes apparently been dating him since December, only about 2 months after she broke up with me. This isn't just totally ridiculous but it also makes no sense because she told me she didn't want to be in a relationship and that she wouldn't get into one for a long time until she sorted herself out mentally. She said that she wasn't well enough to be with anybody. She did this knowing that the thought of her being with someone else made me sick and that I couldn't be friends with her because I didn't want to know who/if she was dating anyone. Now I have extreme anxiety being in the same room as him or anyone involved with that particular social circle. That group is intentionally bullying and making fun of me at smash events to make me feel even worse than I already do. No doubt, Kat is a supporter of these actions.

And that leads me to now. I have been betrayed by my girlfriend, the person I loved, I have been cast out of a group of friends I have had for years and she has planted herself right in the middle of it without a shred of respect, empathy or feeling for me. In addition to all of this, my computer HDD which had 3 years of my work on it randomly stopped working, my cat of 14 years died of heart failure on Kats birthday this year, my parents have been on the edge of a divorce and a chronic abdominal pain I've had for years is wreaking havoc on me and no doctor or specialist can find a way to treat it. I have recently been told that this is a life long condition that will stay with me forever and there are no drugs I cant take that mitigate the pain, not even morphine! I tried to speak to Kat telling her that in addition to the breakup, I am going through so much stuff at home and that I wanted to work together with her to make things better. I was in tears basically begging for some compassion over the phone. She said I should "get over myself" and that she "doesn't have to help me" and then hung up.

I cry in my room alone, my heart hurts (physically, it actually hurts) and I cant sleep. I am on tablets that make me feel drowsy and generally unwell. I have no will to live, no joy or pleasure in anything, I have lost my short term memory, my social anxiety is returning and I feel like there is nothing in the universe that can help me. I have never been this depressed. The only time I feel okay are the rare times I am asleep, but even then I am haunted by nightmares. All I ever did was try to support and love this girl in the best ways I knew how. I gave my all and I did the very best I could do and in return, I was labelled as Satan."

9.10.3 An emptiness

If you don't want to read a life story, scroll down and read the TLDR, I'm feeling worse than I've ever been in my entire life, and I need to write this out. Writing anything always helped, be it my dreams, or my life, and my hope is someone out there has the time and compassion to just give me a chance, and read understand my story from behind my eyes. If that means giving me critique about errors and things I'm still doing wrong, GIVE IT TO ME. I'm not here to bitch and moan about my life, I need help, and so far counselors, family, friends, lovers, and Narcotic Anonymous groups have failed to give that to me. If you give me a chance, I'm about to write down and hopefully remember things I haven't even told my family, or ex fiancé in three years of being with her, if not, then please just read the TLDR, get off a quick laugh and recognize that maybe your life is worse than mine, or maybe it isn't. I've been sitting here, in my apartment, biding my time on Reddit. Most people would call it lurking, and I can't decide on a more appropriate term for what my life's become. Empty is basically all I can say that I'm feeling at this point. This has been going on for nearly 4 years; depression, suicide attempts that amazed the ICU and mental hospitals I went to (Because somehow I didn't die.) and basically a feeling of emptiness that comes from living a life that I don't want. As long as I remember, my family has had problems. Not financial ones, no, we were well off. Very well off to say the least. Always had enough food, never skipped an electric bill, always a phenomenal roof over our heads, well educated, and well cared for. We (My brothers and I) had nothing to bitch about as kids, I for one was very well loved and respected by my family to say the least. Then the fighting started. I didn't know what it was at first, I was too young, but when thinking back to the first time I remember something happening, it was when I was about 6 years old. My mom and dad were getting into arguments over what I would find out 10 years later was him jacking off to porn and not wanting to be intimate with my mother. Obviously I never knew anything about it at the time, but the only way I can describe it is that kids can sense when somethings not right. I knew something wasn't right, mom and dad weren't the happy go lucky super duper whoopee in love couple that they made themselves out to be. I might've been 6, but it hit me hard in a way I couldn't describe until now. My life was a antisocial, and secluded one up until 7th grade. Let me explain. My parents came out with the hot idea that "Hey! Since my son's a year ahead of the learning curve for fucking kindergarten (like that means so much), let's home school him and help him get ahead! We're much more qualified than those bogus teachers! " I feel like this decision killed off most of my personality I would've had; because the end result was I bullshit my way through every assignment, cheated on every test, and played videogames day and night for the next few years, with little to no interaction with people on the "outside. " Sure, I played some sports, soccer, baseball, whatever my parents thought I should do, but I hated it on the inside. My teams always, always lost, and even when they won, I always had the idea that somehow, we didn't deserve to win, and somehow, we were really losing. I didn't make any real friends in sports, it was another facade to make my parents think they were doing awesome at their job. Back to the topic of school on the "outside: " There were cigarette smokers, alcoholics, and homeless people outside; why would I ever want to go to school and spend time out

there away from the protection of my parents? When my parents realized how badly they messed up, and decided to do something about it, it was 7th grade already. I went to a fancy private school, dress code, suites and ties at least once a week, proper conduct, the whole works. I loved the teachers, I made some great relationships with them, straight A's, and often spent time talking to them about the subjects outside of class. Lunch time, I scarcely remember a day when I would eat lunch with anyone my age, it was always with a teacher. I feel like this might've been my way of reaching out and trying to maintain that feeling of being parented throughout my first year of school away from home, because God knows I couldn't stand the other kids my age. nI was bullied my first year of junior high, and it's what made me finish junior high in home school. It got to the point where I went and broke down to my favorite teacher because it just plain sucked. I was a relatively attractive kid for 7th grade, I just didn't know how to act socially. Naturally, as soon as the weird new kid started showing off how awkward he was, and botching all the moves girls would make on HIM, he gets made fun of a lot by all the bigger guys who don't have the balls to make a move, but can sure as hell put down the guy that they know they don't like. I was left out of everything in 7th grade, no one wanted to be around me, and eventually those girls that were stunners even for 7th grade standards stopped trying, because they weren't getting anywhere. nSo what did I do? I became the reject, I became the kid that just didn't give a flying fuck about anything anyone said about me, and I'd cuss you out in an instant for saying something. That's the perks to being online your whole life, you pick up some colorful language that not many people know at that age. Of course, as soon as I started letting loose some cuss words, everyone else did. Eventually it got to such a huge problem, that school administrators had to pull everyone together and lecture them about the importance of clean language. I gained a couple friends from that. Granted, I ended up pushing those friends away towards the end of the year because quite frankly, I'd rather be online playing my videogames in my spare time instead of hanging out with you. Nothing much happened my 8th grade, I just became more and more sick of my parents, and aware of how "full of shit " they are, like so many other teenagers get, so I vowed never to home school again. 9th grade, again, boring year, but one thing that I can say is this, I'm not stupid. Even as a kid, I'm able to analyze things much differently from normal people. Maybe it's something I picked up from my parents, maybe it's from growing up in a family that argues over things I don't understand and constantly having to pick apart situations to decide who's "side " I'm on, but I know what I have to do to be successful. I used my mistakes from 7th grade, and recognized what I had to do this second time over. I made friends quickly, I was still awkward with girls, but I was learning. I was a part of many different groups of friends, but I was never really their "friend. " I'm that guy who you sit with at the lunch table, or outside on the concrete, bull shitting about your life, and then we forget about each other when school's out. I was happy with that, it let me play more videogames and go on the internet. Now, don't get the wrong idea, not everyone who plays videogames for endless hours every day is overweight. Quite the contrary, while the only negative physical attribute I can remember from freshman year was an unfortunate peppering of acne on my face, I was a relatively charming, and good looking person. I'd finish out high school with 8% body fat, and I can say that my physical appearance really never changed much over those

years. Most people thought I was a nice guy, the rest of them thought I was a bit annoying. Not much I could do about that, it's high school. Then sophomore year came around, and I was introduced to a whole new crowd of people, known as "the smokers." I was captivated with them, I wondered what it was like to be around them, how they always got cigarettes, while they were 14 to 17, I wondered what their story was, and what went so wrong with their lives that this is what they were doing now. I let it go by without much notice for awhile, but long story short, someone who was very close to me bought us a pack. We began by smoking them behind our houses, and late at night when both our parents were asleep. This continued until I grew the balls to bring some to school with me, and start smoking with the group that I always saw sitting at the smoking section outside. I loved it. I made friends, real friends. They were the kind of people I wanted to hang around, understand, talk to, and enjoy my life with. They captured my interest with their creativity, recklessness, and ballsiness that I never saw in anyone else up to my point. Acceptive, kind, and caring, and it seemed like they all had a story that made them different, like me, they quickly let me into their little circle, and I made some friends I've loved and talked to up until pretty recently. A few months later, that all ended when I really lost the first group of friends I loved. nI'll explain: my friend and I quickly moved on from cigarettes to the next big drug, weed. I looked for some through my group, and quickly found it. I bought a 20 sack from some dude I don't even remember, and we both smoked I'd say just a little bit of it out of an apple before trying to sell the rest to make some money, and be able to constantly buy more. We didn't need the money, we were both from rich families that gave us both more than enough money to buy lunches, and support us smoking as much as we wanted, but it wasn't about that. Status, bragging rights, being a badass, MORE money, it's the allure of being a drug dealer that makes people who don't need it, want it. We were stupid, we got caught instantly, and from then on out I thought my life is over. I was an emotional little brat, but regardless, puberty can make you do some pretty stupid things and make it seem like the end of your rope is right here when it really isn't. That was the first time I tried to commit suicide. I was at home, and I just disappointed my parents to no end. Their perfect, straight A, genius child had began smoking pot and cigarettes, what's going on with the world. I thought I was going to jail, I thought I'd have a record, I thought my life was over. That was the beginning of it, but no, my life wasn't over at that point. I reached in the medicine cabinet, pulled out a super size bottle of ibuprofen, some bandaid alcohol cleaner, and a cup of water. I remember counting every single pill I swallowed that night, sitting in a bathtub, slitting my wrists, downing sanitizer, and trying to hang myself with a hoodie cord. I was up to around 45 pills before I passed out, and I thought I was dead. There wasn't a light, there wasn't any voice screaming my name, it was just black. Then, I woke up. There was yellow puke all over the floor, all over the bathroom, and in my bed. I got up, and immediately puked up more of this yellow shit into a trash can, and then realized: Holy fuck, it didn't work, and my parents are going to bring my dumb ass to school now so they can decide what to do with me. I was so sick it was unbelievable, and my parents attributed it to the fact that I was afraid of telling the truth. Naive was the understatement of the year. The second I got in to the school, my friend was in there first with his parents, then I went in. I was still sick, and puking, so I asked for a trash can to puke into. The whole time

my parents remarked how "He's getting the truth out of his system. " The whole time I just thought how fucking stupid can you be. The school police officer asked me to roll up my sleeves, because I'm sure that when I was bending over to heave drippy yellow shit and half digested ibuprofen, he saw some dried blood or scabbed over cut show from my arm. I had to tell my principle, the policeman, and my parents that I tried to commit suicide. Immediately, I was checked into a hospital, and they told me that post puke, I had enough ibuprofen in my system to get me about 75% of the way to a liver failure, or whatever organ it was that they said filters that stuff out. I never said anything about the alcohol, or trying to hang myself, so no one knew what that mark on my neck was from, and I was too embarrassed to say anything about it. The man at the hospital said I was lucky to be alive, and I laughed. They brought in a psychiatrist to evaluate me, and surprise surprise, I was in shock from the whole ordeal. I had diagnosed severe depression, and could barely remember my own name when she asked me. The woman told my mother that either you can check him into a mental hospital for care over the next few days, or CPS will come take your child away and put him there. Naturally, mother dearest complied, and signed me up for one of the mental hospitals in the town I lived. I spent a full week there, meeting other psychopaths, schizo's, people who heard voices telling them to kill themselves, or other people, and people who were just plain crazy. I remember one guy who made up a relationship with a girl just to feel less alone after his family abandoned him, another who stuck a butterfly knife in his hand after running away from his family to get fucked up. Crazy, crazy shit, and I thought to myself, I don't belong here. Throughout my entire stay, I took no medication. I can't say for sure, because it's very, very hazy, but I remember writing down events to calm my mind during my stay there. I think that I was hallucinating, very mildly, because while doing that, I remember seeing things on the wall that would be gone in an instant, or looking outside the barred windows in my room and see shadows turn into something I knew they weren't then go back. It wasn't like I was hearing voices, or seeing imaginary people, but it was something that I knew wasn't there, that I was seeing. However, besides that, I knew how to lie to everyone at that hospital. I made up that I was happy, I told them what they wanted to hear, and after a week, they decided to let me out with paperwork that said I made a near full recovery, no medication advised. After that, I lost my friends that I cared about. My parents wouldn't have it that their son likes cigarettes, and wouldn't EVER want that son going back and spending time with the people that encouraged their use. Yes, looking out for my well being is a good idea, but to this day I still feel like it was blown way out of proportion. I had to attend counseling, specifically group counseling with crack, heroin, and meth addicts who were all my age. Never smoking anything harder than weed, I felt this was ridiculous, and I was right. I shouldn't have been there, it only fueled a fascination to get back where I was, and discover what all these drugs these people are talking about were REALLY all about. However, as many people will say, time has a way of healing all wounds. I forgot about my friends, and drugs for the most part, after a few months of being escorted to and from class by the administration, and the threat of drug testing from my parents. I didn't want anything to do with drugs, because I was so fearful that they'd find out. However, with forgetting comes a cost. I became manically depressed. I had no one to talk to, I had no one to be around, I lost everything I once had. I was

going to and from class to the administration office on an escort service so there was no way I was ever going to meet up with anyone, or get any of those evil cigarettes. After school was done, I'd be escorted back to the administration office, and only allowed to leave when my parents came to pick me up. I hated it, I hated everything, and I hated my parents even more for basically forcing me back into seclusion. My video game playing took a huge increase, and again, I was back into being that kid that no one ever saw, and never talked to anyone. It was during this time that I met another friend of mine, who I'll refer to as J. If you never heard of it, look up the law of attraction. It's real, no matter how crazy it may sound, it just happens far too much to everyone to be simple coincidence. I met J in one of my classes, and we were exactly alike at that point in time. We were both severely depressed teenagers, clinically so, we both had similar outlooks for our lives, we both hated our parents, we both came from well off backgrounds, and we both even looked similar. Every single class period would be spent sitting next to each other, and talking about things that went on in our lives. I think I ended up pitying J so much that it actually cheered me up, because I realized how much deeper in depression he was than me. After I made this realization, I ended up pushing J away from me, and rarely saw him again until the end of my Junior year. After my little puberty stunt sophomore year, I began realizing something. My acne was gone, I'm more physically fit than ever, and I can talk to girls. Now, I've always been into sports, wrestling, running, weight lifting, it's how I grew up, and it is a huge stress reliever. I buffed up, to say the least. I made it my goal to be a Casanova, and to do the thing every high school boy wants to do: Get laid. It worked, sort of. I went on a trip with a family friend of mine touring through California, and when I was given a clean slate with girls, I was able to get exactly what I wanted. That summer, I met the woman I'd be engaged to, and be with for the longest period of time out of all the women I've dated. I fell in love, really, for the first time. Granted, it started out as a one week stand while I was passing through her town, but it quickly grew. First we decided it's just a hookup, and I quickly moved from her to the next girl, to the next, to the next. I'd be with more girls that summer than I had my entire life previous to this, but afterwards, I kept talking to this one girl. We just kept talking, and kept talking, and kept finding more about each other, to the point where we actually decided to try a long distance relationship. It worked, for a very long time. Again, we both had very, very rich families that were able to fly us back and forth from both our homes to visit each other at least once a month. Skype became a huge factor in this whole thing, and we just slowly became more comfortable with each other, and tested those limits. I grew up in a Christian household, so abstinence was preached to me, despite the fact that every single person in the church I went to, my parents included, exclaimed how they messed up by having sex before marriage. This girl was the same way, so for about 6 months we had nothing to do with each other's no no parts until we started testing the boundaries more and more. Eventually, touching each other became okay, next, it was kissing each other there, then finally oral sex became both our okay's since it wasn't really sex. (HAH). We were content with that for the duration of the relationship, up until the last day I saw her in person before we broke up. We were about to have sex for the first time, and I didn't have a condom. Fuck me, right? We settled for the usual, and I ended up going back home. A few days later, I got a call saying we needed to break up. Things

