

Honest Depression Experience

Michelle Peloquin*

Shepherd University, USA

*Corresponding author: Michelle Peloquin, Shepherd University, USA, E-mail: MPELOQ01@rams.shepherd.edu

Rec Date: March 25, 2015; Acc Date: May 29, 2105 Pub Date: June 1, 2015

Copyright: © 2015 Peloquin M. et al. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Opinion

What is depression? According to every medical textbook, it's a persistent feeling of sadness longer than 2 weeks. To that, I say screw you. The writers behind medical textbooks have no freaking idea what depression is. I don't even know and I've been depressed for 3 freaking years. It's not sadness. Sadness is when your dog dies, or you go through a break-up, or you break a just-manicured nail. Depression is not sadness. Depression is hell.

Now I'm no expert. I'm not going to tell you how to cure depression. My three-year anniversary with depression is coming up (hey, at least he's faithful) and I still have no idea. I just manage it.

Depression just came out of nowhere. Apparently it's genetic, as it's in my family. It's just that I'm the only one out of my family who got the lucky draw. Yay me. I had the perfect childhood that would make Carol Brady vomit. Successful parents, straight as, perfect home. I would not allow myself to watch TV until I got my homework done. I would do that. Apparently I was my own parent. I didn't take drugs or alcohol. Forget going to parties, apparently I was so oblivious that I didn't even know my classmates went to parties. I was an athlete and a nerd. I was the prom queen. I think I was the only person who loved high school. I didn't want to graduate. It was home. I was happy, and naïve, but that's the way I liked it.

Now it gets real. Let's fast forward to freshmen year, my first date with depression. Now that devil came out of nowhere. I went home for Christmas break. Ordinarily I love Christmas. I mean it comes out of my ears. And for some reason, I was not happy. I was not jolly. I was the Grinch on steroids. I mean, I didn't try to stop Christmas from happening, but I wasn't there.

By the start of the new year, my life changed. My dream of being a teacher that I'd been working for all of high school? Nah. My jeep wrangler that I adored? Nope. My high school sweetheart that I swore I'd marry? Nada. Who was I? I didn't know. I was without a major, a boyfriend, and a car. Just like that, depression had become my major, my boyfriend, and my car. It stole everything from me.

Like I said, depression isn't sadness. I want to punch everyone who has ever written that. Clearly, they've never been depressed.

So what does depression feel like? The best way I can describe it is having to voluntarily breathe every second. Breathing in and out doesn't happen unless you do it. You have to think about every breath, or else you will die. However, that pressure, those thoughts, slowly kills you anyway.

So you can't breathe with depression. You also can't think. Everything you think you know, depression makes you feel like you don't. And I don't mean the typical, the more I know, the less I know. Like my decisions. I was the president of Future Educators of America, and then suddenly teaching isn't for me. Was my decision because of my depression, or was it because I truly didn't want to teach? Was it

fate or was it big fat depression? Imagine not knowing what is the cause for every decision you make. Do I really feel this way or is depression making up my mind? I didn't even know who I was. I changed my major 5 times in one summer. I was honestly lost. I was drowning. For the first time in my life, I didn't think I had a purpose.

Those commercials where the raincloud follows the person? That's depression. It constantly follows you raining on every piece of your life that it goddamn wants to. Oh, you got an A on your paper? You still suck. The sun is shining? Shut the blinds. Your boyfriend got you roses? Roses die. Nothing is good. Nothing will make you smile. Nothing can fill the gaping hole inside your body.

Nothing except sleep. Sleep is amazing. Sleep is the only time in a depressed person's life that they aren't depressed. They are normal. The sucky part? They wake up and they are back to depression. Those people who wake up happy? I hate them. Every single one (not really). But I hate that they don't know what it's like to wake up and pretend to be happy. They just are. They don't try. They just wake up and it's freaking raining flowers. They have unicorns and rainbows and stuff. Yeah, I know life can suck, but they don't have to think about constantly making themselves happy. Their brain loves and respects them. Do you know what is similar to sleep? Dying.

It's not bull when people say that the risk for suicide increases once on anti-depressants. I went on anti-depressants soon after my long plummet down and I felt better. I could finally breathe easier. The pressure was off of my lungs. It felt good to breathe, to expand them to capacity. Then, the water started to rise around me again. What was happening? Why was it happening? I was on anti-depressants for god's sake.

It turns out that anti-depressants are not a cure. I was still going to have mood swings, but less. Why the hell don't they mention that in those stupid raincloud commercials? They show a sad person taking these pills and low and behold, suddenly they are peeing rainbows. Why wasn't I peeing rainbows? Why was I sitting on the floor of the shower crying? Why were there times when I physically couldn't move? Why did the thought of taking all of those goddamn fake rainbow pills cross my mind? Why did the knife cutting my skin feel so good?

