

Topic: How I ended up in a self-harm hospital.

Abstract: I had a problem that my mother ignored, and it drove me to take matters into my own hands to try and solve it. Following my teenage mindset that I was invincible, drove me to experiment with prescription drugs. Self-medication was my answer to solve whatever I was feeling, but a few pills too many and I ended up in a self-harm hospital.

Key Words: Depression, medication, hospital, Suicide, Teenage Mindset, Parent Disapproval.

Self-Medication

Where does one begin to tell a life story? How to figure out which is worth mentioning, maybe it should be life changing. Ever since that day, I don't think anything has ever been the same. Thinking back to the choices I made, I'm still not certain that I'd take back what I did. Although it was very selfish of me to do what I had done, I don't believe I would be who I am today if I hadn't.

When I was about sixteen years old, I decided it would be fun to experiment. I now realize this wasn't the most brilliant decision, but I didn't care at the time. Like almost all teenagers, I felt invincible. The reason it was such a bad decision was because I suffered from what I called "undiagnosed depression", while my mother simply referred to it as mood swings. She said it was just hormones. I would have my ups and downs, but it would fall from a really high up, straight to the ground.

Around this time, I visited my brother in San Jose a lot and randomly stay nights there. I was there, waiting for my mother to come pick me up, when I decided to go through his cupboards. I found typical household items around the house, until I looked in the medicine cabinet. There were the usual medicines for headaches, colds, and stomach aches. Then I saw some prescriptions and read what they were. He had been in a work related accident and hurt his

back, so the doctor had prescribed him some pain relievers and muscle relaxers. I found myself curious of the muscle relaxers, so I took the liberty and took some without him knowing.

I was experimenting, and since I had a lot of them, I started out with two just to know the effect of them. Turns out they did what they were supposed to do, because my muscles and my body were at ease. After a while, your body gets used to it and you have to up the dosage. A week went by and I was popping four to five like candy. Clearly I wasn't thinking about how this is damaging my body, but hey, I was invincible. Anyone that knew could've predicted this, but how was I to know what was about to happen to me.

It was an ordinary day in my math class, and we basically had free time to do homework and sit where we wanted. I was sitting on the floor next to my best friend, and we were having a good time. When I was going through my backpack I saw my pills and thought to myself, what a great idea since I'm not really doing anything. I offered her some and she said no because she had things to do. I don't remember if I took four or five that day... I don't really remember much of my day after that. I used to have to walk home, and my house was basically across town. When I was sitting on the couch, I realized I didn't remember walking home or if I even walked home.

Even though I was confused, I shrugged it off and called my mom to ask if we could go to the store when she got home and she said yes. I needed to kill time, so I talked to this girl I had been getting to know and she said she couldn't talk to me anymore because of someone else. This news upset me, and I remember calling my sister-in-law to vent. I don't recall the conversation, but I remember feeling hurt when I was talking to her. After a while, I got off the phone and went to my room. While in there, I assumed the pills were no longer in effect and

decided to take some more. I grabbed a handful of about six, and remember staring at my hand in a very brief contemplation but took them anyways.

My mother arrived and I had no idea if I was okay or not. She wanted to go to the store before it got any later, so I agreed and got in the car. When we got there I was fine, but once we walked through the front doors, it got bad. My muscles became weak, and my legs began to quake and collapse beneath me. My mom was freaking out and I told her I was fine, that I was just tired. She helped me to my feet and I could feel the eyes of spectators staring at us. Everything from this point became a blur and random blackouts. Now I was in the car, and she was yelling at me and asking me what was wrong, what I did, and finally, what did I take. All I could manage to say was that I was fine, but I wasn't. She called her husband to tell him what happened, but I don't really remember her doing so. Another blackout, we were home. I couldn't open the door to get out of the car, my arms and legs were like noodles. I kept fading in and out of the situation. I remember bits and pieces of my mom and stepdad yelling at me, darkness, more yelling, and finally, darkness.

Waking up in a hospital with no recollection of how you got there isn't the most pleasant experience. I awoke all drugged, weak, and confused. It took effort just to open my eyes and speak. A therapist came in to speak to me and ask me a few questions. My body felt exhausted and I was half asleep, which meant I was an open book without being fully aware about it. She asked me if I was trying to kill myself, and I told her no, that it was an accident. All my words were mumbles and I slurred. She then asked what I had taken and how many. I answered, and she asked if I ever had any thoughts of suicide, and I told her yes. She asked some more questions, but I don't remember. The therapist left, and my mom was there waiting, and she told me the doctors said I could have died. She was crying, and I assumed it was from both worry

and joy. I cried with my mom, because I never wanted to hurt her that way, and I apologized to her. The therapist came back into the room and told my mom I had to be placed in a self-harm hospital for observation, because I was considered a threat to myself. My mom tried telling her I didn't need to go, but the lady insisted and said she already sent the paperwork.

Due to my body's exhaustion, I was able to fall asleep in that hospital bed. I was woken in the morning to two paramedics and a gurney. They lifted me onto the gurney and told me they had to strap me in. They wheeled me out with the straps over my torso, legs, and wrists, which is when everything started to become surreal. They loaded me up onto the ambulance truck and told me it was all standard procedure. The self-harm hospital was in Sacramento and all I could do was lie there. We arrived to the hospital and they wheeled me in and took the straps off once inside. I still felt weak and confused. Everything that was happening didn't seem like it was real. They had me sit in a chair while they got my paperwork and room situated. I remember the chair being cold, the whole place was cold. Once the paramedics left, the nurses took me in for inspection. They made me strip and I had to stand there and let them look at me. I wasn't sure what they were checking for, if it was bruises or cuts, or just to know when and if I get a cut while there.

While in there, I met other teens that had tried to end their lives. All of the stories were different but the same on some level. They all had reached a breaking point after putting up with something for some time. I could not stop crying in that place, I tried isolating myself from the others, but the group sessions didn't allow it. There was a girl that I became good friends with, but over the years we lost touch. I was only in there for a couple of days, but they felt so surreal and long. You were not allowed to be alone, and if you were, you were checked on constantly

by a nurse. They checked on us in the middle of the night, and each time it woke me up. Every time I woke up I thought I was going to wake up in my bed but I didn't, I was still there.

The next day I had to meet with the psychologist, and it was visiting day. When meeting with the psychiatrist, he asked me basic questions. He then tried digging deeper, but for some reason, when there is a focus on my life in the conversation, I would cry. He asked me why I was crying, and I told him it was because I missed home. He began to sound irritated, because he asked me again, and when he got the same answer, he said no one should be crying this much for something so small. He changed the subject and asked me questions I felt a little more comfortable answering. After a few minutes he said he was done, but I asked him when I would be going home. He was going to try to keep me in that hospital for months. When my mom and stepdad came to visit, I was happy to see them. There was something in my mom's face that showed disappointment. She is the type that feels the need to tell the rest of my family everything, so I also saw embarrassment. She told me the doctor had told her he wanted to put me on medication, and told me she didn't want me on them. So when the psychiatrist asked me if I wanted to be on them, I refused.

Looking back on the years, most of the medical conditions now would have gotten you put into a mental ward. Depression would have still been considered mood swings, and people with bipolar disorder or schizophrenia would be put away as a crazy person. The development of studies in medicine has allowed doctors to find appropriate diagnoses. These disorders and conditions are now treatable, so why should we turn them down. It makes me think about my mom's reaction to me being on medication. After constant pushing by my mom, the doctor let me leave home. After everything that's happened, I learned to keep a smile on my face, even when it isn't how I am feeling.