*had been getting rough with her parents, we were both on edge, so after a lot of restless nights and getting my heart broken the first time, that was it. So ends my junior year, and begins my senior year of high school. *Edit* This is around the same time my friend, J, commit suicide. He shot himself in the head, probably didn't help anything. *Edit* Depression came back, and it wasn't just because of the break up, no, that was part of it, but I think it was a resurfacing of what was there the whole time. While I had someone to be with, someone to look back to, someone to love me, I was happy. When I didn't, I resorted to going back to smoking, and looking for that love again. I became a man whore, in the kindest way of putting it. As soon as I was a senior, I more or less gave up on everything. I could pass my easy as fuck classes without batting an eye, and that meant I could party to no end since I had now just turned 18; so I did. In a few weeks of partying and re-getting to know the crowd I used to hang out with my soph. year, I lost my virginity. A few days later, the second time I ever had sex, I had a threesome. After that, I was THE man whore in our group, and the entire school of over two thousand people found out about it it seemed. This is what I feel made me continue going on and on with this whole facade of being a man whore, because I loved the attention. I loved being someone, instead of being no one, I loved the physical love I got from girls, I loved being wasted, and I loved drugs. For a moment in time, I replaced the surfacing depression with drugs, alcohol, and women. It worked, for the longest time, it worked. Shortly after I graduated high school, partying went to an all time high. My parents sat me down previous to this, and told me I needed to be home at 1 o clock, because this was getting ridiculous. I didn't give a damn. I felt like I was the most entitled little shit in the entire world, because I'm an adult now, and I can do what I want with my money that I saved from jobs I worked, and money I saved. It got to the point where I'd be out all night, for 3 or 4 days on end, finding another party and packing my car full of "friends" to keep it going. I got to know basically everyone in that entire city through partying, and being constantly wasted, and you can be damn sure everyone knew me. This continued through my freshman year at college, when I went to state college. I took maybe 3 or 4 classes, made it seem like such a huge fucking deal to my parents, so that they'd pay for me to be in college and live in the dorms. It worked. And instead of having to work for anything, I was free to party all night, do some work every now and then, and smoke more weed, do more drugs, and drink more booze than I'd ever do again in my entire life. I prided myself on the fact that my roommate moved out of my dorm, leaving me with one of the biggest rooms on campus to myself, purely because of the fact that I brought over way too many girls to have sex with, and woke him up multiple times. I wasn't just anyone, I was the shit at that point, but I remember that when I was alone, all I felt like was shit. I had to surround myself with friends constantly, and when it wasn't friends, it was women. If I didn't, I'd find myself near tears, drinking alone, or just mentally breaking down. I experimented with harder and harder drugs, my rule of "Keeping it herbal" went out the window in a hurry, and physically I paid for it. I managed to stay away from meth, heroin, crack, pcp, and all that nasty stuff (which I can only thank God for) but it was taking its toll on my body; I began losing a lot of weight, since I wasn't eating very much. I remember when I visited my mom she commented on how frail I looked compared to when I was wrestling in high school, and I didn't even want to admit it. I was in complete denial on*

my situation, and it didn't even matter to me. I just kept on doing what I did until one day, I did too much. I'm not going to go into detail, but I fucked up, majorly, and I'll pay for the consequences for the rest of my life. I did way too much acid, in the name of "who the fuck cares, " and I hurt someone that did not deserve to be hurt. I was promptly arrested, in complete hysteria, and after awhile, I woke up in a hospital bed with the entire staff and police wondering what the fuck this kid was on. All this was around the time of the miami Zombie attack, and I remember they kept asking me if I did bath salts, and who gave me the drugs. I don't remember a single thing after I took the acid, just bits and pieces of what happened an hour before, and after, when I really regained consciousness strapped down all 4's in a hospital bed. For the longest time, I was pretty calm and composed because I thought I just got caught for being too fucked up, and they're detoxing me, then they'll let me go back to college. But no, I got sent to jail, immediately after being released from the hospital. I had armed guards watching me the whole time, and at that point I was starting to understand something really, really bad happened. I didn't find out what it was until I got to jail, and one of the secretaries explained it to me. Somehow, I ended up stabbing someone. I didn't kill the person, thank God, but I hurt who it was very badly. At this point, I was still blasted out of my mind, and besides that statement, only a few words ring out in my head every now and then of what she said to me. "Unfortunately, it's all downhill from here. " I was crushed, I don't know how long I spent in jail, but I couldn't eat, sleep, or even take a shit I was so scared. I realized, this is it bud; you had your run, and you blew it. Everything's gone, the partying, the women, the love, the friends, everything's gone. Fortunately, the secretary lady had a lot of compassion in her, and realized how fucked up I still was, but she didn't tell the police, she did me one better. I was in there for BDW charges, not drugs, so instead of putting me in a normal prison room, I was put in seclusion, away from the general prison pop, and allowed a blanket, and some time to just sit in a corner on a bed that was more like a slab of concrete. I hallucinated. The walls were moving, changing colors, taunting me, killing me, screaming YOU'RE FUCKED in my head. The entire time, I had trippy songs that I listened to on a regular basis repeating their beats over and over in my head, taunting me, telling me that I'll never hear them again outside of my head. I'm never going to be where I was, I'm done. I'm done. I'm done. I cried, harder than I could ever remember. I'm so glad that I wasn't with any of the other prisoners, I have no idea what the fuck would've happened, but all that depression I'd been feeling my whole life swelled up in my brain and just told me how much of a fucking failure I was. I tried to literally bash my head in on the concrete, by covering up what I was doing with a blanket so that the guard wouldn't see. I don't have the balls to actually kill myself like that, so naturally all I got was a pounding headache and a bruise on my forehead. Sometime after finally passing out, I was bailed out by my family. I was secluded in my mother's closet for weeks before I talked to anyone. I erased my contacts in my phone, ignored calls from worried friends who I thought were people trying to scream at me for what I did. I didn't talk to anyone, I didn't move from a bed that I set up in there, I wanted to die alone; but I didn't want to kill myself. Depression was at an all new high, because I realized there's nothing going for me at this point. I got expelled from college, I'd have no job, no girlfriend, and my family is going through turmoil from what's going on. My parents realized that this is

soph. year all over again, and they're dying alongside me just thinking about it. We all lawyer-ed up, but there's nothing he could do in that situation. It all changed when the girl from my Junior year left me a message. When I finally decided to get up from my bed, I listened to my messages. Most of them were from people looking for a party, who I couldn't care less about now, and who couldn't care less about me, but the last one I listened to was her. I knew who it was even though she didn't say her name, and the craziest thing was as I began listening to it, she called me. We began talking, again, she was scared for me, didn't know what was happening, knew I'd never do something like this. I could tell she still loved me, and I realized that I still had feelings for her. I started getting up off my lazy ass, volunteering at gospel missions, began helping people, trying to fix my life, and be a better person. It started with my lawyer telling me to do it, but I didn't even do it for the courts or him at that point, I did it to show her that I was still the man that I was back when I loved her, and I was sober. But then I found out she had a boyfriend; and she, like me, abandoned her viewpoint of no sex before marriage. I can't say I was devastated, because I more or less expected it, but it still made me take a step back. Depression kept creeping in past that point, I was loosing interest in my work, and every day I'd wake up and think, is this the end? How will I do it today if I want to die. I went over things in my mind, I realized I wouldn't be able to do anything that required action from me. I had no gun, my dad locked all his firearms in a safe, I couldn't even bring myself to swallow a pill of ibuprofen when I was sick since my soph. year let alone think of trying to OD again, so I was really fucked. I just kept living, day in, day out, being polite, working hard as I could, and being more or less a zombie that just existed. I kept talking to the girl, but it was more out of being polite than wanting to actually talk since I knew it wouldn't go anywhere, and there was no point in letting myself try for a relationship with her again. That was until she told me that she was visiting my hometown, and she broke up with her boyfriend. I was happy, and as I'm writing this out I realize maybe it's because I'm incapable of being happy on my own which makes me so emotionally unstable. I substitute real happiness with my achievements, accomplishments, and relationships to get me through life. I was much more lively, I began doing GOOD things just for the sake of doing them. I just wanted to help people at that point, and make the people who were doing shitty feel as well as I was right then and there. When the big day came, and I saw her again in person, I almost broke down and kissed her right there. I refrained, I kept myself from doing it because somewhere deep down I didn't want to be vulnerable again, I didn't want to admit that someone else had power over me again and this happiness I was feeling was from anything other than myself. But, one thing led to the next, when she came over, it started by holding each other. We knew what would happen, but didn't want to say anything to my family or make it apparent. When we were alone, we kissed, and it was the most passionate thing I've felt in my entire life. It wasn't anything ordinary, it's impossible to explain. It's exactly what you need, when you need it, it's a warmth and a feeling that you'll never be alone again, it's that feeling that none of your past mistakes matter and you found someone who's with you thick and thin throughout everything for the rest of your life. That right there I think is Love. Maybe I'm still not old enough to really feel it, maybe it was just puppy love, maybe someone out there is going to criticize me for not having enough experience in my seemingly

short life, but I don't give a damn. I wouldn't trade that moment for the world, no matter how much I might say I would. It was beautiful, and innocent. But what we did next wasn't so innocent, we had some of the most breathtaking sex I've ever experienced in my life, for the first time ever with each other. And there would be plenty more to follow; but enough about that, I'm not trying to love some cheesy love novel, my life doesn't end well, keep that in mind. Eventually, she convinced me to start applying for new colleges, so I applied for one; the one she was going to. I got in. I don't know how, it was two days before the semester, and with everything that had just gone on I think it was a miracle to say the least, but I tried my hardest to get in there and I did it. I packed my things, told my lawyer, and I drove 16 hours down to my new college. Everything was perfect, throughout the whole experience. My court sentencing got pushed off nearly a year for me to show that I'm rehabilitated, I was back in college, and my girl, my beautiful, perfect girl was by my side through it all. Then it wasn't so perfect. My mom came down to visit, to help me find an apartment, and help me decorate it. She didn't want my girl to be around me for the time she was there since she thought it'd be awkward; and since we had both (my girl and I) been going through a rough patch for a bit, I was still smoking cigarettes to deal with stress, and she didn't like them anymore; one thing led to the next, and she ended up cheating on me. I figured she did, but she lied to my face and told me no when I asked her. (it only came out days after we broke up, again.) I was devastated, and I was confused. Depression came back, ten fold, and I numbed it with more cigarettes, and by surrounding myself with what little friends I had in this new city. However, this last bit of depression would be short lived, as quickly we worked things out, and were back together in a few days. I forgave her, and I believed she was genuinely sorry. When she broke up, I thought I wouldn't give her another chance to hurt me, but I was wrong. I would, because I'd give anything not to be placed in that situation of depression that I'm used to living in, if that means smoking, drinking, or being in a relationship. Perhaps it's selfish, maybe it's just my way of finding love and happiness, I don't think it's anyone's place to judge me; we all do it one way or another. A few months go by, and the girl is living with me, in my apartment. We're both in love, so what do I do? I buy her a ring. I proposed to her in quite possibly one of the nerdiest ways possible: I taped the ring to the inside of an xbox 360 game she wanted. She loved it, I still keep the whole thing on tap to this day. But, unfortunately, she's only living me until the end of the semester. Her parents still don't like me, even more now because of the whole violent felony, and they DEFINITELY don't know that I'm at her college, living with her. So she goes back to her hometown for the summer. Commence long distance relationship, again. I'll tell you, maybe we could pull it off for awhile before, but after being up in the mile high club, going back to square 1 is not nearly as appealing. All of a sudden, we're both depressed, she's crying nearly every day because she can't be with me, and I can't do anything about it. Because of that, I end up ignoring her for most of the day, just wasting my time going to class, playing videogames, and long boarding to just kill time so I don't have to see her cry. It hurts, I don't want to do this, but I don't see any alternative. All of a sudden, she's telling me she's back into partying, going to concerts, and not spending much time back at home. I seen that there were sirens going off all over the place in my head, but I chose to ignore them. Depression makes you do stupid shit, one of the stupidest things is that it makes you

ignore things that can potentially bring you back to below where you were. One day, after not talking to her at all, I get a text from her saying that we need to break up. I knew why, deep down, but I didn't want to say anything about it. It wasn't until a day later when I realized that I still had a facebook that I saw what really happened, and it killed me. Since then, I've gone back to smoking cigarettes. I hate it. I want to get back into wrestling, but I just can't find the motivation to do anything. I barely wake up to get to my summer courses, and like the title says, I'm empty. I'm finding myself going out with a small group of friends that I just made, almost every single night until the sun's up, and it just doesn't feel right. Every time I'm with another girl, or even just chatting one up it feels like I'm cheating. I feel absolutely nothing inside, and I just try and cover it up with one thing or another, and at this point I'm just biding my time until sentencing comes around. I don't know what to do, I hate where I am, and I'm realizing that there's nothing left for me. College is pointless now, it doesn't matter if I have one degree or a hundred, on paper I'm going to look like a brutal low life who scraped by. Not to mention that, but I'm not going to find a decent home life no matter what I do at this point. Maybe I'm looking in all the wrong places, maybe I'm trying to fill the wrong gaps, but unfortunately I know too well that people do judge a book by its cover. I'm truly and hopelessly alone, depressed, and experiencing mentally pains and torture that I can't even begin to explain. I don't know what to do at this point, I don't know who I'm trying to reach out to, but I need help. I can't even tell you what kind of help I need, but I just need a friend by my side like I've tried to have for so damn long. Maybe it's my way of trying to introduce some level of happiness back into my life, but I'm all out of ideas. This world holds no value for me, at this point even my family is broken and split in so many directions it's ridiculous. I don't think I've really talked to another human being in almost a week, so here I am, reddit. Now when sex, smoking, relationships, family, counselors, help groups, the system, and my own mind fail me, I'm turning to you. TL;DR: I'm a self diagnosed sociopath, I'm antisocial, I have extremely graphic flashbacks from past drug use, I'm an alcoholic, a stress smoker, and I have moments of complete disassociation from the world that make me literally beat myself up from the amount of regret I have for living through periods of my life and not fixing mistakes. I've been severely depressed for at least the last four years of my life, on and off with sickening duration, and I'm currently living through the mental torture of trying to fit in with a society that deems me to be a violent felon, when in reality I had no mental or physical control over those moments of my life, and in my right state of mind can't even bring myself to inflict real pain on people who literally beat the shit out of me for a few dollars, let alone myself. I'm at the point where it seems like I'm at the end of my rope, literally and figuratively.", "selftext_clean": "if you don t want to read a life story scroll down and read the tldr i m feeling worse than i ve ever been in my entire life and i need to write this out writing anything always helped be it my dreams or my life and my hope is someone out there has the time and compassion to just give me a chance and read understand my story from behind my eyes if that means giving me critique about errors and things i m still doing wrong give it to me i m not here to bitch and moan about my life i need help and so far counselors family friends lovers and narcotic anonymous groups have failed to give that to me if you give me a chance i m about to write down and hopefully remember things i haven t even told my family or ex fiance in three years

of being with her if not then please just read the tl;dr get off a quick laugh and recognize that maybe your life is worse than mine or maybe it isn't I've been sitting here in my apartment biding my time on reddit most people would call it lurking and I can't decide on a more appropriate term for what my life's become empty is basically all I can say that I'm feeling at this point this has been going on for nearly tokennumber_b years depression suicide attempts that amazed the ICU and mental hospitals I went to because somehow I didn't die and basically a feeling of emptiness that comes from living a life that I don't want as long as I remember my family has had problems not financial ones no we were well off very well off to say the least always had enough food never skipped an electric bill always a phenomenal roof over our heads well educated and well cared for we my brothers and I had nothing to bitch about as kids I for one was very well loved and respected by my family to say the least then the fighting started I didn't know what it was at first I was too young but when thinking back to the first time I remember something happening it was when I was about tokennumber_c years old my mom and dad were getting into arguments over what I would find out tokennumber_d years later was him jacking off to porn and not wanting to be intimate with my mother obviously I never knew anything about it at the time but the only way I can describe it is that kids can sense when somethings not right I knew something wasn't right mom and dad weren't the happy go lucky super duper whoopee in love couple that they made themselves out to be I might've been tokennumber_c but it hit me hard in a way I couldn't describe until now my life was a antisocial and secluded one up until tokennumber_f th grade let me explain my parents came out with the hot idea that hey since my son's a year ahead of the learning curve for fucking kindergarten like that means so much let's home school him and help him get ahead we're much more qualified than those bogus teachers I feel like this decision killed off most of my personality I would've had because the end result was I bullshit my way through every assignment cheated on every test and played videogames day and night for the next few years with little to no interaction with people on the outside sure I played some sports soccer baseball whatever my parents thought I should do but I hated it on the inside my teams always always lost and even when they won I always had the idea that somehow we didn't deserve to win and somehow we were really losing I didn't make any real friends in sports it was another facade to make my parents think they were doing awesome at their job back to the topic of school on the outside there were cigarette smokers alcoholics and homeless people outside why would I ever want to go to school and spend time out there away from the protection of my parents when my parents realized how badly they messed up and decided to do something about it it was tokennumber_f th grade already I went to a fancy private school dress code suites and ties at least once a week proper conduct the whole works I loved the teachers I made some great relationships with them straight A's and often spent time talking to them about the subjects outside of class lunch time I scarcely remember a day when I would eat lunch with anyone my age it was always with a teacher I feel like this might've been my way of reaching out and trying to maintain that feeling of being parented throughout my first year of school away from home because god knows I couldn't stand the other kids my age I was bullied my first year of junior high and it's what made me finish junior high in home school it got to the point where I went and broke down to my favorite teacher because it just plain sucked I was a

relatively attractive kid for tokennumber_f th grade i just didn t know how to act socially naturally as soon as the weird new kid started showing off how awkward he was and botching all the moves girls would make on him he gets made fun of a lot by all the bigger guys who don t have the balls to make a move but can sure as hell put down the guy that they know they don t like i was left out of everything in tokennumber_f th grade no one wanted to be around me and eventually those girls that were stunners even for tokennumber_f th grade standards stopped trying because they weren t getting anywhere so what did i do i became the reject i became the kid that just didn t give a flying fuck about anything anyone said about me and i d cuss you out in an instant for saying something that s the perks to being online your whole life you pick up some colorful language that not many people know at that age of course as soon as i started letting loose some cuss words everyone else did eventually it got to such a huge problem that school administrators had to pull everyone together and lecture them about the importance of clean language i gained a couple friends from that granted i ended up pushing those friends away towards the end of the year because quite frankly i d rather be online playing my videogames in my spare time instead of hanging out with you nothing much happened my tokennumber_k th grade i just became more and more sick of my parents and aware of how full of shit they are like so many other teenagers get so i vowed never to home school again tokennumber_l th grade again boring year but one thing that i can say is this i m not stupid even as a kid i m able to analyze things much differently from normal people maybe it s something i picked up from my parents maybe it s from growing up in a family that argues over things i don t understand and constantly having to pick apart situations to decide who s side i m on but i know what i have to do to be successful i used my mistakes from tokennumber_f th grade and recognized what i had to do this second time over i made friends quickly i was still awkward with girls but i was learning i was a part of many different groups of friends but i was never really their friend i m that guy who you sit with at the lunch table or outside on the concrete bull shitting about your life and then we forget about each other when school s out i was happy with that it let me play more videogames and go on the internet now don t get the wrong idea not everyone who plays videogames for endless hours every day is overweight quite the contrary while the only negative physical attribute i can remember from freshman year was an unfortunate peppering of acne on my face i was a relatively charming and good looking person i d finish out high school with tokennumber_k body fat and i can say that my physical appearance really never changed much over those years most people thought i was a nice guy the rest of them thought i was a bit annoying not much i could do about that it s high school then sophomore year came around and i was introduced to a whole new crowd of people known as the smokers i was captivated with them i wondered what it was like to be around them how they always got cigarettes while they were tokennumber_v tokennumber_b to tokennumber_v tokennumber_f i wondered what their story was and what went so wrong with their lives that this is what they were doing now i let it go by without much notice for awhile but long story short someone who was very close to me bought us a pack we began by smoking them behind our houses and late at night when both our parents were asleep this continued until i grew the balls to bring some to school with me and start smoking with the group that i always saw sitting at the

