



BIPOLAR

You're just juggling your personalities aren't you?

Stuart Sanderson

***I Hate Being Bipolar, it's
Absolutely Awesome!***

I don't really like even numbers hence
all the chapters being odd numbers!

The Prolapsed Log

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bells would stop ringing!!!

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The Epileptic Log

The Prolapse Log

“You only get it, if you’ve got it”

Stuart Sanderson

To have a mental illness that has been diagnosed as bipolar disorder is a nauseating experience. Given it a name that to many people is associated with crazy and deranged individuals. Just as the body won't recognise bipolar and have preconceived notions of it because of the name, society should take heed. The name is simply a way of making the issue subjective and separate. When asked how you are feeling and coping with it, you don't give answers that portray the persona of a character hell bent on pathological mayhem. You are given drugs named

antipsychotics, anticonvulsants, mood stabilisers, tranquillisers and antidepressants. Telling you how you need 'anti' this and 'anti' that because you are psychotic, depressed or hyper et al. Branded submissively. The language you have is limited to the words that have been created to describe something. There are often times no words a language possesses that can truly explain what you are going through. How do you explain how you feel without words?

Actions speak louder than words...

Chapter 1: I wish them fuckin'
Church bells would stop ringing!!!

My personality is apparently a disorder. I have been told that I am, and have been diagnosed with, Bipolar Disorder. A severe mental illness, the most prevalent of which are Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder. Fundamentally, nothing is known about either condition, ranging from the cause, most effective treatment, how the mechanics of conditions cause the individual behaviours displayed by a person. Personally I haven't experienced any common feelings or warnings for an episode start.

As if this wasn't bad enough, then the probability of developing physical

illnesses too, is a greater risk than that of not having an SMI. In England premature mortality is observed and on average, 15 to 20 years of your life is expected to be taken away. If you are under 75, you are nearly 4 times more likely than the general public to never celebrate this birthday. But then again, who knows what age we're going to live to? A person with an SMI is likely to have substance abuse issues at some point in their life. If the drink or drugs got the better of you, would your death still be attributed to the mental illness? Would you become a statistic? The statistics for deaths from alcohol and tobacco aren't published or promoted to show how 'legal' drugs are the biggest killers in the country. Illegal drugs like cocaine and heroin are not as deadly as

they want you to believe. Street drugs bring dangerous possibilities with them of being heavily cut with unknown substances and being of poor quality or low purity. If these drugs were legalised and controlled, they would be a better quality and higher purity. In treating overdosed users, when they are using heavily cut drugs, it's difficult to administer an antidote as it's unknown what else has been taken. Drinking impacts the liver and liver disease (the organ which metabolises your medication) is at risk of complications, respiratory illness, cardiovascular problems and cancers are but 4 problems that you are at risk of developing. To compound this even further, death from suicide is also more prevalent. It doesn't stop there either.

Substance abuse, Parkinson's disease, accidents in daily life, Alzheimer's disease and dementia, pose risks the mortality rate that displays inequality in comparison with the general public.

So, what is it that means that your physical health is being impacted by your mental illness?? Is it your brain reacting to the alterations your medication causes? Meaning that your brain is altered in such a way that the messages which are sent to your organs, are interfered with? You primarily might have some mental complications but you had a good physical condition? The brain/gut axis is heavily dependent on your serotonin levels. Is it possible for your weight gain with medication

being because your axis is being changed too? Who knows?!?

My first episode of having hallucinations started in the early summer months of 2017 (guesstimate). I wasn't hearing anything detrimental or sinister. I can recall that it was basically just laughing. The same sort of thing that you hear whilst watching a sitcom. It wasn't even related to the activity I was doing or borne out of a mishap that I'd done. Simply just laughter. I called my GP, and I know it's not his specialist area, but he asked if I was experiencing any voices or getting messages to harm myself and others. I wasn't. Fair play to him, he lodged it on my medical record and then he said that if I experienced

anything telling me to inflict pain or suffering to myself or others, then to call him. It started to then become more and more frequent. On top of the laughter, I was frequently turning round to my colleague in the office, whom I was certain said my name in a manner that they had a question, for them to say they hadn't said anything. I was answering the door of a number of occasions when I thought I'd heard someone knocking on it. Where I worked at my bosses house at the time, had electronic gates and again, I thought I heard the intercom buzz as to either answer the person or open the gates for them. You have probably guessed it already, no one was there. So I reported this problem reoccurring and spoke with a very friendly, polite and

helpful lady. She said it wasn't a priority (I'm still bewildered to this day how hallucinations can be quantified with severity), but I would receive a letter in the post. Nevertheless I hadn't received said letter after 8 weeks. I called back and I was told that they had sent me a letter, with an appointment date, and as I never responded or attended the appointment, they presumed that I no longer needed an appointment or any help. I did though. Luckily I never committed any crime or inflicted any detrimental damage towards myself or others.