You know, sometimes I wish I had a physical injury. I wanted cancer. I diagnosed myself with illnesses and took myself to so many doctors' appointments. I had MRIs just because I was hoping they would find something. Maybe then there would be a way to fix it.

Now, before you criticize me, I know what cancer does. My mom and my dad both had cancer. My grandmother died. Hell, even my dog died from freaking cancer. I wanted cancer because then I could actually know what disease I was fighting. Cancer is an overgrowth of cells, it grows, and it shows in your body. Everyone knows that you're hurting.

Depression hides in every cell of your body. It doesn't show to anyone, not even yourself. Because you don't know where it is, you don't know how to fight it. It throws a punch out of nowhere, and honestly you just start to let it hit you after a while. It's easier than fighting. Eventually, you start to hit yourself, too.

I tried to end it once. I was fighting with my boyfriend, and I felt alone. He didn't understand what I was going through. He couldn't know because he wasn't feeling it. I wasn't mad at him but I was tired. I was tired of feeling bad. I was tired of taking these stupid little fake rainbow pills that still made me sad. Yes, I had good days, but they wouldn't matter when I had a bad day and it felt like my world ended. That's the trouble with anti-depressants. You have good days, but you know a bad day is coming.

That bad day was happening. The raincloud was laughing at me as it poured buckets of water on me. I laid on the kitchen floor and I lined up my anti-depressant pills. These stupid pills I took every morning that reminded me how messed up I was. I swallowed one. I hated the taste, Stupid pills, Stupid rainbows, Second pill, I didn't want to die; I was just tired of fighting. When you stop fighting depression, it kills you. Another pill, was this a good idea? What would my friends think when they find out I killed myself? Would they wonder why? No one knew the struggle I was fighting. I put on a happy face for the public, which made it even harder, but I didn't want to be the depressed girl. Yeah, this would totally shock them. Fourth pill, what would my obituary say? People would wonder what was so terrible about my life. It seemed perfect. So it would seem. No one knew that my perfect life included a genetic predisposition to depression. And I was the only one out of my family who got it. Fan-freaking-tastic, Fifth pill.

I want to say I had some major breakthrough and I discovered that I had everything to live for so I stopped taking the pills and I lived happily ever after. I wish. The truth: I was scared to die. And the pills tasted awful. I stopped after five. I called my mom crying and I admitted her my intent. It was the first time I ever told her I was suicidal. She knew I was depressed, but I had always kept my suicidal tendencies to myself. I didn't want to be that girl. A disappointment. Again, this should be the part where I say I had a major breakthrough and I lived happily ever after. Again no.

I will say that I learned to live with it. Do I love taking those pills in the morning (ones I lovingly refer to as my crazy pills)? Hell no. They

are shithheads and they taste bad. But I take them anyway because I know I would be worse without them. Suicide still crosses my mind sometimes, not going to lie, but it's only when I feel helpless, and luckily I've found ways to cope with that. You can live with depression. You have to fight everyday, and you have to surround yourself with people that will pick you up on your bad days. Because you will have them. You will have the most wonderful day in the world and then you will fall asleep and wake up miserable. It's a game of luck. I was never a lucky person.

If you're not depressed and you're reading this, be nice. Depression is so much more common than society makes you believe. The person who you are making fun of might hear you, go home and cut themselves. The coworker that stays to themselves might be planning on killing themselves next week. You honestly never know. If depression has taught me one thing, it's to be freaking nice. You never know what you are capable of doing to someone else.

I'm not saying it's impossible to live with depression. I'm saying it's almost impossible. It's a cruel disease that haunts me day and night. It haunts everyone around me. No one could possibly understand the pain in my body. The pain that I just let consume me. Sometimes I fight, but sometimes I just lay on the floor and cry because it's easier. Still, don't push those caring people away. They are your lifeline, your superpower. They aren't messed up. It's hard to imagine why they would want to be around you when you're feeling low, but if they do, let them stay. They are truly one in a million. Take your damn rainbow pills everyday. They taste bad, but they help, even if you don't think so. Just watch what happens when you stop taking them. Yay roller coaster of death. Exercise every single day. The endorphins help, but it's also nice to feel proud of yourself. It doesn't hurt that it burns calories, because depressed people tend to eat their feelings. What is it called? YOLO. Nothing a good Sheetz Mexi-bagel can't fix. If only life was that easy. Lastly, accept yourself for who you are. This was the hardest thing for me to do. I still struggle with the thought that I'm depressed. It's not what I envisioned my life to be. I envisioned the unicorns and sprinkles life, but I'm working with it. I am this person now, but that's not all that I am. I find new things out about myself everyday, and honestly I'm finding out how freaking strong I am. And that's more powerful than any depression I know.

This article was originally published in a special issue, entitled: "**Depression & Aging**", Edited by Shailesh Bobby Jain, Texas University, United States