smoking section outside i loved it i made friends real friends they were the kind of people i wanted to hang around understand talk to and enjoy my life with they captured my interest with their creativity recklessness and ballsiness that i never saw in anyone else up to my point acceptive kind and caring and it seemed like they all had a story that made them different like me they quickly let me into their little circle and i made some friends i ve loved and talked to up until pretty recently a few months later that all ended when i really lost the first group of friends i loved i l explain my friend and i quickly moved on from cigarettes to the next big drug weed i looked for some through my group and quickly found it i bought a tokennumber_q sack from some dude i don t even remember and we both smoked i d say just a little bit of it out of an apple before trying to sell the rest to make some money and be able to constantly buy more we didn t need the money we were both from rich families that gave us both more than enough money to buy lunches and support us smoking as much as we wanted but it wasn t about that status bragging rights being a badass more money it s the allure of being a drug dealer that makes people who don t need it want it we were stupid we got caught instantly and from then on out i thought my life is over i was an emotional little brat but regardless puberty can make you do some pretty stupid things and make it seem like the end of your rope is right here when it really isn t that was the first time i tried to commit suicide i was at home and i just disappointed my parents to no end their perfect straight a genius child had began smoking pot and cigarettes what s going on with the world i thought i was going to jail i thought i d have a record i thought my life was over that was the beginning of it but no my life wasn t over at that point i reached in the medicine cabinet pulled out a super size bottle of ibuprofen some bandaid alcohol cleaner and a cup of water i remember counting every single pill i swallowed that night sitting in a bathtub slitting my wrists downing sanitizer and trying to hang myself with a hoodie cord i was up to around tokennumber_b tokennumber_k pills before i passed out and i thought i was dead there wasn t a light there wasn t any voice screaming my name it was just black then i woke up there was yellow puke all over the floor all over the bathroom and in my bed i got up and immediately puked up more of this yellow shit into a trash can and then realized holy fuck it didn t work and my parents are going to bring my dumb ass to school now so they can decide what to do with me i was so sick it was unbelievable and my parents attributed it to the fact that i was afraid of telling the truth naive was the understatement of the year the second i got in to the school my friend was in there first with his parents then i went in i was still sick and puking so i asked for a trash can to puke into the whole time my parents remarked how he s getting the truth out of his system the whole time i just thought how fucking stupid can you be the school police officer asked me to roll up my sleeves because i m sure that when i was bending over to heave drippy yellow shit and half digested ibuprofen he saw some dried blood or scabbed over cut show from my arm i had to tell my principle the policeman and my parents that i tried to commit suicide immediately i was checked into a hospital and they told me that post puke i had enough ibuprofen in my system to get me about tokennumber_f tokennumber_k of the way to a liver failure or whatever organ it was that they said filters that stuff out i never said anything about the alcohol or trying to hang myself so no one knew what that mark on my neck was from and i was too embarrassed to say anything about it the man at the hospital said i was lucky to be alive

and i laughed they brought in a psychiatrist to evaluate me and surprise surprise i was in shock from the whole ordeal i had diagnosed severe depression and could barely remember my own name when she asked me the woman told my mother that either you can check him into a mental hospital for care over the next few days or cps will come take your child away and put him there naturally mother dearest complied and signed me up for one of the mental hospitals in the town i lived i spent a full week there meeting other psychopaths schizo s people who heard voices telling them to kill themselves or other people and people who were just plain crazy i remember one guy who made up a relationship with a girl just to feel less alone after his family abandoned him another who stuck a butterfly knife in his hand after running away from his family to get fucked up crazy crazy shit and i thought to myself i don t belong here throughout my entire stay i took no medication i can t say for sure because it s very very hazy but i remember writing down events to calm my mind during my stay there i think that i was hallucinating very mildly because while doing that i remember seeing things on the wall that would be gone in an instant or looking outside the barred windows in my room and see shadows turn into something i knew they weren t then go back it wasn t like i was hearing voices or seeing imaginary people but it was something that i knew wasn t there that i was seeing however besides that i knew how to lie to everyone at that hospital i made up that i was happy i told them what they wanted to hear and after a week they decided to let me out with paperwork that said i made a near full recovery no medication advised after that i lost my friends that i cared about my parents wouldn t have it that their son likes cigarettes and wouldn t ever want that son going back and spending time with the people that encouraged their use yes looking out for my well being is a good idea but to this day i still feel like it was blown way out of proportion i had to attend counseling specifically group counseling with crack heroin and meth addicts who were all my age never smoking anything harder than weed i felt this was ridiculous and i was right i shouldn t have been there it only fueled a fascination to get back where i was and discover what all these drugs these people are talking about were really all about however as many people will say time has a way of healing all wounds i forgot about my friends and drugs for the most part after a few months of being escorted to and from class by the administration and the threat of drug testing from my parents i didn t want anything to do with drugs because i was so fearful that they d find out however with forgetting comes a cost i became manically depressed i had no one to talk to i had no one to be around i lost everything i once had i was going to and from class to the administration office on an escort service so there was no way i was ever going to meet up with anyone or get any of those evil cigarettes after school was done i d be escorted back to the administration office and only allowed to leave when my parents came to pick me up i hated it i hated everything and i hated my parents even more for basically forcing me back into seclusion my video game playing took a huge increase and again i was back into being that kid that no one ever saw and never talked to anyone it was during this time that i met another friend of mine who i l refer to as j if you never heard of it look up the law of attraction it s real no matter how crazy it may sound it just happens far too much to everyone to be simple coincidence i met j in one of my classes and we were exactly alike at that point in time we were both severely depressed teenagers clinically so we both had similar outlooks for our lives we both

hated our parents we both came from well off backgrounds and we both even looked similar every single class period would be spent sitting next to each other and talking about things that went on in our lives i think i ended up pitying j so much that it actually cheered me up because i realized how much deeper in depression he was than me after i made this realization i ended up pushing j away from me and rarely saw him again until the end of my junior year after my little puberty stunt sophomore year i began realizing something my acne was gone i m more physically fit than ever and i can talk to girls now i ve always been into sports wrestling running weight lifting it s how i grew up and it is a huge stress reliever i buffed up to say the least i made it my goal to be a casanova and to do the thing every high school boy wants to do get laid it worked sort of i went on a trip with a family friend of mine touring through california and when i was given a clean slate with girls i was able to get exactly what i wanted that summer i met the woman i d be engaged to and be with for the longest period of time out of all the women i ve dated i fell in love really for the first time granted it started out as a one week stand while i was passing through her town but it quickly grew first we decided it s just a hookup and i quickly moved from her to the next girl to the next to the next i d be with more girls that summer than i had my entire life previous to this but afterwards i kept talking to this one girl we just kept talking and kept talking and kept finding more about each other to the point where we actually decided to try a long distance relationship it worked for a very long time again we both had very very rich families that were able to fly us back and forth from both our homes to visit each other at least once a month skype became a huge factor in this whole thing and we just slowly became more comfortable with each other and tested those limits i grew up in a christian household so abstinence was preached to me despite the fact that every single person in the church i went to my parents included exclaimed how they messed up by having sex before marriage this girl was the same way so for about tokennumber_c months we had nothing to do with each other s no no parts until we started testing the boundaries more and more eventually touching each other became okay next it was kissing each other there then finally oral sex became both our okay s since it wasn t really sex hah we were content with that for the duration of the relationship up until the last day i saw her in person before we broke up we were about to have sex for the first time and i didn t have a condom fuck me right we settled for the usual and i ended up going back home a few days later i got a call saying we needed to break up things had been getting rough with her parents we were both on edge so after a lot of restless nights and getting my heart broken the first time that was it so ends my junior year and begins my senior year of high school edit this is around the same time my friend j commit suicide he shot himself in the head probably didn t help anything edit depression came back and it wasn t just because of the break up no that was part of it but i think it was a resurfacing of what was there the whole time while i had someone to be with someone to look back to someone to love me i was happy when i didn t i resorted to going back to smoking and looking for that love again i became a man whore in the kindest way of putting it as soon as i was a senior i more or less gave up on everything i could pass my easy as fuck classes without batting an eye and that meant i could party to no end since i had now just turned tokennumber_v tokennumber_k so i did in a few weeks of partying and re getting to know the crowd i used to hang out with my soph year i lost my virginity a few

days later the second time i ever had sex i had a threesome after that i was the man whore in our group and the entire school of over two thousand people found out about it it seemed this is what i feel made me continue going on and on with this whole facade of being a man whore because i loved the attention i loved being someone instead of being no one i loved the physical love i got from girls i loved being wasted and i loved drugs for a moment in time i replaced the surfacing depression with drugs alcohol and women it worked for the longest time it worked shortly after i graduated high school partying went to an all time high my parents sat me down previous to this and told me i needed to be home at tokenumber_v o clock because this was getting ridiculous i didn t give a damn i felt like i was the most entitled little shit in the entire world because i m an adult now and i can do what i want with my money that i saved from jobs i worked and money i saved it got to the point where i d be out all night for tokenumber_w or tokenumber_b days on end finding another party and packing my car full of friends to keep it going i got to know basically everyone in that entire city through partying and being constantly wasted and you can be damn sure everyone knew me this continued through my freshman year at college when i went to state college i took maybe tokenumber_w or tokenumber_b classes made it seem like such a huge fucking deal to my parents so that they d pay for me to be in college and live in the dorms it worked and instead of having to work for anything i was free to party all night do some work every now and then and smoke more weed do more drugs and drink more booze than i d ever do again in my entire life i prided myself on the fact that my roommate moved out of my dorm leaving me with one of the biggest rooms on campus to myself purely because of the fact that i brought over way too many girls to have sex with and woke him up multiple times i wasn t just anyone i was the shit at that point but i remember that when i was alone all i felt like was shit i had to surround myself with friends constantly and when it wasn t friends it was women if i didn t i d find myself near tears drinking alone or just mentally breaking down i experimented with harder and harder drugs my rule of keeping it herbal went out the window in a hurry and physically i paid for it i managed to stay away from meth heroin crack pcp and all that nasty stuff which i can only thank god for but it was taking its toll on my body i began losing a lot of weight since i wasn t eating very much i remember when i visited my mom she commented on how frail i looked compared to when i was wrestling in high school and i didn t even want to admit it i was in complete denial on my situation and it didn t even matter to me i just kept on doing what i did until one day i did too much i m not going to go into detail but i fucked up majorly and i l pay for the consequences for the rest of my life i did way too much acid in the name of who the fuck cares and i hurt someone that did not deserve to be hurt i was promptly arrested in complete hysteria and after awhile i woke up in a hospital bed with the entire staff and police wondering what the fuck this kid was on all this was around the time of the miami zombie attack and i remember they kept asking me if i did bath salts and who gave me the drugs i don t remember a single thing after i took the acid just bits and pieces of what happened an hour before and after when i really regained consciousness strapped down all tokenumber_b s in a hospital bed for the longest time i was pretty calm and composed because i thought i just got caught for being too fucked up and they re detoxing me then they l let me go back to college but no i got sent to jail immediately after being released from the

hospital i had armed guards watching me the whole time and at that point i was starting to understand something really really bad happened i didn t find out what it was until i got to jail and one of the secretaries explained it to me somehow i ended up stabbing someone i didn t kill the person thank god but i hurt who it was very badly at this point i was still blasted out of my mind and besides that statement only a few words ring out in my head every now and then of what she said to me unfortunately it s all downhill from here i was crushed i don t know how long i spent in jail but i couldn t eat sleep or even take a shit i was so scared i realized this is it bud you had your run and you blew it everything s gone the partying the women the love the friends everything s gone fortunately the secretary lady had a lot of compassion in her and realized how fucked up i still was but she didn t tell the police she did me one better i was in there for bdw charges not drugs so instead of putting me in a normal prison room i was put in seclusion away from the general prison pop and allowed a blanket and some time to just sit in a corner on a bed that was more like a slab of concrete i hallucinated the walls were moving changing colors taunting me killing me screaming you re fucked in my head the entire time i had trippy songs that i listened to on a regular basis repeating their beats over and over in my head taunting me telling me that i l never hear them again outside of my head i m never going to be where i was i m done i m done i m done i cried harder than i could ever remember i m so glad that i wasn t with any of the other prisoners i have no idea what the fuck would ve happened but all that depression i d been feeling my whole life swelled up in my brain and just told me how much of a fucking failure i was i tried to literally bash my head in on the concrete by covering up what i was doing with a blanket so that the guard wouldn t see i don t have the balls to actually kill myself like that so naturally all i got was a pounding headache and a bruise on my forehead sometime after finally passing out i was bailed out by my family i was secluded in my mother s closet for weeks before i talked to anyone i erased my contacts in my phone ignored calls from worried friends who i thought were people trying to scream at me for what i did i didn t talk to anyone i didn t move from a bed that i set up in there i wanted to die alone but i didn t want to kill myself depression was at an all new high because i realized there s nothing going for me at this point i got expelled from college i d have no job no girlfriend and my family is going through turmoil from what s going on my parents realized that this is soph year all over again and they re dying alongside me just thinking about it we all lawyer ed up but there s nothing he could do in that situation it all changed when the girl from my junior year left me a message when i finally decided to get up from my bed i listened to my messages most of them were from people looking for a party who i couldn t care less about now and who couldn t care less about me but the last one i listened to was her i knew who it was even though she didn t say her name and the craziest thing was as i began listening to it she called me we began talking again she was scared for me didn t know what was happening knew i d never do something like this i could tell she still loved me and i realized that i still had feelings for her i started getting up off my lazy ass volunteering at gospel missions began helping people trying to fix my life and be a better person it started with my lawyer telling me to do it but i didn t even do it for the courts or him at that point i did it to show her that i was still the man that i was back when i loved her and i was sober but then i found out she had a boyfriend and she like me abandoned her

viewpoint of no sex before marriage i can t say i was devastated because i more or less expected it but it still made me take a step back depression kept creeping in past that point i was loosing interest in my work and every day i d wake up and think is this the end how will i do it today if i want to die i went over things in my mind i realized i wouldn t be able to do anything that required action from me i had no gun my dad locked all his firearms in a safe i couldn t even bring myself to swallow a pill of ibuprofen when i was sick since my soph year let alone think of trying to od again so i was really fucked i just kept living day in day out being polite working hard as i could and being more or less a zombie that just existed i kept talking to the girl but it was more out of being polite than wanting to actually talk since i knew it wouldn t go anywhere and there was no point in letting myself try for a relationship with her again that was until she told me that she was visiting my hometown and she broke up with her boyfriend i was happy and as i m writing this out i realize maybe it s because i m incapable of being happy on my own which makes me so emotionally unstable i substitute real happiness with my achievements accomplishments and relationships to get me through life i was much more lively i began doing good things just for the sake of doing them i just wanted to help people at that point and make the people who were doing shitty feel as well as i was right then and there when the big day came and i saw her again in person i almost broke down and kissed her right there i refrained i kept myself from doing it because somewhere deep down i didn t want to be vulnerable again i didn t want to admit that someone else had power over me again and this happiness i was feeling was from anything other than myself but one thing led to the next when she came over it started by holding each other we knew what would happen but didn t want to say anything to my family or make it apparent when we were alone we kissed and it was the most passionate thing i ve felt in my entire life it wasn t anything ordinary it s impossible to explain it s exactly what you need when you need it it s a warmness and a feeling that you l never be alone again it s that feeling that none of your past mistakes matter and you found someone who s with you thick and thin throughout everything for the rest of your life that right there i think is love maybe i m still not old enough to really feel it maybe it was just puppy love maybe someone out there is going to criticize me for not having enough experience in my seemingly short life but i don t give a damn i wouldn t trade that moment for the world no matter how much i might say i would it was beautiful and innocent but what we did next wasn t so innocent we had some of the most breathtaking sex i ve ever experienced in my life for the first time ever with each other and there would be plenty more to follow but enough about that i m not trying to love some cheesy love novel my life doesn t end well keep that in mind eventually she convinced me to start applying for new colleges so i applied for one the one she was going to i got in i don t know how it was two days before the semester and with everything that had just gone on i think it was a miracle to say the least but i tried my hardest to get in there and i did it i packed my things told my lawyer and i drove tokennumber_v tokennumber_c hours down to my new college everything was perfect throughout the whole experience my court sentencing got pushed off nearly a year for me to show that i m rehabilitated i was back in college and my girl my beautiful perfect girl was by my side through it all then it wasn t so perfect my mom came down to visit to help me find an apartment and help me decorate it she didn t want my girl to be around

me for the time she was there since she thought it d be awkward and since we had both my girl and i been going through a rough patch for a bit i was still smoking cigarettes to deal with stress and she didn t like them anymore one thing led to the next and she ended up cheating on me i figured she did but she lied to my face and told me no when i asked her it only came out days after we broke up again i was devastated and i was confused depression came back ten fold and i numbed it with more cigarettes and by surrounding myself with what little friends i had in this new city however this last bit of depression would be short lived as quickly we worked things out and were back together in a few days i forgave her and i believed she was genuinely sorry when she broke up i thought i wouldn t give her another chance to hurt me but i was wrong i would because i d give anything not to be placed in that situation of depression that i m used to living in if that means smoking drinking or being in a relationship perhaps it s selfish maybe it s just my way of finding love and happiness i don t think it s anyone s place to judge me we all do it one way or another a few months go by and the girl is living with me in my apartment we re both in love so what do i do i buy her a ring i proposed to her in quite possibly one of the nerdiest ways possible i taped the ring to the inside of an xbox tokenumber_w tokenumber_c tokenumber_m game she wanted she loved it i still keep the whole thing on tap to this day but unfortunately she s only living me until the end of the semester her parents still don t like me even more now because of the whole violent felony and they definitely don t know that i m at her college living with her so she goes back to her hometown for the summer commence long distance relationship again i l tell you maybe we could pull it off for awhile before but after being up in the mile high club going back to square tokenumber_v is not nearly as appealing all of a sudden we re both depressed she s crying nearly every day because she can t be with me and i can t do anything about it because of that i end up ignoring her for most of the day just wasting my time going to class playing videogames and long boarding to just kill time so i don t have to see her cry it hurts i don t want to do this but i don t see any alternative all of a sudden she s telling me she s back into partying going to concerts and not spending much time back at home i seen that there were sirens going off all over the place in my head but i chose to ignore them depression makes you do stupid shit one of the stupidest things is that it makes you ignore things that can potentially bring you back to below where you were one day after not talking to her at all i get a text from her saying that we need to break up i knew why deep down but i didn t want to say anything about it it wasn t until a day later when i realized that i still had a facebook that i saw what really happened and it killed me since then i ve gone back to smoking cigarettes i hate it i want to get back into wrestling but i just can t find the motivation to do anything i barely wake up to get to my summer courses and like the title says i m empty i m finding myself going out with a small group of friends that i just made almost every single night until the sun s up and it just doesn t feel right every time i m with another girl or even just chatting one up it feels like i m cheating i feel absolutely nothing inside and i just try and cover it up with one thing or another and at this point i m just biding my time until sentencing comes around i don t know what to do i hate where i am and i m realizing that there s nothing left for me college is pointless now it doesn t matter if i have one degree or a hundred on paper i m going to look like a brutal low life who scraped by not to mention that but i m not going

to find a decent home life no matter what i do at this point maybe i m looking in all the wrong places maybe i m trying to fill the wrong gaps but unfortunately i know too well that people do judge a book by its cover i m truly and hopelessly alone depressed and experiencing mentally pains and torture that i can t even begin to explain i don t know what to do at this point i don t know who i m trying to reach out to but i need help i can t even tell you what kind of help i need but i just need a friend by my side like i ve tried to have for so damn long maybe it s my way of trying to introduce some level of happiness back into my life but i m all out of ideas this world holds no value for me at this point even my family is broken and split in so many directions it s ridiculous i don t think i ve really talked to another human being in almost a week so here i am reddit now when sex smoking relationships family counselors help groups the system and my own mind fail me i m turning to you tl dr i m a self diagnosed sociopath i m antisocial i have extremely graphic flashbacks from past drug use i m an alcoholic a stress smoker and i have moments of complete disassociation from the world that make me literally beat myself up from the amount of regret i have for living through periods of my life and not fixing mistakes i ve been severely depressed for at least the last four years of my life on and off with sickening duration and i m currently living through the mental torture of trying to fit in with a society that deems me to be a violent felon when in reality i had no mental or physical control over those moments of my life and in my right state of mind can t even bring myself to inflict real pain on people who literally beat the shit out of me for a few dollars let alone myself i m at the point where it seems like i m at the end of my rope literally and figuratively".

9.10.4 I am "weird" and "slow". Every social interaction is painfully awkward.

"I'm going to go deep into detail for anyone that cares to hear it. Probably nobody will read this, but I have to try to get help from somewhere.

I am a 19 year old white male. I spend way too much time on the computer and have no social interaction unless absolutely necessary, and even then it is excruciating and depressing every time I engage in conversation.

I don't know if this has anything to do with it, but I vaguely remember when I was about 3 years old I was alone in my bedroom in my babysitter's lap, and she was playing with my penis. This is one of the earliest memories I have. I also have some other tidbits of memory - when I was sitting on a bed around 2 years old and there were what I now know to be dildos. I also remember that my mom and step dad always left me alone while they sat in another dark, stinky room, I think smoking weed, and my step dad always wore sweat pants with holes in the crotch and his dick hanging out.

When I was 5 years old I started going to kindergarten. My first day, I walked in the room like "who the fuck are these people"? I hadn't ever had to be around this many people before. My mom walked me into the room and sitting in a circle on the floor was my teacher and my ~13 classmates. I felt like everybody already knew each other because they were already sitting together and I was the last one there. I was really shy

because these people seemed to know each other already and I felt judged as the new guy to the group. I didn't talk much because I didn't know how I was supposed to act; this was a completely new type of situation for me and it was just too much to take in at one time. Going from being left alone all the time to being tossed to a group of strangers was really hard. I always did really awkward things, like cry when some kid asked me about my plastic rugrats wrist watch.

Going to first grade was another huge change for me and it gave me intense anxiety. I think between here and 3rd grade is where I started being known as the smart, quiet kid.

In 2nd grade I moved to a completely different city and had to get used to even more completely new people. People at this point always described me as shy and smart. I knew all my times tables before everyone else. When I went outside for recess, I stood outside and looked in on all the playground kids (This is how I have felt my entire life - Like I am on the outside looking in. Like my mind is separate from my body). I must have stood there for atleast 10 minutes wondering what I was supposed to do. I hesitantly went in and tried my hand at socializing.

Not much happened in 3rd grade. Still known as the smart, shy kid.

In 4th grade my teacher died halfway through the year because of a winter car accident. A truck driver had a heart attack while driving and the roads were already icy. I didn't cry when I heard the news at school. When I got home, I cried pretty hard. I don't know if I really felt sad or if I felt like that was just the reaction I was "supposed" to have. Death was a weird concept to me that was hard to take in. One of my dad's friends that also happened to be a sub teacher at the school took me to my dead teacher's funeral. In the middle of the trip, she commented on the area we were driving through. She said "this is what we call nigger hill". I stayed silent, but that hit me hard. This was supposed to be a sad moment and here is my sub teacher, a co-worker of the man who recently died, making a racist comment. Why do people behave like this? I kept to myself in 4th grade, reading a lot of books. I also drew some comics about a super hero named "super fart boy", a boy who fought crime and flew around propelled by powerful farts, and let other kids read them and modify them. When my teacher was alive we had been practicing a play called "healthy, wealthy, and wise". After his death, a woman took his place and we continued practicing for the play. I already established myself as antisocial at this point, choosing to sit at a table and read while my classmates did the play. One day we lined up and were getting ready to leave the classroom. I thought we were just going to practice the play as usual, so I asked if I could just read my book. "How rude!", the teacher exclaimed in an angry tone. We were apparently going to see a presentation by some woman from Africa and she thought I was disrespecting the woman by wanting to read. I still didn't understand why she had such a harsh tone over an honest mistake.

One day, still in 4th grade, my class was practicing the play still and I asked if I could go to the hallway to read my book. Then, unexpectedly, one of my female classmates also asked if she could go outside to read. I didn't know what to think. She normally didn't want to read. We go outside, I sit down and start reading my book. I am on the left side of the door and she is on the right. She's not even reading her book... she's just staring at me. I feel extremely awkward. Why is she doing that? I feel like she may have

a crush on me or be flirting with me, but I don't know how to act on it or even if I should. I just ignore her and keep reading my book.

In 5th grade I started being known as lazy. I had actually started this trend in 4th grade, but nobody noticed until near the end of the year when they were cleaning lockers and found stacks of unfinished work in mine. We started having different teachers for each subject this year. I was still very shy at this point and my go-to response when I was feeling awkward was to make an "ooo" face, kinda like the boy in this picture . My social studies teacher called me out on it, told me how stupid I looked and made me feel really bad about it. She sat me out in the hall with a mirror and made me stare at myself while making the face. The girl from fourth grade that took a liking to me was also in this class. We had some rare intimate moments. Once I was in computer class and she sat next to me. I went to reach for the mouse and she raised her eye brows and smiled while teasingly pulling away from me, apparently mistaking me reaching for the mouse as trying to touch her. We were together pretty often back then and I miss it. I felt like there was some romantic tension between us, but we hung out just like normal friends and not bf/gf. I started to feel like I was in love with her.

Somewhere in the middle of my 5th grade year, a girl from my class moved into the house next door. I looked outside one day and saw her waiting at the bus stop. I didn't like that she was our new neighbor because she had acted like a bitch a few times earlier in the year. We actually became pretty good friends after that, and I would go to her house every few days to hang out with her and her brother and sister. When I started hanging out over there, it was uplifting. I finally had some kind of social life. But this good thing didn't last long. I had to ask my step dad every day if I could go over there and hang out. One day I opened his door at the very back of the house. He stayed on the porch with black trash bags covering the screens so that it was like a room. It was very dark and it always smelled like cigarettes and weed because he laid on a mattress on the floor permanently, playing on the computer and smoking. I brought my classmate's brother back there to ask if I could go to his house, and my stepdad said okay. When Charlie went back over to wait for me, I was scolded and told never to bring him back there again. I asked to go over there a few days after that and was told no, that "this is not going to be an every day thing". Okay. Socializing is not going to be an every day thing. Eventually I just wasn't allowed to visit anymore and soon after, we moved to another shitty house for unrelated reasons (in the same city).

6th grade sucked. I hung out with mainly two kids and the three of us had video gaming in common. I would write fictional battle scenes between the runescape characters of the two of them. I also drew battle scenes of stickmen using various weapons - swords, machine guns, bows and arrows. I was also drawing comics about a dog that would eat a yellow orb and grow bigger and stronger, kinda like mario when he eats a mushroom. My 2 friends thought I was good at drawing and complimented me on my "attention to detail".

The girl that I was into from 4th grade was not in any of my classes in 6th grade, which was upsetting. She had been one of my closest friends and almost like a girlfriend. We will call her "Jamie" for future reference. I pretty much only had one encounter with Jamie for my entire 6th grade year. A girl had written with marker, "LifeOnAScreen is a fag". After that incident I passed Jamie on my way back to class from a bathroom break.

We had 30 seconds of alone time that I cherished so much. It was a shame that each of us only said one thing. She asked "Why is your name on the back of your shirt?". The school principal had cleaned up the writing off my shirt for me, but apparently some of my name was visible. I told Jamie "cuz someone wrote 'LifeOnAScreen is a fag)". I then walked back into my class, to not see her for a long time.

Eventually, there was a school dance. After the school day ended everyone would walk to their bus or to their car, depending on whether they were a "car rider" or a "bus rider". Jamie took the same path as me, but her classroom was closer to the exit so she was always ahead of me on the way out. I remember assuring myself that I was going to ask her to the dance. I was walking behind her, staring, trying to come up with the courage to do it. I couldn't do it. I was a failure.

I ended up going to the dance with no date and just hanging out with some friends from school. They played a lot of different music from Chamillionaire's "Ridin' Dirty" to "In the End" by Linkin Park. When I walked in, Jamie was already there and she was grinding her back on the wall, dancing with her wrists crossed and arms held above her head. She looked so sexy, but of course I didn't act on my feelings.

In 7th grade I really found out what it was like to be a loner. Previously, I was in one group and every one of us had the exact same classes and the exact same schedule. Now each person had their own individualized schedule and was with a totally different set of kids each class period. My shyness hadn't hindered me as much before because I was around the same people all the time and had a lot of chances to learn about them and get used to them. After this point I started becoming more and more catatonic. Bullies picked me as a target because I wouldn't stand up for myself. A kid that sat behind me on the school bus every morning had been bullying me, threatening, and saying he would "take me from behind". He was getting on the bus one day and I decided that I needed to stand up for myself. I was going to hit the kid. I looked at my brother and kinda smiled, then as the kid walked by me in the aisle I nudged him a little bit elbow to elbow. It was awkward and retarded. He stopped and stared at me for a few seconds with an angry look on his face, then went to his seat. I expected to be hit when I got off the bus because of the bully's reaction, so when I got off the bus I walked a few steps and looked behind me. He wasn't even off the bus yet, so I thought I was okay. I turned back around and kept walking toward the school, and just like that, in the blink of an eye I was knocked to the ground. My vision went black for probably 5 to 10 seconds. The bully had ran up behind me, punched me in my right eye, then immediately ran away. I went to the lunch room to get breakfast and everyone was looking at me. My eye had swollen up to the size of a baseball. People kept telling me to go the office, but I just wanted the incident to be over with. I didn't feel I had done anything wrong. Eventually the principal came to me, brought me to the office and had a talk with me and the bully. I tried to always tell the truth back then, because that's when I believed the world was a moral place and that doing the "right thing" was the path to success in life. I told the truth - I had barely nudged the bully's elbow as some sort of payback for his verbal abuse, and he punched me in the eye for it. Didn't matter that he was not harmed at all. We were both suspended for 3 days.

8th grade rolled up. Around this time, my family had moved ~20 miles out of town in the country. My step dad was a huge conspiracy theorist as a result of sitting on the

computer listening to Alex Jones all day. He wanted us to get guns and stock up on food out there to defend against the government when they decide to kill everybody. We ended up getting miniature horses, chickens, a llama. We started planting tomatoes, squash, zucchini and other vegetables.

My step dad, his boyfriend, and my mom all lived together with me and my two brothers. I never even realized my step dad was gay until his boyfriend had been living with us for a few years. He actually started living with us when I was in 5th grade. I was clueless to why he was there. It finally dawned on me that my step dad was gay and had a boyfriend, and that my mom was also gay; all the times she took the 3 of us children to hang out with her "friend" and her 2 kids, that had actually been part of her lesbian relationship.

In 8th grade we didn't have hot water. We didn't have a clothing drier. Our house was always covered in roaches and they would come out of the faucet when I tried to make a glass of water. My mom was always gone working or having sex with some woman, and my step dad and his boyfriend would use us kids as free labor. Our neighbors paid them to have us clean up the horse shit in their barn. Nobody lifted a finger to help us, but they're the ones that got paid \$100 every time we cleaned the barn. One time they cut us an amazing deal - they would buy us halo 3, a \$60 game, if we would hurry up and clean the barn so he would still have time to pick up some weed. He didn't say he wanted us to hurry so he could get weed, but in retrospect that is exactly the reason.

I was almost driven to the point of suicide because of the torture. I was never really hit, sometimes smacked in the mouth. I was very verbally abused, always called retarded and slow, and made fun of because my voice sounded "like a little bitch". I would go all day at school feeling awkward, bullied, not able to relate to people. My brothers and I were all fat because of the monstrous portions of food we had been used to our whole lives. Our main diet was carbohydrates - ramen noodles, spaghetti, etc. It was common for us to be talked about like animals in front of the adults' visitors and laughed at for being such pigs, like it was our fault they fed us so much.

Every school day, I had to take an extremely cold shower in the morning. Then, I had to put on yard sale and flea market clothing that had been dried on an indoor clothes line, hung over a wood burning stove. My clothes were always covered in lint, smelled like smoke, and slightly damp. My pants would leave water marks on the seats of the desks at school. I was made fun of by kids for getting my shoes at wal-mart and my clothes smelling like mildew because they had not been properly dried. I would sit at my desk every day, not say a word, then when the bell rang I would take my books to the next period's classroom and repeat until the day was over. Then I would get on the bus that had no air conditioning under intense summer heat and ride an hour and a half to get to my house, feeling like I was dying, then be embarrassed that all the kids on the bus see chickens running wildly, un-caged in my yard and the clothes line clumsily draped over some trees. Trash everywhere. Every time the bus pulled up to my house I felt like dying because of the embarrassment. I would also be thirsty because I'd had nothing but an 8 oz. carton of milk to drink all day. I didn't even eat lunch at school due to people making fun of my "jelly rolls" and calling me lardass, etc.

My step dad and his boyfriend had an air conditioner. The 3 of us kids didn't "deserve" an air conditioner just like we didn't "deserve" to have anything to drink. I had to

immediately change into my "work clothes" right after walking in the door, then work for a few hours to "earn" my water or tea or coke. My stepdad and his boyfriend would give us a chore or task to do, most of the time something pointless that we would have to undo the next day, then they would go back to their dark, cigarette and weed smelling room to watch movies in the air conditioning while enjoying their drinks. They'd come out periodically to smack us in the mouth and make sure we were doing what they said. I liked the color black. Being "goth" or "emo" was popular with kids then, but I didn't think of myself like that. I thought those kids were posers. I got black shoes, had three black t-shirts - one from a sale at wal-mart and the other two from a flea market - a black hoodie also from a flea market. I asked my mom to get me black hair dye, and amazingly I was allowed to get it. My hair was getting long and covering my eyes. I didn't like haircuts because instead of going to a barber I always had to have it shaved off completely with electric hair clippers like a cancer patient. Long hair seemed like it would make me look less retarded.

After making these wardrobe changes, I suddenly started being noticed by girls. It was mainly the hair. I remember in P.E. one day, I was going to take a drink from the water fountain. Boys sat on one side of the room, girls sat on the other. As I was going back to my spot from the fountain, a girl ran up to me and I think she kinda grabbed my arm while nervously laughing and saying "don't listen to them". The other girls were yelling "she likes you". I awkwardly just walked away without saying anything. Later on, at lunch, all the girls from my P.E. class just surrounded me (we ate outside in a courtyard). They wanted to know if I was going to say "yes" to this girl asking me out. I obviously liked girls, but there was no way I could have gotten a girlfriend if it wasn't forced onto me like that. I nervously, awkwardly agreed to date her and we became "boyfriend and girlfriend" like that. I'll call this girl Kristy for future reference.

Me and Kristy ended up "dating" for most of the year. My social skills were non-existent. We would see each around the school, but we would never really talk. People always asked me why I didn't talk to her - the truth was I didn't have anything to say. I didn't know what to say. I knew she was physically attractive and that was about it. I found her on facebook and that's how we communicated most of the time. Somehow I had a lot more to talk about when I wasn't face to face with another human being. Eventually Kristy's friends started adding me on facebook. I would always call this fat blonde one a ho and we would joke that I was her pimp and got a discount on having sex with her. She kinda looks like Stifler's mom. I actually feel like a got closer to that blonde than I did to Kristy herself. Talking to her was just more natural.

Our "relationship" was really stale after a while. It practically didn't exist, but we called each other boyfriend and girl friend and messaged eachother on facebook all the time. I would call her every day after school. My step dad and his boyfriend always listened to the calls. I had no privacy whatsoever. I got a cell phone at some point during that year, and they read my text messages too. Some of them were pretty sexually explicit, mostly with that blonde girl. I actually didn't text my girlfriend much at all.

I was talking to my girlfriend after school one day. We had to do something, because this relationship was going nowhere. She asked if I wanted to go to church with her that night. I was conditioned to think that if I asked anybody to take me to town, which was 20 miles away, to see my girlfriend that the answer would be an automatic no. I didn't

"deserve" anything because I was a worthless piece of shit. I told her I didn't think I could go because it was on such short notice. She got an attitude. Surprisingly, I asked my mom while she was in the room with my step dad, and they agreed that my mom would take me if I cleaned up the weeds out of the garden. If my mom hadn't been there, it probably would have been a no. I went outside and cleaned that garden so well, and excitedly called my girlfriend back and told her I would be able to see her.

My girlfriend's grandparents picked me up at my mom's friend's house in town and took me and my girlfriend to church. As I was sitting down her grandma tried talking to me and I just told her I wasn't much of a people person and ended the conversation like that. I barely said a word during the whole visit. I fucked up and made myself look like a social retard by going to sit across the table from my girlfriend instead of right next to her.

We went to her house after church, I still barely said anything. I was going through the motions of having a girlfriend but saying almost nothing the whole time. We broke up some time later. She was getting fed up with me not talking to her.

In P.E. one day, our teacher was absent so we had to sit in an empty classroom for the day. Kristy started passing notes with me on a spiral notebook. After a few back-and-forth notes, I got curious to know what was in the rest of the notebook. I started flipping through the pages and saw that she was doing the same shit with some other guy. She snatched the notebook from me when she saw me doing that. This was one of my first lessons on the nature of women.

One week or less after our relationship ended, one of her friends asked me out. I said I wanted to think about it. I believed in morals back then, thought guys were supposed to be with one girl for life, etc. I felt like I was in love with Kristy, so I didn't want to date the other girl. This guy convinced me and I did agree to date her, but I literally cried at night because I was "cheating" on Kristy who I was in love with. I would hear songs on the radio like Taylor Swift's love story and it would make me think of her. I was an idiot. During all this drama at school, I still had shit going on at home that was getting on my nerves. My stepdad and his boyfriend were making us pick pears and peaches for them, they would make pies and jelly out of it and give us nothing. We were still cleaning our neighbors' horse shit up for free. We had to fill up ice trays for our step dad every time he made a glass of water. For some reason we had to dig up a septic tank and carry buckets full of human shit to our garden and "fertilize" our plants with it. I said my arms were hurting, and my stepdad's boyfriend, who never helped with anything and just stood around chatting with the neighbors, said "That's just lazy-ass-it's! HAHAHAHAHA!". I started imagining hanging myself in the barn with some of the rope we had from hay bales. I told my mom I had to get away from our dad's boyfriend or I would kill myself.

It wasn't that great, but my social life at school was the best it had ever been. Things at home were unbearable, though. After I told my mom I wanted to kill myself, she took us to live with her girlfriend in a neighboring state. I didn't want to leave all my friends, girlfriend, etc. I just wanted to get away from my stepdad and his boyfriend and stop being treated like a slave.

My oldest brother was in job corps at the time, but my other brother and I both went with my mom. We pulled up to the apartment complex that our mom's new girlfriend

lived at, and my brother and I both laughed at this woman, who looked like a man, smoking a cigarette. We called her a "dike". I've gotten more mature and accepting of other people since then. Our mom put her finger to her lips and made a "shhh" sound, and I realized that the dike was our mom's girlfriend. We went inside and had pizza. We didn't know anyone there, so we would rent xbox 360 games and literally do nothing but play video games and watch tv all day.

Our mom's new girlfriend turned out to be an alcoholic (go figure). We lived with her for about a year, then I started missing my friends and decided to come back to my home state even if it meant living with my stepdad and his boyfriend again. Horrible mistake. They put me through a lot of hell, and their house was still covered in roaches. They had been blaming that on us kids all our lives. I ended up not even speaking to any of my old friends anymore because I was so shy. I regretted coming back. I could not relate to people at all, and after that year in a foreign state I really lost all of the few social skills I had.

My mom moved back after a year because she missed us. She brought her girlfriend too. I ended up moving back in with them. I couldn't handle school anymore. I would show up. sit still with my mouth shut all day, then go home and play runescape and browse 4 chan in a room by myself all day. My mom and her girlfriend worked late, and my brother had moved into a shithole trailer with my stepdad and his boyfriend. They didn't even have running water there. He had to pee out the back door, and to flush the toilet he would have to run a water hose into the back of the toilet from the bathroom window. He started working at mcdonalds, and spent almost every dollar he made on weed.

I started getting harrassed by my librarian because I forgot my flash drive in a library computer. During breakfast and lunch every day I would just browse reddit on the school computers. I had copy-pasted something about marketing into a text file and it had some sexually explicit text in it, and the librarian turned my flash drive into the principal. I went to get it from him, but he wouldn't let me have it back until he copied all the files onto another computer. Then I was banned from using the computers at school, which made it impossible to do work in my computer accounting class. Browsing reddit was one of the only ways I could bear going through the school day. I'd been sent to detention in my English class because I spent too long thinking about a writing prompt before I started writing. There was just so much shit to deal with. I went to my accounting class, and since they had locked my account I used my brother's account. The teacher, who never actually taught except once a week, and mostly just handed us packets) told me to sit at a table in the middle of the room instead of at the computer so she could keep an eye on me since she was told that I wasn't allowed to use the computers. I just sat there silently. She asked again if I was going to change seats, and I managed to get one word out. "No." She turned on the intercom and told the principal that I was being sent to the office. I grabbed my binder and left the room, then walked straight out the front door and to my house instead of going to the office.

I brought my laptop to school and started using it one morning since I wasn't allowed to use the school computers. This really pissed off the librarian. She came up to me and said "LifeOnAScreen, you're not allowed to use the school computers OR the wifi". I told her that I wasn't using either, and she was still standing over my shoulder like I

was doing something wrong. I was using my own property and I wasn't even connected to the internet, so what was I doing wrong? She was still standing over me, so I said "...and I would appreciate it if you would stop harrassing me". She threw a temper tantrum over this, told me to go to the office, intercommed the principle in when I refused to go to the office.

They made it too difficult for me to bear the pain of going to school everyday, so I decided that I would drop and get a job. I went up to the principal and told him I didn't want to be there. I asked him if I could stay home, and I picked the school handbook. I asked if I would have to resort to finding a rule in there to break to get myself suspended. He said that if I didn't want to go to school that he really couldn't stop me, so I just stopped going right then. I went home and never came back.

I was playing video games all day and browsing 4chan and reddit, as always. About a year after dropping out of school I decided it was time to stop putting off getting my GED, so I finally went and took the test. They said I had the highest scores they'd seen in a while, and because of my scores I qualified for a 2 year tuition scholarship to my local community college. I applied for FAFSA and got approved for \$5,000 a year in aid. My first check was \$2500. My mom made me give her \$600 of it as rent. I gave my brother \$300 of it to help him make his car payment, asking him to just pay me back \$200 and he never paid me back a single cent. I honestly don't remember what happened to the rest of the money. I know I bought some nice shoes, some khakis, etc. I also got a bike and a backpack.

Every time my life starts going uphill, thinks quickly turn around. One step forward and two steps back. After just one semester of me going to community college, my mom and her girlfriend decided to go back to live in her girlfriend's home state to be closer to her family. I had no other options than to go with them, so I had to give up my college education.

I am currently still in my mom's girlfriend's home state. I found a job after a couple months, at a call center. I do nothing but browse reddit and stuff like that for about 16 hours a day, so my social skills are shit. I start working at this call center. They tell me I'm SUPPOSED to be monotone, which seemed great. I worked there for about four months before I finally just quit. Everyone was rude to me because of my obvious lack of social skill. One woman asked if I was "a robotic". There was a lot wrong with this job, especially morally, but the last straw was when they wouldn't give me my check because I told them I was taking the day off to visit a friend from my home state. I don't know why he is my friend, because I have shit social skills, but he still is my friend and has been for years.

About a month after quitting that job I started working at a machine shop through a temp agency. It felt like longer, and I actually did kinda enjoy it. Our boss was rude, but mostly everyone else treated me with more respect than I'd had in a long time. Too bad it didn't last. My brother and I found out that the company wasn't paying us for all of the time we worked, so we told them we were going to go to the labor board with the issue if they didn't pay us everything that was owed. Our supervisor specifically told us that he knew they were ripping off all 30+ employees in the shop, but he couldn't protect anyone from it except night shift. He ADMITTED that he knew they were stealing money from people. He told us to wait, "Get our ducks in a row" before we

confront the president of the company with the issue. So we waited. We got a call from the temp agency we were hired through, telling us that we had both been fired for threatening to call the labor board. They told us that the company had made "an honest mistake" when reporting our hours. They were charging us for 50 minutes of every day when our lunch was only 30. That's 20 minutes extra, 5 days a week that wasn't getting paid. On top of that, when we worked weekends they were taking out 30 minutes pay for lunch even though we weren't even allowed to have a lunch on weekends. We asked the temp agency to find us another job, and guess what? They never found us one after that. They most likely put us on some blacklist.

We went to a lawyer about it and he said that we seem to have a good case here, but their firm didn't want to invest resources in helping us because the return of investment wouldn't be good enough for them. Mmm. The sweet smell of justice.

I then started working at a pizza place for minimum wage. They'd love to have paid me less, but they were legally required to pay me atleast that much. A 50 year old guy that worked there talked to me and actually became sortof like a friend to me. He said I gave off a serial killer vibe when I made a comment about people not liking me, though. The manager seemed like she might have been attracted to me. She was pretty friendly, but her sister wasn't. Neither was the other 16 year old girl that worked there. The manager's sister said one day, "he's weird... I've been trying to hold my tongue, but I just have to say somethin'". The other 16 year old was always yelling and cussing at me, saying "The manager always hires morons".

I got fed up with that place. Now im working at what I think will be my last job. It's the hardest of the 4 jobs I have had, and it pays 2nd to lowest. They only give me 15 hours a week there. I work with 3, sometimes 4 mexicans that know just enough english to get by. I don't talk much, just make chicken and stuff. People call me slow. Shy. I'm pretty sure I heard someone calling me weird the other day. I'm literally moving as fast as I can to make this food, and they tell me I'm too slow and look at me disapprovingly. They tell me not to cook anything for 20 minutes or so, then tell me I need to bread something and cook it. A minute later they tell me I need to bread something else and cook it. A minute later they tell me I need to bread something else and cook it. It just goes on and on. They give me 3 or 4 things to do at once and act like I'm slow.

Maybe I am slow. I don't know. I'm just done wishing I could socialize. Wishing I had money. Wishing I had a car. Something besides a McJob. A girlfriend. You know I'm still a virgin, right? No matter what I do, people treat me like shit and act like I'm retarded. Try to fuck me over for 20 minutes of work a day. Try to pay me minimum wage. Try to withhold my paycheck from me because I take off work for one day even though I've had great attendance up to that point.

My mom's girlfriend drinks a twelve pack of beer every day. She is always a cunt. I can't stand living in the house with her. She keeps telling me I need to move out. Acting like I'm choosing not to go to college, choosing to have poor social skills, choosing to not have a car. Choosing to work minimum wage. Her dad is practically a millionaire and bought her a car, paid for her college degree, etc. I can't even have my door open because when she walks by she slams it closed like I'm a dog or some shit. I don't say a word to her when I walk by. She always bitches about me living here, never says anything positive.

I didn't mention this earlier in this posting but I tried counseling and it didn't seem to be working after 3 or 4 times visiting the counselor. Then my mom got lazy and just stopped taking me altogether.

I've been wanting to kill myself since I was 13 and I just keep waiting and waiting and waiting for things to get better, but it's not going to happen. I tried 4 jobs. They all fuck me over. They all make me feel like shit. I can't even relax at home because I have an alcoholic bitch constantly telling me to GTFO. I don't know what to do. I don't know who to ask for help. I can barely communicate with people. It's about time I just "pull the trigger", so to speak."

9.10.5 My life.

"I remember falling down the stairs when I was two years old. Mostly, I remember my Mum's scream. There's not much beyond that, until the day I went to Montessori school. There were pitchers of water and white shelves. Biscuits with milk. A man with a beard. A peg with a parallelogram on it, and "Rosie" in peach writing. My peg. I studied the other children playing and the world entered me through my eyes. I was not a part of it but observing, quietly. A shy child.

Then it goes blank, the memory stops. My Mum tells me that I screamed for hours without stopping and didn't stop until I was taken into the kitchen, away from the others. When she collected me to bring me home, I sat in front of the TV, mute. I didn't speak to her for days. She thought most of me had died in that school. She thought she had in some way killed me.

I remember watching Sleeping Beauty and The Last Unicorn on the TV. Then wetting myself. My Mum shouting. Feeling all kinds of pain and confusion and dampness.

The next memories are mainly of waking in the night with various kinds of itching and yeast infections with no obvious cause. Being woken because I'd wet the bed. This went on for years without explanation.

I think I liked the school. I remember playing with metal cars in a sand box but I don't recall anyone else being there.

My parents insist that I was very popular, and friends came to my house, but all my memories cut out other children. There is never anyone there. If they are vaguely present, they are a weird smudge, faceless, just a prop to continue my own narration.

My parents' fighting got worse. I took care of my little brother when he came along. We sat on the stairs and I covered his ears. The most comforting sound I could hear was the TV muttering away downstairs as I fell asleep. The worst was silence because it meant Mum had left again and Dad was quietly raging. The second worst was smashing plates. Or swearing. Or the door slamming. Or Dad's sighing.

At Primary School, I had an uncomfortable uniform and a lot of new people to shout at me, seemingly at random. Adults and children. It didn't much matter because I had discovered reading and writing. If I wasn't pouring thoughts into an exercise book, I had my head buried in someone else's words. Or standing at the very edge of the playground, playing imaginary games in my head.

At home, I sat with the door open to my doll's house and played with the mum, dad, two kids. Put the girl in the cupboard under the stairs, tore her dress. Set the rest up at the dinner table. Covered the girl in red lipstick after I threw her down the stairs. Called her the servant, called her worthless, called her bad. Stripped my Barbie dolls naked and tortured them, except for the prettiest one.

My best friend, Jade, rejected me in about Class Three because I wasn't very cool. I was very popular as a kid, people liked me a lot, but I was strange and as I got older they could all sense that I might bring them down. I wrote about it two years later for an assignment and my teacher read it out to the class, leaving out Jade's name, but she held the book at such an angle that Jade could see it, and it got me into a lot of trouble. I spilled a glass of milk before school and my Mum beat me with a wooden spoon. I started picking up my guinea pigs and cuddling them because I knew she wouldn't risk injuring them. "Stop hiding behind animals and face up to what you've done". I think I was four.

Scrubbed the kitchen floor during a period of silent treatment. My brother was taken to the cinema. "My well behaved child". "My good child". The bad one stayed in the house. My Dad was never home. When he was, he would stick up for me. She threatened to leave him and he joined her side.

I texted him when I was fourteen and she had pushed me down the stairs. I said "please help me". He didn't reply. I started screaming because I couldn't do anything else. She immediately dialled 999. "If I don't speak to the police the neighbours will call". She said her daughter was attacking her. She locked me in the kitchen. I raged and tried to break the glass window to get out. I just cut my hands up. I hid in a cupboard, bloodied. The police came in and told me to get up. Told me they'd seen the bite marks I gave my Mum (she gave herself). Told me I had a nice house and a nice middle class family and most kids have nothing. Looked at the self harm scars I started inflicting at eleven years old and told me I was spoilt. Told me I'd be prosecuted for assault.

I never screamed again.

Boys at school detected my weakness. They eventually spent the hour lunch break dropping encyclopaedias onto my head to try to make me respond. I said catatonic, staring into space, doing nothing. Someone reported it. I skipped all my classes. Hid in the music rooms, listening to strains from other children's playing. Cutting my arms. Once I cut "leave me alone". Let it soak my school jumper so it stuck to it. At school, at home, especially at night. It didn't feel right to wake in the morning without my pyjamas stuck to an open wound.

I was losing all my friends and living inside my own head. I was no longer friendly or happy, I forgot what happiness was or could ever be. Eventually I stopped going to school altogether. Mum caught me and I had to go to meetings. She asked "do you know how this makes me look?". I got given some time off school due to suspected mental health problems. I was paraded in front of an endless selection of counsellors that my Mum insisted I see. She tried to make me go for crystal healing. I kept telling her that I was this way because of her, and she would accuse me of blaming her. I started drinking all day and she called me a disgusting, worthless alcoholic who would eventually die a junkie.

I was trapped in the house with her and it was worse than having school. As bad as school had been, home was worse and getting worse.

I was regularly overdosing on anything I could get my hands on and trying to cut badly enough to bleed out, but nothing worked. It wasn't a cry for help because no one knew. I just put on a brave face and tortured myself in private. I became my own abuser. I was at least in control of the pain I was in.

A lot more happened in the meantime. Boyfriends. On a camping trip, a friend's boyfriend put his hand down my pants without permission and told me to keep quiet about it. I dropped art lessons because seeing him made me feel ashamed.

At thirteen, my closest friend faked a suicide attempt for attention because she was sad a boy didn't want her. I called her mum and got her medical attention that she didn't need. Lara lied and said I'd made it all up. Her mum called my mum. Said I was poisonous. Lara told her mum everything about me, about my depression and self harm, and portrayed me as a crazy person who'd corrupted her. To protect herself. She sold me out. I had all my notebooks and music taken, wasn't allowed out of the house, wasn't allowed to shut my bedroom door. I had to undress into my swimming costume in front of my mum every day to prove I hadn't cut myself.

Mum told the school. My head of year pulled me in for a meeting and said "either you see the counsellor or you show me your arms and show you haven't cut yourself". She pulled up my sleeves. "Either you go or I report this to your mother".

The counsellor made me look at figures on a tree and pick which once I was. There was one hanging so I picked that. She told me not to be so melodramatic. The next time she told me to pick, I said nothing. They called me uncooperative and sulky and moody.

I began running away sometimes. It would get too much at home. All my stuff was there, my security, but the fear of my mum would be so strong that I would sneak out of the front door and run and run. I would end up nowhere. I would stay there, feeling strong and in control, wondering where I could go, knowing I could go anywhere, and then realising there was nowhere I could go. I would shuffle back home. I would go back into the warm house. I would slide into my bed and cry silently until it was time to get up for school.

I still got straight As all the time because it was the only thing I could do right.

At seventeen, I went to college to do art against everyone's advice. "You wanted to be a doctor, why can't you stay on and do A Levels?". I just wanted to survive and I wanted to get out of the school buildings where so much had happened. I didn't want to bump into the people who'd bullied me any more. I didn't want to see my head of year around the corridors. I wanted to be free.

I did art and did well.

But I left out a part.

When I was fourteen, I met people from the internet. A self harm support site. They became my only friends. We would meet once a month and drink and take drugs. We would get so trashed we were barely living anymore. Only then could we cry and hug each other and somehow connect. We all wanted to destroy ourselves on the outside but inside we just wanted love. And we could give it to each other once we got so intoxicated that it didn't matter.

But I got a call, at eighteen. One of those friends had died. She had choked on her own vomit in her sleep during an overdose. She had not been saved. Through all my attempts, all my self destruction, I was there.. living.. and Libby was gone. Forever. The girl who had gone to hospital with me when I'd been picked up by police for being so drunk, who'd hugged me when no one else would, who could sense my mood slipping behind my mask where no one else could... she had gone.

It was so fucking unfair.

I didn't go to college, I went to a friend's house. I stayed there for 2 months and did ketamine and drank every night. I slept with her and her housemate. I cried on my own at night when no one else was awake. I cleaned their house. I fell in love with the housemate who couldn't love anyone. I fucked him because it hurt me. I missed my interview for Cambridge University that I had worked so hard for, and been awarded despite everything. It didn't matter, I thought, because I'd be dead soon anyway.

I left out three boyfriends: Andi, Mike and Joe. Andi had testicular torsion and lost his testicles at thirteen so had to take testosterone medication. He'd forget it somedays and then take loads at once. It made him aggressive and emotionless. He would alternate between sweet vulnerability and insisting he was a sociopath. I eventually left him. Mike had a violent mother who had lost the child before him, so had a house full of dolls (every room was packed) that she would work endlessly on, as a substitute. Mike stayed in the attic and the only visitor he ever had was me. His previous girlfriend had abused him, so he spat on me during sex and called me a worthless pig. He thought that was just sex play. I didn't know a lot better. He would often punch or break things. If I beat him at a game, or got better at something than he was, or knew something he didn't, he wouldn't speak to me for a week. He would say "fuck you, worthless pig" and block my phone number, MSN and any other contact. It taught me never to try to be better than a man. It was not my place.

Joe wanted a perfectly submissive girlfriend. He wanted me to ask his permission to use the toilet. He wanted to own me completely and eventually kill me. I cut all contact with him but he still pursues me.

I gathered around me a group of men who I knew were bad for me. I hoped they'd help me kill myself by encouraging my bad habits, or maybe even losing their temper and going too far and putting me out of my misery. My life had no value to me at all.

Amidst all this, I felt I had to try. I got myself a place at a top ten university. I helped my entire Art class get into university by doing all their applications with them. They were massively grateful. Because I can never entirely fuck up, I can get so far down and then... then I have to rise up again, be who I am fucking meant to be.

A month before I was due to leave for university, I met my previous ex. He had an abusive mother. He had a dad with dementia. He had a crazy sister. He had a troubled brother. He had a weed addiction. He needed me and I was happy getting stoned with him. But when I left for university, I panicked. Everything was going OK. But it wasn't me, didn't fit. I wandered the campus alone, too scared to make friends, terrified of everyone, lonely. I heard whispering outside my room at all times and stopped leaving it. I knew everyone hated me.

The boyfriend picked me up with all my stuff and drove me home. On the way, the stars were so clear over the countryside that you could see the milky way.

My dad lost his temper for the first time in my life. He called me an unemployed parasitic failure. I wanted to make peace with my mum before killing myself, so I wrote her a letter saying I wanted to try to build a relationship with her despite everything. She came into my room in the middle of the night and spat on it and ripped it and threw it in my face. I cried as I packed up my stuff, called my boyfriend and moved in with him and his parents.

I lived in his bedroom for a few months. His mum would wake him most days, crying and shouting that he was a bastard. Saying he helped her with nothing. He would cry in my arms, not sure how to reconcile his guilt about doing nothing round the house with the hate he felt because of her beating him as a child. I talked him through his abusive ex gf. Sat up til four am as his friends smoked endless spliffs. I became less than a person, doing nothing I wanted to do, even wearing his clothes. Sitting on his bed. Fucking him when he needed. Barely knowing who or what I was.

He began getting nasty. He got frustrated that I was sad all the time. Shouted at me. Said I was too much to deal with. Began teasing me and calling me stupid. The explosions became regular and he shouted at me every single day. I'd clam up, go mute and shake and back into a corner. He would shout at me more and slam the door and drive away in his car to get stoned. I would sit on a strange floor, alone, in a house that was never cleaned, trying to care for the dogs that the family neglected, trying to care for them because I looked at them and saw myself.

I got myself another university place because I was trying to save myself. I talked my way onto the course. It was Diagnostic Radiography. I loved it. I cared for the patients, I took good x-rays, I studied and worked my fucking arse off. I loved my uniform, I loved the routine of going to the hospital. I was happy.

My flatmates partied every night and didn't clean up after themselves. When I objected, they threatened to beat me up and set their dealer friends on me, so I had to move rooms. They didn't have a room immediately, so I moved room twice in the space of a few days, while still studying and working at the hospital.

My boyfriend was still with me and I was used to his anger by now. "I only get angry at you because I love you so much". "You make me angrier than any other person". "You wind me up".

Moving into second year, my room was no longer available. My boyfriend and I went to a festival. I went to see Slipknot because he didn't want to go. During a song, we all crouched down on the ground then leapt up together. It felt amazing. I came back to the campground, buzzing, exhilarated. In relaying the story to my boyfriend, I said "the crowd was so packed, I was practically sitting on some guy's knee!". He said "you fucking WHAT?" and shoved me so hard I stumbled backwards. He then stormed off. I burst into tears. His friends comforted me. They were initially angry at him, but over time it faded into "well I doubt he meant it that way", "he's a good guy, he wouldn't do it on purpose". I felt alone again. They'd seen his dark side and still couldn't believe it.

He came back to the tent and cried and begged me not to leave him. I said I had to. I had to stay at his parents' that night. He played Staind and Nickelback and "our songs" over and over, weeping. I felt so guilty I broke and hugged him. I promised I loved him and would not leave.

I went to look at housing options, as my room was not available. I didn't want to go back to living with strangers because of the people threatening to beat me up before. The only option was a house that cost £750 a month. They said "why not live with your boyfriend?". I felt my heart sink. I had been wanting to break up with him after gaining some distance. We discussed it in private and he said that if I didn't live with him it obviously meant I didn't love him. I didn't want to hurt him. I said OK.

As I signed the contract, a phone call came through to the housing manager. She said "your room just became available.. are you sure you don't want it?". I looked at my boyfriend and said "no".

Living with him was hell. He did nothing round the house. He cried due to his weed addiction. He expected me to be available to entertain him and provide him with sex but if I wanted something when he already had plans, he called me needy. He expected me to cook for him. He expected me to do his washing for him. I was too scared to upset him to do anything wrong, and I did love him, and I did want to help.

My patient had a cardiac arrest around the anniversary of Libby's suicide. I watched the woman falling out of existence, gripped her hand, told her it'd all be okay, watched her blood coming out of the site where they stuck a massive needle in her. Then someone came in and said I had to go back to work. Sent me to take x-rays. When I went back to the room, in my break, all that was left of Margaret was a blood stain on the floor. No one told me what happened to her. I went into the toilets and looked at my own face in the mirror and felt it moving further and further away. I couldn't cry. I was just nothing, really.

An eight month old baby came in with a classic bucket handle fracture to her arm and I knew the dad had done it on purpose because I just knew. I reported it and everyone said "but he seems a nice bloke, you're making something out nothing surely?". I saw the little girl leave, in her pretty little hair band, with her big sad eyes. I saw me. Everyone I can't save. I went home and cut my arm for the first time in years. My boyfriend called up to ask me to watch TV. I wrapped the cuts in a sock and smiled at him as I came into the room. Sucked his cock. Fell asleep in his arms and dreamt of children dying because of my lack of backbone. I should've pushed. Done something. I was evil.

I tried to go to work and one day found that I couldn't. I went to go to the hospital. I got dressed. I sat on my bed and wept. Bawled my fucking eyes out. Went to the university and cried and cried and cried. They said to have some time off.

The time I missed, I'd have to make up during my summer break. Shortening that.

All I needed was a pause, some time to myself, but it'd make everything worse.

I tried to force myself to keep going. I spent more and more time in the toilets in the hospital. I started seeing Margaret's ghost in the corridors, seeing her blood flash onto the floor then vanish again.

I asked to work a four day week. I made myself calm and presentable. I knew if I kept doing five days I would kill myself. I spent all my time alone making plans and punching and cutting myself. In my boyfriend's view, I made pasta bakes and mopped the floor and took care of the cat. At the hospital, I x-rayed people with a smile, took criticism that I was "quite shy" on the chin, told everyone I'd try to be better.

The university said if I worked a four day week I'd have less hours under my belt than the other students and would fuck up their statistics. They would not legally be able to say "all our students complete 750 hours of clinical training". No, they said, you have to do the same as everyone else.

"But I need a break" I screamed inside my head. At work, I'm seeing blood and guilt everywhere. At home, my boyfriend is abusing and taking advantage. I am surrounded and caged by my memories. I am trapped and I am going to explode and the fire will take me.

I left the course. I found myself a new course.

I persuaded Geography to take me. Started again. Started with a bunch of 18 year olds, me now being 23. I put on a happy face.

I decided to leave my boyfriend because he had cheated on me again. I told him to leave the house. I was beginning a new course of study, still reeling from yet another failure, still trying to deal with everything that had happened, and he refused to leave. Stayed in the house. Came to my room with bloodied arms, saying he would kill himself without me. "Look how you're making me feel". I broke again and lay in his bed, cuddling him. I said sorry but I couldn't take him back. His friends messaged me, calling me heartless. I attended all my lectures but reality was slipping away from me.

I wrote an essay on completely the wrong topic and it came back with a question mark on it.

My boyfriend finally moved out. I began seeing a counsellor, saying I must be a sociopath because I couldn't feel my emotions any more.

A girl from the website started talking to me again, invited me to hers for new years eve, told me I could try MDMA for the first time. She gave it to me and everything dropped away. Everything I wrote above disappeared. I was happy. I could not remember ever, ever being happy.

Then it wore off and all I wanted to do was to feel something, anything, so I started taking a lot of speed. In early January, I had taken so much and so much caffeine that I ended up lying in a bath with no water in it, convinced if I moved I would strangle my cat to death.

I glued salt onto my fingernails to ward off Margaret's ghost. I poured lines of salt around all the doorways.

I said the lord's prayer as I left each room. If I didn't, she would get me.

I got admitted to hospital after many assessments and visitations. I was there three weeks and didn't tell anyone. I didn't tell my parents until I was discharged.

A guy in hospital wanted to be my boyfriend. I let him finger me when the nurses weren't looking. He said we should have sex. I said no. He said yes. He pulled down my pyjama trousers and put his penis in me. I said no. He stopped. I lost all trust for that environment.

I got out of hospital and had lost my place at university because I had missed lectures. I got angry because they told me I needed to go to hospital to have some time for myself, but it had made things worse.

My friend who gave me MDMA told me to move to her town. I began looking for work and eventually got myself a room and a job there. The day before I moved, she started a

fight with me because she thought I was stealing her friends, as her friends had begun hanging out with me independently of her. She cut all contact.

I moved into a room with a house full of strangers in a new place and started my job, alone, I began drinking again.

At the end of the month, I moved in with two of my "ex friend"s friends, St and Sy. St and Sy had been friends for ten years. St and I had been having sex for a few months, mainly under the influence of MDMA or cocaine. Just before we moved in together, he said we had to stop having sex because it would get weird. I felt rejected and did a gram of cocaine on my own, in the house, then started coming down and tried to run away. I got to the airport but a friend I'd been messaging had tipped off the police. The armed coppers told me to go with them. They said they thought I was a suicide risk and I was to go with them. I was searched and processed and put in a cell for six hours because there were no psychiatrists to assess me and no hospital beds.

I lay on a plastic bed in a windowless room, alone with my own thoughts. I ended up banging my head on the wall and crying. Someone came and I poured out everything to him. He said the only way I'd get out was if I pretended to be OK. I said I understood.

The psychiatrists assessed me and I put on my best sane face. I walked out the door of the police station into the darkness. I went back to my room and packed to move house. The next day, I had a miscarriage from a pregnancy I didn't know I was in possession of. St's miscarriage.

I had a new job that would begin two days after moving in with St and Sy. I managed to get everything unpacked and my room painted. I managed to conceal my emotional state from them.

St and I started going out drinking. We started having sex again.

He says he only loves me as a friend. Cuddles me in the mornings after we've been drinking ourselves half to death the night before. Shows me tiny pieces of guarded affection. Pushes me away and pulls me back. Tortures me without realising.

On Saturday, I got up out of bed because I couldn't take it. He pulled me back and put his dick back inside me. I started crying immediately. He got upset and I ended up comforting him, assuring him it wasn't rape. But it was.

I took two days off work for a migraine and was pulled into a meeting saying if I took any more sick days I'd be fired. It wasn't just a migraine but I'd been hallucinating and cutting myself. I didn't say that.

One of my colleagues admitted he's in love with me and sent me messages saying "I swore I'd never do this to myself, fall for someone unattainable, I am so worthless". I feel guilty.

I am signed off work for two weeks but I need to go back on Monday because sick pay doesn't pay enough and I will get into more debt. I got signed off because I tried to go into work and ended up crying in Dan's car en route. He spoke to my boss and I got permission for an emergency doctor's appointment. She told me I desperately need intensive psychiatric appointments and I can't go on like this. But now I've realised I'll lose money, I have no choice.

I try to pick up my life. try to start again. but something always happens. i am doing my best. i am not a fuck up. but i feel like one. my birthday is the 28th. i will not reach it.

in 2010, when i was with that boyfriend, he tried giving up weed. he couldn't hack it, it made him too anxious. so he wouldn't lose face with his weed smoking friends, he told them i had pressured him into giving it up. he sent me to my parents "for the night" so he could go to a party. he never showed up in the morning. he wouldn't pick up his phone. his friends answered, saying "leave him alone, crazy girl". he'd told them all i was nuts. eventually, he got in touch. he told me he'd meet up with me if i fucked him. he drove me out to an industrial estate and stopped. i cried, asked for a hug. he said "no" and began kissing me. we had sex and he drove me home. left me in my room. ignored me again. i stopped eating, stopped sleeping. saw my mum's car keys on the shelf, took them. started driving. put on a song. at the crescendo, turned the steering wheel full lock at 120mph and drove into the central reservation of the a41. woke up with a mouth full of glass shards. called 999. said it was an accident. had my whole family yell at me. told them i'd just been trying to go to speak to my boyfriend.

i should be dead. "

9.10.6 [REALLY Long Read] I have to get this off my chest to someone who cannot put me in a hospital

"[TW: This contains explicit descriptions of suicide methods]

I feel like I somehow broke myself by overthinking everything. I feel like the world is on a TV screen whose knobs I am trying to turn but it keeps going too far one way or the other so all the colors get incredibly saturated and then I try to turn the knob back and for a flash the picture is perfect and then snow. Or I'm at the helm of some huge android and trying to control it and I can't. I feel so disconnected from my body and so out of control of my actions. Like I'm watching a TV show about some especially terrible and broken person, and every time they hit some new low I am shocked at that other persons behavior, like it's fake and happening to someone else. Like I'll do something awful and I think "huh, I guess I am the kind of person who does things like this. Didn't know that before. NOW I DO". I am only able to get away with being the way I am because I am young and cute and a girl. Were I not these things, I straight up might be a sex offender. I get so sexually aggressive I feel like I can't control it, and drinking so much doesn't help. I have approximately zero truly platonic friendships, and the ones I do have I usually don't consider "personal", in the same way that friends I don't drink/use drugs with are not "personal" friendships. I realize this is wrong and feel unable to correct it. I feel isolated because I know my ways of thinking and connecting with others, and of managing my own life and emotions, are VERY different from others, and I feel as though I'm forced to choose between pretending (usually pretty unsuccessfully) that I'm normal, or exposing what I'm like and passing it off as "quirky" for as long as I can before the crazy breaks through. I am astounded that I have the friends I do. I am a fucking MESS. I destroy friendships. I am obsessed with my own trauma to the exclusion of all else. I get focused on "survivor mode", where I just try and make sure I'll be okay the next couple days, during times and situations where that is (I think?) not okay. I think about suicide constantly, all day, every day, and it feels like a relief. Like thinking about water in the desert is a relief. I want to do it with

a gun, a headshot, as clean as possible. I'll leave a note, probably several – a general, public one saying “nobody's fault, it was mental illness, I'm in a happier place, I love you all, there was nothing you could have done”, and one at least for my parents, and probably short notes to close friends. I want to minimize blame as much as possible, which is why if I do go through with this, it will be a serious time commitment to write notes. I want to ACTUALLY explain, what I feel like all the time. I want to both escape my own pain but honestly fix others. I know things like my parents are too late, killing myself will hardly help them, but they have my sister at least. She will hopefully not be destroyed. I know it'll fuck her up for a while but she at least has a career and passions and good friends and that sort of thing. I just don't know where I'd get the gun. I can't get one legally (felon), and any illegal method would FUCK UP the person who provided it to me. Maybe legally. Wouldn't want a friend thrown in prison for my fucking suicide. And other methods don't appeal to me. I talk about the head-in-a-microwave thing but nobody would understand and the trauma of the death would fuck other people up too much. For some reason, I don't like carbon monoxide – maybe because of that Six Feet Under episode, I guess. I don't understand why every time something stresses me out (school, the future, my parents, but ESPECIALLY deadlines) I start obsessively reading about dealing with rape and abuse. It's like stress at all brings me back to it. And I can't look it up online because since PTSD has the word stress in it it just brings up general results instead of like, unrelated stresses always being “triggering” fuck do I hate that word. I just don't want to self diagnose and be like I HAVE ALL THESE PROBLEMS LOL when like. I don't want to minimize what I've been through but it really was not that bad and everyone has problems and things are basically mostly okay right now. I hate being the white college girl lying in her bed being like I'M SOOOOO UNHAPPY. I think I've done too many drugs and I'm just broken now. But that's stupid too. I've never done meth or heroin or anything, I've only even done cocaine a few times. Just a mind boggling amount of alcohol and weed and pills and shit. But I feel like it's not even drugs, I'm addicted to the feeling of FEELING like I can control my own feelings. God that sounds stupid. I'm addicted to the actual doing of drugs, of putting them in my body and thinking “now I know what I'm going to feel like and it's because of something I did. And it will stay that way for a while.” And sex is like that too. Sometimes I feel like the world is so stimulating it's overwhelming and I need drugs to numb it, sometimes I feel fucking numb and the extremeness of being wasted is necessary to feel ANYTHING. And sex is sometimes so overwhelming I can't avoid it and sometimes it's the only thing I can feel. And I use sex to disassociate. It's why I like to rile guys up to a certain kind of frenzy before/during sex, so we can both kind of “lose ourselves”, and not all guys do it and I get frustrated when they don't. Which is shitty because it's not a good quality, a guy who gets so into sex he stops realizing whether the girl is into it or totally in a dark space in her own mind and barely present for the actual activity, but I crave it. I crave it so much. I get off on other people not being able to resist me and ruining their lives to be with me (like people in positions of authority over me, or people with partners they are genuinely committed to), and I guess some of it is vanity like it's a compliment because they're willing to give stuff up to be with me but it's also a weird power thing. Like being able to control them. And this feeling of vindictive anger, like I'm not the one with something to lose, it's

their bad choice, it's their mistake. And I get stuck on goals and then I want to "achieve" them only the achievement is people and once I've gotten it I'm bored and done. And by that time the only person has screwed up their life to be with me and then sometimes I roll with it sort of. I kind of stop respecting people, in a way, after they show sexual interest in me. I can't tell if I'm a sociopath, I feel like I'm somehow not a real person. Lately I've been falling apart at the seams and I know it's showing, I know people can see. I drink constantly and fuck or try to fuck everyone and am constantly on drugs and broke because I don't have a job because I don't apply because I'm scared of getting rejected because of my criminal record and shitty work history.

I cannot think of a way out except for suicide. I cannot live this way. I don't think I can stop. I just want to know WHEN. When I broke, when everything was ruined, when I lost all fucking chance at happiness and normalcy. Did it happen recently? When I got arrested the first time? High school? Drugs? Maybe I've ALWAYS been this way. Compulsive, deceitful. Maybe the problem is I never properly left childhood or adolescence. I feel like I've always, my whole life, been fascinated and obsessed with the loss of innocence. I've tried hard to make myself into this person who knows about the seedy side of life, and now I fucking succeeded and it's too late to go back. I understand what Justin meant. I think about killing other people a lot too because I figure if I'm going to kill myself I might as well take a few assholes with me. Luke. But he's just crazy, he might not even know or understand what he did. I could go political. But that's put a spotlight on my family. My fucking family. Who love and support me and TIE ME HERE. I'm impatient with life, I'm anxious to just fucking get it over with. I don't fit here. If I could just stop THINKING, everything would be fine, but I just can't stop ever. I cannot control my own thoughts. What the fuck.

And I'm just crazy. I'm worried I've started seeing things that aren't there again. I don't tell anyone except my girlfriend sometimes and she sort of doesn't make a big deal of it, chalks it up to smoking or insomnia. It's minor, just shapes and spiders that aren't there and stuff and they go away when I stare at them. But sometimes they are worse and sometimes they are better and they get worse when I am worse I think. I also hear things that are not there, low level noises like a ringing phone when there isn't one, that kind of thing. My entire life, all adults have told me I am unusually intelligent, that I could probably join mensa if I bothered getting tested. When I am relatively emotionally stable I easily excel in school. I'm able to get away with putting close to zero effort towards that kind of thing and still do really well and have people think I work my ass off. I start thinking that maybe the problem is that I am smarter than literally almost everyone I know and then my psychiatrist backs it up by randomly telling me I'm so much smarter than him it freaks him out and I feel like another anchor has been cut to reality and I'm just adrift, totally unable to measure the world or know if I'm perceiving reality wrong. I am because my brain has more connections than it is supposed to. I secretly have hoped that by doing drugs I can make myself stupider and I'll get more normal. But I'm starting to think that's not how brain damage works. SURPRISE. I love being told I am smart because it's validating and I feel proud, and it gives me a way to feel sort of superior about being different, like I can't fit in because I'm better than them, and it allows me to justify bad behavior because I sort of think of people with average intelligence as being like farm animals, you can sort of do what

you want to them. Moral rules don't apply because they aren't on the same level of consciousness.

But then everyone seems to think I am okay. Which is because I have gone to extremely great lengths and been VERY dishonest with pretty much everyone I know to maintain that illusion. And yet it still sort of makes me think that maybe I am okay? Like maybe this is a choice I just don't realize that I'm making and if I just like... stop, somehow. I think that's why I'm not really into taking medication or doing therapy, even though I recommend it for others. I strongly feel that this is something I need to just get over, that I am indulging myself by allowing so much time for something so frivolous, and that I am creating problems so I can pity myself. I'm not sure if this is real. I don't know who I am. I don't know if consistency exists or if I am a person at all. I am obsessed with Notes from Underground and feel it describes me perfectly. My family and friends, by the way, all know I have problems with mental illness, and sometimes I'll tell them I feel depressed or hypomanic (I tell people I am diagnosed as bipolar to explain my mood swings. It's possible I am, I suppose. I lie so much I feel diagnoses are inaccurate, and my moral problems make them irrelevant.) They just have zero idea how bad it is. I believe I should maybe be institutionalized, I sure as hell need drug treatment, but I DO NOT WANT THESE THINGS so I hide hide hide so nobody puts me in a mental hospital or a drug rehab place or a prison where I belong. I think about hurting and killing other people, not so much I think I am like an immediate danger, but enough that I scare myself sometimes. I am so out of control of my own actions.

I have problems with lying. I have consistently lied to therapists. I feel unable to be honest (though I think I have done perfectly in here) because I shift so much I am not a real person so making concrete statements about myself that are not really vague and general is impossible to do without lying. I also hide my drug problems from them as I have abused prescription medication before. I have a complicated relationship with pills. My parents are both psychiatrists. I sometimes comb the DSM trying to figure out what the fuck is wrong with me, and sometimes I don't believe in psychiatry at all. I don't put much stock in diagnoses anyway because I've read too much and I know it's all fucking arbitrary. Sometimes I really think I have something and sometimes I am positive I don't. I've been depressed before I guess. I practically failed out at the end of middle school because of it. I have ADHD, bad, and have problems taking medication responsibly. Medication doesn't fix everything anyway. I've been on a big range of anti depressants and mood stabilizers. My psychiatrist thinks I might be bipolar, I think I suggested it, but I don't know if I believe in psychiatry at all honestly. I feel I use my own mental illness as an excuse to act poorly and I suspect everyone else does the same thing. I never told my therapist in high school about the "complexities" of my relationship at the time. Since then I have never attempted to actually explain our relationship HONESTLY to anyone, ever. I've talked about it at length I just leave parts out I feel nobody would understand. My boyfriend and I experimented with BDSM in a way that was not healthy and it led to a lot of problems with consent. "Problems with consent". Rape is a problem with consent. Are there other kinds? I can't really tell if I've been raped or not I guess. Feminists would say I was. Sometimes I literally can't remember what happened. I was drinking a lot by the end so my actual memories are distorted. Sometimes I re-remember things that I'd buried for years. Sometimes I get

fuzzy and I can't tell if something happened or not, or how I was feeling. And of course I leave out my role. I feel that "predatory" is a word that often describes me well. My boyfriend at the time was even more predatory than me. I feel like it was a lot of what made us feel close to one another. Our methods of dealing with the other women we included in our relationship were probably not healthy. Neither were our methods of defining boundaries around our open relationship. We were both big on emotional blackmail. My boyfriend would hit me in the face in front of people and we'd just tell them we were into BDSM, which we were. They at least pretended to believe us, I don't think they understood what was happening and were scared by it but I am good at convincing people I am happy and in control. I have no idea what people thought. Now I feel shitty about the fact that nobody stepped in but how could they possibly know? I barely knew. I would allow BF to indulge his interest in BDSM in a way that made me feel unhappy and unsafe because I thought he would leave me otherwise. I don't think he realized that. He did openly blackmail me into having sex with him and told me he would leave me otherwise. He would tell me I was fat and that nobody would love me other than him. I drank every day. I cried at home and at school. The first day of college orientation they acted out scenes of abuse and I cried for hours and couldn't stop. Every time I had finals or midterms I would spend hours reading stories of abuse and rape and crying. Now I tell people I was abused but I don't tell them about the BDSM part. My issues around sex and control are so big I can't even wrap my head around them. I used to cry during sex all the time, with BF. I literally had no idea why. I can't remember when it started. I lied and told him I'd been abused before to explain it because I felt so ashamed that I couldn't stop. And not like, just tears during sex or whatever. I'd disassociate COMPLETELY. Randomly. During sex. Usually I'd cry but I'd try and be quiet so he wouldn't notice. He'd stop if he did. At first he'd get really concerned. Sometimes I wouldn't be able to handle him touching me or would freak out and ask him to get the fuck out. That's what happened the first time I gave him head. I screamed at him a couple times. Sometimes I would say "get your belt and beat me for x long, and when I cry just keep going and ignore it". I've kind of repressed all these memories. So maybe NONE of this is caused by him and I just sort of chalk it up to that because then it makes sense. It would happen after him too though it hasn't happened in a long time. I think maybe I control it now so it doesn't surprise me. Especially since I "let it out" sometimes. And that happened "before", I think? Before he went crazy and everything turned bad? Except I'm not sure there is a before and after now – he pressured me into sex from the beginning, way before he was bipolar. I can't even remember anymore, the storyline. I lie to simplify because my life doesn't really make sense and I can't remember it. I feel I am bad at determining cause and effect. I feel like a passive viewer of my own life. BF pressured me into having sex before I was ready. I think that's pretty common, though. I really enjoy sex now. Sometimes I think I enjoy it in a healthy way? I am very predatory but men often seem to like it. I think most of them have never experienced being "pursued". I strongly identify as a "bad girl". I like BDSM in a way that is not quite sexual. I like shocking people. I like being a fantasy because fantasies are 2-D and then I feel I know what I am supposed to do and act like, unlike most of the time when I am lost and adrift. And I sort of like being dissociated. My sexual fantasies often stop being sexual halfway through and become the two people

screaming at each other in rage and fighting in a way that isn't really sexual. I don't find "traditional" BDSM appealing. I like revealing that I do like very intense BDSM to someone who would not expect it to be sort of arousing (not generally, like right now, but the "big reveal" is a really really big sexual fantasy for me. The reveal of ANYTHING shocking or bad or terrible. Making people realize that I am "bad" instead of "good". Maybe it's because I crave connection and feel that I cannot connect with people who think I am good because they fundamentally misunderstand me and who I am. A girl called me out at a bar in front of a bunch of people the other day: "I think your behavior is really inappropriate, and I think you know it". And afterwards everyone reassured me that the bitch was crazy and didn't really like anyone and blah blah but she was fucking DEAD ON. And nobody else realized it. And I felt sort of... fulfilled. Like finally someone saw me for who I was. I am in a very serious committed relationship. We have an open relationship in which I am the only one who seeks out other partners. I do not always tell her about mine although we agreed to be open. I am not always consistent about protection, though I have been lately. My girlfriend is transgender and came out/started transitioning after we had begun a serious relationship. I stayed with her. She is wealthy and without her I would probably be unable to afford my drug habit. Thus, I can't bring myself to break up with her, even though I want to. I also use her for emotional support. We don't really have a sex life anymore since she transitioned, though we try. We're hopeful things will get better as she transitions, but my lust for her is just gone. I try and pretend as best I can, because I feel guilty for using her money (her parents money, really) all the time and not even fucking her. I know she depends on me to not absolutely fall apart. She has no friends. Her only friend here is our mutual friend D, who has a girlfriend. We haven't slept together, but our relationship is very inappropriate. I have kept this secret from his girlfriend, who is also a friend, and from my girlfriend. Occasionally I truly think I am in love with GF. More and more I am admitting to myself than I'm using her. She is a crutch I cannot get rid of. I justify it to myself because I know she uses me too and makes a lot of her own very bad life choices. We enable each other – I put up with the fact that she doesn't go school or have a job or have any friends or do any activities, and she funds my drug habit. She also uses drugs and alcohol, maybe too much, but nothing on the scale that I have. I lie to my friends and tell them we are in love and very happy. I lie to GF and tell her I am in love and we are definitely going to be together forever. We talk at length about marriage and plans for the distant future, all the time. I genuinely meant it back when she was a boy. At times I do mean it but sex is so important to me I don't think I could. And she bores and annoys me sometimes. My plan is to commit suicide in my late twenties. I want to experience more of being very beautiful, because seduction gives me pleasure, but once it stops being easy I want to die. There is nothing else worth living for. I used to think I would live as long as I could because I could always do drugs, but they don't feel as good as they used to. And the withdrawl and shit is so much worse I can't handle it. Or afford it. I'm tired of money. My mother has told me she never broke up with a boyfriend before starting to date the next one too. I think I am like that. I like to have lots and lots of options. Keep several on the back burner, etc. The only time I've gone a long stretch without much sexual contact is when I was fat. I can explain things that happened in my past, and I guess it's

important, but doing so irritates me in a way. What I cannot explain is my experience NOW. I feel like I'm in an altered state of consciousness, permanently. Like I live inside of my head and my eyes are just windows I am watching out of. Sometimes I think I can't see anything except my thoughts. It's like I'm drowning inside of myself. That's when I'll stay in bed for days and days and do nothing. And then other times I feel like I am a bomb and I want to set myself off and don't know how quite. I imagine myself screaming in public in a quiet place or get stuck on imagining hurting other people repetitively and can't stop. Like I'll just think one thing, like the image of a pencil going into someone's leg, over and over, for days. And I can't STOP I CAN'T EVER FUCKING STOP DOING ANYTHING I JUST WANT EVERYTHING TO STOP. I feel somehow like I am a different size and shape from my body. I feel like the connection between my body and mind has been severed and I can't get it back. I want to go back to just being inside myself and I can't do it. I want to cut my body off of myself.

I think what I feel angry about is feeling stuck halfway through the membrane between sanity and insanity. Sometimes it's like if I can't have the former I just want the latter. Sometimes when everything gets crazy it's almost nice, I can totally escape reality because I don't even know what it is. Like crawling under the covers of my brain. I want to throw myself into insanity like you want to throw yourself off a bridge you're looking over. This instinct is sometimes what makes me quit meds, which I always do. I also physically dislike pills, and I'm tired of dealing with side effects, and I don't expect anything to work anyway. I have only had two serious relationships, the ones I've described above. Both involved being VERY in love with the other person, having a "perfect" early stage, and then having a huge bomb dropped after it was too late to get out. The first was BF having his first full blown manic episode. Things never went back to normal after that. The second was GF coming out as trans. I watch my own life with horror. I try and be loyal because I feel that I am a terrible person and being loyal to those nobody else can love is the only thing I am "good" at. I want to dedicate my life to improving prisons, I think that this is why. It is another way of addressing my guilt. Of course I can only do that if I don't go through with killing myself. I destroy myself to make others happy when I lose the ability to even feel happiness myself. It's like smelling food you can't eat. This is how I enjoy sex when I am depressed. Often it doesn't work and I end up crying. I ruin others lives and ruin myself for others. I cannot tell if I am selfish or selfless. I feel like my entire life is a lie and I just don't have the energy to keep living it."

9.10.7 Each day, each hour, each minute is just torture. I want it to end...

*"*This will be long... I'm on the fence, I just don't know what to do anymore. I'm so lost right now. A little back story. When I was a teenager, I struggled through High School with serious depression, no one knew, no one suspected, no one still knows. I put a fake smile on day after day, did my thing, no one was the wiser, but internally, I was fucked up. I was numb, I was in misery, I was in pain, and I wanted it to stop. I dropped out after a severe fracture of my shin caused me to be unable to go to school, so the school*

district sent a teacher to my house 3x a week (injury was their fault, it was a compromise the school district made in order to avoid a lawsuit as a teacher disregarded doctors orders). When I came back in my Junior year (I was out all of Sophomore year) I was in constant pain and on Vicodin, I had to use a cane, and I lost all motivation as learning on my own and using the teacher to help me with the stuff I couldn't figure out was really my learning style.

I missed 1-2 days a week, my Doctor would just fax a note to the school after each day, no questions asked because he hated the school after they injured me (this was a older doctor who really cared for his patients and he felt badly that I got fucked up after he figured out what was wrong) and the school said nothing. I started failing my classes. It wasn't mostly my fault, but partially. I knew I was lying to myself saying it wasn't my fault at all, but it was mostly the school. Teachers weren't obligated to help after class hours. So while I was behind, I tried during my study hall periods to get some extra instruction, and 2 of the teachers outright refused ("You didn't want to show up, why should I bother") one modified the curriculum for me as I knew the majority of the subject material already and the last one sat down and helped me as much as he could, he was coincidentally the teacher who home schooled me, and he was one of those teachers who cared and would do anything to help a student.

So I dropped out at the end of my Junior year when they wanted to put me back to Sophomore year as the Principal said it was that, or off the record, drop out and get my GED as all the teachers said I was extremely intelligent I just had no motivation. So i dropped out, got a job at Walmart (My mom's deal with me was she supported whatever decision I made, but I wasn't going to just sit around the house all day). I really enjoyed working at Walmart, I loved it, they bumped me up to full time within 2 months once the school district sent over a copy of my documentation stating I was no longer a student (not sure if it's company wide or just this store, but kids under 18 couldn't work more then 20 hours a week while in school) and I was in love with it. I met a friend there, and after a few weeks, we became best friends, and I had a entire new group of friends. I was still depressed, but it wasn't as severe... it was manageable. I started to become attracted to his sister, and asked him if he'd have a issue if I asked her out when I found out she broke up with her BF, and he said I was the only person to ask if he was cool with it, so he said ok. I only asked because I knew it pissed him off when guys dated his sister like it was their right to. They were very, very close. She didn't... answer. It was neither a yes or no, and to me, a maybe was better then a no.

Fast forward a year, we still weren't together, she hated me it seemed. Conversations were one sided, she only texted me or called me if she needed help, never to just... talk. I kept helping though because I am extremely loyal to people I consider friends, and I am also blind to people using me. It culminated in a huge fight Halloween '08. We all got really drunk, and she said something to another of my friends that I overheard, and I kinda just... lost it. I walked over to her and called her a fucking cunt and a whore. Everyone was shocked, I wasn't known to snap. I was the one who always kept their cool and kept all of us out of trouble, but I was also known as the most violent one. The 2 times I got involved in a fight with them against other groups, I was like a animal. When I get angry, it's like I take all my rage out on people, everything in the world blurs except the person I want to hurt. So they were shocked that no provocation set me off,

and they dragged me away from her, because they knew I had little self control once I got going.

I was in the garage with one of them and I heard my best friend going off on her, he was screaming at her that she is a fucked up person, I showed her nothing but love, I went out of my way for her, I'm the one who drove her to the hospital at 4am when he was in jail (their mom didn't have a license and their dad worked overnight) I got up and drove to them, picked her up and sat with her for 9 hours. He kept going for 2 hours, ranting like a lunatic, then came out and talked to me. He told me no one except her was mad at me, they were actually glad I called her out, and they kept me in the garage for her sake.

I kinda said fuck it at that point and drove home. I was fucked up, but I left, and they tried to stop me but couldn't. I didn't care if I crashed and died or got arrested. I didn't sleep, I sat in my room raging all morning. He called me around noon and I told him I was done, I quit my job, I didn't want to see them anymore, because she was always around, and it wouldn't be anger, it'd be sadness like it always had been. What I didn't tell him was I planned on taking my shotgun out into the woods later and offing myself.

I think he knew, later that night he called me and said he was on his way with booze, we were drinking. I couldn't say no, I never could to my friends. He basically moved in with me. Every night we hung out, he changed his hours of availability at Walmart to be 11am-7pm so he could hang out with me at night. He told me he knew why I didn't wanna hang out with them, so he'd hang out with me. He kept me alive. He doesn't know, nor will he ever. Then things went wrong. My family moved out to NY, and I went with them, and lost contact with him. I decided I couldn't take it anymore and ran away to the Army. It worked, during basic I completely forgot about my problems, I was genuinely happy for the first time in my life. In hindsight though... lying during processing was a bad idea, I hid my pre-existing injury and I broke my leg again during basic. I got a discharge, honorably, after meeting with the Battalion Commander and just being numb. I spent the next 3 weeks waiting to ship home in a stupor, miserable and depressed. It was back. At least I got 13 weeks of peace and happiness out of it.

When I got home, I was miserable, I didn't shower, clean my room or move. I spent the entire day and night in my bed. I got a wireless keyboard and mouse and sat and played computer games on my bed and just drifted through life. I wanted to die but when I moved to NY I had to give up my firearms because I wasn't 21, my Step-Dad HATES firearms and didn't agree with me having them and my mom couldn't take them either.

I was miserable and unable to die because if I went, I didn't want to go in a messy way, even though I didn't care if I hung myself or not. I just didn't want my parents to see me dead hanging, slit throat/wrists, etc. Then something happened. DayZ just got released and I started playing it and fell in with a clan. It was a great way to ride through the day... but then after about 2 months we got a new member, a girl. I started talking to her and we hit it off. She followed me around, always messaged me, and we were inseparable. After a few weeks of that, I sent her a email telling her my feelings for her, that I felt so strongly for her, and I wanted to meet her and be with her. I knew she had a husband, but I had to tell her. I got a email back saying she felt like I had a crush on her, but she couldn't because she had a husband and a kid. I was crushed, but I knew

that was coming because she was married. She said she wished we could still be friends because she loved talking to me and playing with me.

Then, things took a turn for the amazing. A few days later, after me not showing up on TS, Steam, etc, she emailed me from a random email address. She told me that she felt the exact same way, she wanted to meet me, see me and have a good time. She felt a strong connection to me, and she felt like shit sending me that email and not seeing me come back on. She only sent it because as it came in, her husband was looking at something on her computer that she was doing (he was a massive control freak, obsessive, he ran her life and she was miserable with that even though she loved him) and he flipped out. He said she wasn't allowed to be alone with me in chat, she had to keep history on Skype and Team Speak and he was going to read it every night when he got home from work. What he didn't count on was her having my number. She texted me her new skype name, one that didn't save history, and we spent all day every day while he was at work talking, laughing and on camera (nothing bad, just a overlay of each others faces while we played). When he came home at night and she had to "go" it was the most miserable time for me. After she made him his dinner, she'd "jump" on and we'd do things as a group, as the rest of the clan knew the situation and went along with us.

After 2 weeks of that and us planning a way to meet up (she was in VA, I was in NY) we decided that she would have her Mom "invite" her to DC with her son, and her Mom would take her son and me and her would spend the day together. Her Mom wasn't happy with the idea, but at the same time, she said to me when I first met her a few months later that she never saw her daughter so happy and as wrong as it was to her, she was ok with it as long as it was just friends only.

As we got closer, I backed out, I felt guilty. I told her that it just didn't feel right, and I wanted to meet her so badly, but I didn't want to meet her and want her to be with me and go home knowing that I was massively attracted to her, her to me and have nothing come from it. She said she felt the same and was glad I said that. This is where things get turned upside down, in a good way. About a week after I told her I couldn't do it, I got a call from her, which we had never done before (our rule was to NEVER EVER have me call her or text her without her texting me or calling me first to avoid me popping up when he was around as he took her phone daily and went through it). I answered and she was crying, it took about 2 minutes for me to calm her down enough to talk to her. She told me she left her husband, she was done with him, feeling like shit, she wanted to come up to me and see me. We talked and I found out that earlier in that day, he sent her a gchat (he constantly talked to her during the day to see what she was doing) and he said he felt like she was cheating on him with me. Why else would she randomly cancel plans to DC that her Mom had planned. She told him, no, she wasn't and came clean with him. She had planned to meet me and just hang out, but I called it off, and she forwarded him the emails I sent her. He had gone off on her, told her she was a lying piece of shit, a cunt, a whore not worthy of happiness and that when he got home, he was leaving then, she was going to be so god damn sorry for what she did. She immediately packed up her son and left with the clothes on their backs. He got home and was calling her and calling her, but she was on the phone with me. When she called him back he was livid and that's when she told him she was miserable and had been and she wanted a divorce. He flipped out and she hung up.

We began planning on meeting up for a weekend. She asked him to watch their son for the weekend, she was going to see her best friend who lived 2 hours away and wanted a weekend alone to calm down, and he agreed (later found out he agreed because he thought after the weekend it'd would lead to her calming down and coming back). Things went wrong though, the day she was set to leave, Friday, he took her phone and saw all the calls and texts from me, and found out she was coming to see me. He was livid, and it got to the point her Mom came downstairs and threw him out. She was in tears, and called me. he was mad because we were talking constantly. She put her son to bed at 830 and from around 9-5am we were on the phone talking, and then she'd sleep from 5ish till her son got up and we'd text all day until the next call. He was livid, but said for her to go and fuck me and be the whore that she was. She had just called me as he said this and what I heard next made me laugh. She told him "It was just a weekend to hang out you dumb ass, I'm not even staying in his room you moron. I am staying in the guest room!!" and drove away.

When she finally arrived around midnight, it was... explosive. I took her hands and told her how strongly I felt for her, she was real and I was so happy. Nothing in the world could make me happier at that moment, and she asked me "How about this" and put my hands on her ass and kissed me. We then walked around a bit and talked and I was so awkward, she was so awkward and we laughed at how bad we were. After about a hour we went upstairs and I put her stuff in her room and told her goodnight. About 10 minutes later, I knocked on the door and went in and told her I wanted her with me, I wanted to stay up all night and talk, laugh and play games. She told me that when I left she prayed I came back. We went to my room and sat on my bed and talked about our dreams and goals, what we wanted to do, where we wanted to go, etc. Then things happened, I kissed her and told her that she was the most perfect person for me, she was a female me, and I was so happy. This led to sex. Then more sex, and more sex and lots more sex. We didn't go to sleep until 7ish am. Around 8ish my Step Dad's voice sounded like it was right next to us, turns out he was fixing the roof right outside my room, and she jokingly said that it'd be so sexy for me to fuck the shit out of her with him and the roofers right there, I quickly obliged.

The weekend came to an end with neither of us getting more than 2 hours of sleep, we stayed up all Saturday night (no more sex after the morning) and just enjoyed each other. As she was leaving, I told her I hoped this wasn't a fling and that we'd continue and she told me that this could be a relationship. She exhaled a sigh of relief that was audible and told me she was worried I was going to kick her out because I stopped having sex with her. I told her that's because I wanted to her to come up and hang out, I never planned for or considered sex.

The next 2 months we'd spend every minute of every day talking to each other, with her coming up every weekend. I didn't go down there because she wanted to make sure I and her Husband never ran into each other and that was a lot easier 300 miles away. I told her that my Mom said she would have no issue with her and her son moving in and that her son could have the guest room as his room, and she was excited. Just one issue, I hadn't met her son yet. The plan was for him to come up with her that weekend and lets see. He did, and me and him got along fine, great even, and as she was getting in her car, she kissed me and said I love you and then drove away. As we talked on the

way home, she told me that her son wouldn't stop talking about me, and he even had said he wanted to come back and never leave. I knew he had fun with me, but I didn't realize that much. She told me his Dad never did anything with him, Dad was always on the computer or at work. I had taken him to the park while she was talking with my Mom getting dinner ready, and he came back giggling, we played in the trampoline, and I taught him how to catch a baseball. She wanted to move up, and I said YESSSS!!! What happened next shocked me, made me so happy. I told her whenever she wanted, come up, she said ok. I gave her one condition though. With my Step Dad being a Divorce Attorney, she couldn't do it without permission from the Father, because he didn't want to have to be her lawyer, even though he was willing. He told me it was because he loved her and me and he wanted us to do it right.

I went to bed after she said she was calling him and woke up to a surprise. My mom called me and said come downstairs, something was wrong. I got dressed and coulda swore I heard her voice downstairs. I walked into the kitchen and said, and I remember these words and always will "Mom, I coulda swore I heard her voice, I think I'm crazy in love, or just crazy." it was at that point she popped around the corner and said "Whose voice, mine? Or your other girlfriends?" and kissed me. She told me she got back and went immediately over to their house, packed up her stuff and drove right back. I told her anytime, and she didn't want to wait another minute. I was over the moon, brought her stuff in, and got them all settled in. Life was like a fairy tale for the next year.

Things started to go downhill though. She moved out to her own place, and I decided to stay at home until I got a new job that wasn't 20 hours a week. That broke us up over the course of the next month. After a few weeks of us being separated, she called me and said that she had broken down in Maryland on her way back from VA after letting her ex see their son. I drove to her, helped her get set up and we drove back. I stopped by her place and we talked for a while and I told her I missed her and was sorry and I wanted her back, lets try this again. She said she needed to think about it.

I didn't hear from her for 3 weeks. I called her and she told me to come over to her new place. I found out she got a new job, new car and new apartment. I had gotten a new job, and we talked. I told her I loved her with all my heart, she was everything to me, and I wanted her back and she said sorry, she couldn't do that. I walked out and she followed me trying to talk to me and I told her I wish I had never played that damn game and sped away. She thought I was mad, but in reality I was heart broken, all the depression and the new depression came flooding back. I went out and purchased some "supplies" and attempted to kill myself as I had found a method that was not only painless, but wouldn't shock those who found me, it would look like I fell asleep. I failed though, I woke up 15 minutes or so later disoriented. My body was on fire, my muscles were tingling and I had a ringing in my ear like a siren was going off right next to my head. I never told anyone about it.

About 2 weeks later, she went to see her best friend who had moved to Texas and came back and started talking to me. It was passion again, she told me she loved me and we spent the next 7 months together as a casual couple. I basically lived with her except for when I worked overnights. We had a understanding our relationship was open, and I

was ok with that because I felt like I would win her back or at least have a break up that would leave some closure.

Then back in March, one of her new friends brothers asked her out and she said ok. We still hung out and stuff, and a few days after the date he wanted to take her out again, and she told me that it probably wasn't going to work with him because he was a serious Christian and she was going to tell him about us and our open relationship, and I said ok. When she came back we talked and she told me how when she told him, he was devastated and gave her a ultimatum, stop with me or he walked. She said she'd just be my friend and try with him, and I was hurt... but ok. What happened next fucked me up and leads to where I am now.

I didn't hear from her for over a month. When I finally talked to her she told me they were going out officially and we couldn't be together like we were, but we could still hang out, and we hung out a bit. It was ok, I'd rather be her friend then lose her completely. Found out that he was a Marine and he was going back to CA in a week for 3 months pre-deployment training then coming back for 2 weeks leave and then going to Afghanistan for a year. He left and she called me over to talk to her. We talked and what she told me next destroyed me. She couldn't talk to me anymore, hang out with me or anything. He was extremely uncomfortable with her talking to her ex and hanging out while he was away. She told him that I was her best friend and she couldn't do that. He started yelling and gave her a ultimatum again, cut all contact with me or they were through. She really liked him and decided to give him a shot and she told me that was it for us.

We started talking again very, very little while she at work and avoided everything personal. For her sons birthday I got invited, and after it was over I took her to the side and talked to her, asked her was everything ok she seemed distant. She started crying and telling me that he talked to her once every few days, and he was probably not coming back for leave because he didn't want to spend money for plane tickets. We ended when he called and I went home thinking I'd get my friend back maybe. I didn't. 2 weeks ago, she called me and asked me to go with Ikea with her. We talked and she said he was maybe coming, she wasn't sure and she missed me, I missed her etc.

Now... after that she said she was going to call him after I told her she should really think about her relationship with him. She was depressed and upset constantly that they talked once every few days, how could she do a year apart. She said she'd talk to me later and left. I haven't heard from her since. She sends me to voice mail, she won't answer my msg's, and my heart is broken. I don't want to go on, I know it's official that we're never talking again. Something happened. I want to die, but yet I don't. It changes hourly. I'm not afraid to die, but yet, I don't want to leave my family. I have no friends now, I haven't left the house in months except for when I saw her, I barely get out of bed, I quit my job, I'm back to just being "there". My Mom told me she knew it hurt, but I had to move on. I can't though. I can accept that she wants to try with this guy, but I can't accept that she just pushed me out of her life so completely over a relationship she said she hated. I don't know what to do. I'm really lost and I wanted someone to hear my story. Sorry it was so long."

9.10.8 Suicide-note-06

“When a “man” doesn’t know where to take his wife — then she isn’t a wife any more

I hope you will be “free” to take anyone any place and I’m sure you will not have any trouble as to places —

Please don’t tell my mother the truth — your whole tribe is partly responsible for this — from your mother on down — hope they are satisfied.”

9.10.9 Suicide-note-07

“I know what I am doing. Annette found out. Ask Cara. I love you all.

Bill”

9.10.10 Suicide-note-11

“Dear David,

After six weeks of streptomycin shots and a total of eleven weeks of rest in bed we have conclusive proof that the ulcers in my bronchial tubes have not healed. The short period of the streptomycin inhalations could not have brought on the results if the ulceration had even partially healed. To try further would mean many more months of bed rest -- more shots and inhalations -- I can't remain at the hospital for the winter months and a prolonged stay at a rest home is out of the question. I did some figuring -- the weekly rate there -- the amount of streptomycin for shots and inhalations plus the doctor's weekly visits would total to over \$200 a week -- I can't bleed my family for any such amount of money, and that means that as soon as the money I have in my checking account runs out I would have to return home -- back to the same conditions which caused me to go downhill so steadily. It's a vicious circle from which there seems no escape. I could of course use up the money from the sale of our furnishings and silver as well as some I put aside for the furnishing of our home -- but all it put together would be like a drop in the bucket -- besides I am now convinced that my condition is too chronic and therefore a cure doubtful.

All of a sudden all will and determination to fight on has left me. I have long ago prepared myself for the time when I reached the end of the trail. I feel calm and at peace and grateful that I can go to sleep painlessly. I feel justified in terminating a life which no longer holds any hope of having the essentials which make it worth living -- I did desperately want to get well -- I still had much to live for -- hope for recovery -- hope of a reunion with the children -- work which I loved and which could have given me financial security and great satisfaction. But it was not to be -- I am defeated and exhausted physically and emotionally.

Please tell the children that I loved them always and that my love has never faltered. I grieve that I could not have had the joy of being close to our babies, but that is no one's fault. Thank God they are well -- with my passing all menace to their wellbeing will have disappeared.

I want you to know that I have a deep affection for you. I am deeply grateful for all your kindness. I wish I could have made a happier life for you. It was mostly my fault, please forgive me.

Please write to Fran and Tony and to Marilyn and Jim and tell them that my love and gratitude could not possibly be put into words. Their generosity, devotion, love and tact made it possible for me to accept their financial help over a long period of time. I wish with all my heart that they might have been better rewarded -- All of you, my dear ones, I ask to keep my memory alive in your hearts -- To live on in the hearts of our dear ones is all that I can conceive of immortality. Please think of me kindly. Remember that which was good and lovely in our relationship and forgive me for the many mistakes I have made. Now that it is all said I feel at peace.

I want Dr. B. to officiate at my funeral. I think Joe would like to have him with him at that time.

Dear David,

I am said that I must go just a few days before your birthday -- but it so happened to pan out. I see no good in incurring the expense and misery of the bronchoscopy. I wish I could spare you the ordeal you have ahead. Try not to grieve. I ask all of you, my dear ones, not to mourn my passing. Be glad I am at least free from the misery of the bronchoscopy. Be glad I am at least free from the miseries and loneliness I have endured for so long and that at last I'll have peace and rest...."

9.10.11 Suicide-note-23

"Fall quarter I called Suicide Prevention. I'd called them before and the people were nice, but this time the woman acted a little indignant. "Why the hell do you want to do something like that?" she asked. We talked until she said she had other phone calls. But she made me promise I wouldn't try it without calling back first. I had a bottle of Coricidin from a wisdom tooth operation. I'd been thinking about it for a month off and on. Much later that night I took ten Coricidin and went to bed. I woke up in the morning feeling really rotten -- weepy, groggy. I could hardly move I thought I was going to die any minute. My roommate came home and got a friend to drive me to the school infirmary, where they gave me something that made me sick to my stomach. The doctor who gave it to me calmed me down. She said it happens to a lot of people, the pills wouldn't hurt me. I felt tingly, like I might pass out any minute.

I was immediately taken in a wheelchair to the psychiatrist's office. I talked to him about five minutes. He kept yelling ta me about why did I take the pills, why didn't I do this or that. I remember thinking, boy this man is a real jerk. I told him I didn't want to see him any more. He said, "That's fine," and put me in a locked room with bars on the windows. I couldn't make phone calls. I felt humiliated, which made me angry. I'm not crazy. I'm not weird. I don't want people to look at me like I'm nuts. I'm not some nutty kid who tried to knock herself off. I was most angry at being stuck in that room. I expected to be put in a straitjacket any minute. I complained until they moved me a pretty room and let me make phone calls.

I was there about two weeks. My psychiatrist kept harping at me about school -- was I going to stay in or drop out? I saw him ten minutes a day. The other patients and one orderly helped me a lot more than he did. I just wanted to find a place where I could be alone and think about things. I left feeling like not much had been accomplished, except letting me know that I didn't want to attempt it again. No -- I feel like I've become a lot more sensitive to people. I don't look at their problems as trivial any more. I almost like it when my friends come to me with problems. I feel like I can help now. I still haven't told the two people I was most angry at -- my father and my boyfriend -- why I was in the hospital."

9.10.12 Suicide-note-24

"A year ago March, while I was living in Michigan, I took an overdose of Elavil. I was seeing a psychiatrist and I was just getting off the medication. But the bottle was still in my apartment. I'd one out and had drinks, came home and that's when I did it -- about ten in the evening or so. I called my boyfriend Jonathan in California and my social worker. I told them I had taken the pills. The social worker told me to drive to the emergency room. I'd have been lucky to make it to the front door. Jonathan called a friend of mine, who came to the apartment and broke down the door. I was in a coma for five days. I guess I was lucky because the doctors told everybody I wasn't going to make it. Then they said I've have permanent brain damage. When it didn't happen they said it was the miracle of the floor. I was out of the hospital in about three weeks; a week of that was in the psychiatric ward, which was a real drag.

I had a lot of problems with my memory for a while. Even now I can't remember some things. Starting a week before the overdose I don't remember anything at all. All I know about it is what Jonathan says I told him over the phone. Everybody asks "Why did you do it?" and I don't know. It sounds real stupid.

Everybody in the hospital was real nice. I was afraid that they would get down on me but they didn't. It was a Catholic hospital, and I had my own room. Friends were there 24 hours a day. It made me realize how many friends I had. On the psychiatric ward they give you tests for brain damage. They ask you a lot of silly questions. They test

your reflexes, your memory. They give you EKG tests. It took a while to get back my coordination. I couldn't write or do other things with my hands. Most of the time I stayed by myself. There were programs for the other patients but they didn't put me in any because they didn't know how long I would be staying.

I'd tried twice, but those times weren't serious. I was just trying to get some attention. The first time I was 14, and I slashed my wrists. It was basic adolescent scare tactics. As a result I ended up in an inpatient clinic for teenagers for about five months. Almost everybody there was there because they ran away or they were doing a lot of drugs. The second time was a couple of years ago. I did a Valium overdose. It wasn't very serious -- I just had to have my stomach pumped.

This time it shocked me to realize what could have happened to me. I realized how much I had hurt my friends and family, which I didn't think about before. I started wondering if people could trust me. It upset my life a lot -- it threw everything backwards. Jonathan flew in from California. HE said the scariest part was worrying about having to decide what to do if my body kept living but I had no brain response. When I first woke up I didn't think there would be anything wrong with me. And then it hit me that I couldn't move. I was embarrassed that people had to see me like that.

Once you're out of the hospital a lot of institutions won't hire you. You can't get health insurance. You have to lie on your job applications. People look at you like you're dangerous. It's real scary for some of my friends -- they think they're responsible. Trying to convince people that I was OK was the hardest thing. That they didn't have to watch over me, that I wasn't going to try it again."

9.10.13 Suicide-note-29

"The survival of the fittest. Adios Unfit."

9.10.14 Suicide-note-30

"I and my daughter have committed suicide."

9.10.15 Suicide-note-40

"This is where I get off."

9.10.16 Suicide-note-41

"God forgive me."

9.10.17 Suicide-note-42

"I'm done with life

I'm no good

I'm dead"