Fast forward to today (23rd June 2023), and I have been in touch with my GP practice who have very kindly printed out basic local records so I can get

some dates and referrals to see a specialist along with acute and repeat medication prescription.

It was 10th August 2018 I was initially referred to Mountcroft Resource Centre (the psychiatrists). Now I recall seeing the psychiatrist who saw I had been having non-tonic colic seizures. Due to the fact I have had these, Depakote was prescribed alongside the Mirtazapine. To this day I am still waiting on the reasoning behind the seizures.

Personally, from reading my text books, which are of a high level of understanding afforded to me from my degree in Medicinal Chemistry, I proposed that at the time I was on Sertraline (200mg) and I also had a bout of sciatica for which I was

prescribed Tramadol. I surmised the two drugs combined and I was experiencing Serotonin Syndrome which ultimately caused me to fit. This occurred three times and each and every time it happened my suggestion was dismissed. Low and behold, only once I stopped taking these medications did the fits disappear too. I went to Preston Hospital for EEG and brain scans and nothing was reported as being abnormal. It's either a coincidence or that basically the fact that someone mentally ill was right?!? I'll let you make your own mind up!

So after my initial appointment, my GP had given me an introductory low dose of Depakote. This was increased by the Psychiatrist. You see with Depakote,

max dose is 2,000mg. I'm not entirely sure what the exact dosage is but for migraines it's about 500mg, epilepsy 1000mg and Bipolar 1,500-2,000mg. Well I was on the max 2,000mg and on my return visit and second appointment I was so spaced out I couldn't hardly speak. My shrug of the shoulders and grunt rendering me to be discharged and then back to my GP! I don't think that I was able to even say "for fuck sake!", until a week after!

So, one unforgettable moment was the catalyst for demanding that I get seen by a specialist professional. I was having a pint after work with a friend. Before the woke generation puts the alcohol down as a reason, I'd had a pint and two mouthfuls of my second (I only

had two pints when I worked in Poulton as the sheer volume of traffic was subsided by this time when I got picked up). My friend and I went to the front of the pub for a cigarette, opposite the pub is a lovely church which is arguably the focal point of the centre of the village/town. I said to my mate “I wish those fuckin’ Church bells would stop ringing!”. My mate laughing at me said that they weren’t. I didn’t believe him. I proceeded to ask a dozen or so people, some I knew, some I didn’t (who looked slightly perturbed), but no one else was hearing these incessant bells. Campanology had become number 5 on my dislike list. For the record; 1. Coldplay 2. Mash Potatoes 3. The word ‘peeps’ 4. Cricket 5. Campanology.

So bell ringing aside, other things started to happen. Bearing in mind that I was never scared by any of this, just fascinating as to why it was happening. The following happened;

Car alarms going off and the lights flashing (I realised this was in my head as happened once in the evening and it was dark, the headlights were coming on yet no light was being projected). Listening to my iPod. I can sometimes (but very rarely), hear my name in the track.

In unfamiliar places I can feel like everyone's looking at me and speaking about me.

I'll expand on a couple of these later.

The one thing that I would advise you to do is to keep at the forefront of your mind throughout reading this, that it is all due to my brain and how it works. There's no outside influence to blame. We'll discuss medication soon but I can only say one thing and one thing only.....our mind is the most important/dangerous/influential component in our lives.

Hearing things like church bells, car alarms, your name being said and pretty much every other single day occurrence of stuff, is absolutely fucking nuts. You can't decipher what you hear as being genuine or concocted by your mind. This is why some of the extreme news that I read or hear a news report from

some tabloid newspaper or news channel, say the person who committed the act, was this or that. That word “committed” immediately implies negative thoughts on the subject. It’s linked to crimes and committed an offence. I don’t agree with it being used to say committed suicide as suicide is sufficient. It makes the situation of the word following it to be negative and something that you shouldn’t do. So these people, they’re jumped upon and persecuted. Now I’m by no way condoning the situation but it’s an absolute mess from the said criminals support network that it’s happened. Low and behold it is always the case of the person being a fruit loop, nutter, mentally ill or something like that. Never do we hear anything about the

system failings and giving the appropriate care.

There's absolutely no difference between the voices you hear in your head, and then the voices you hear from people around you.

Chapter 3: Imagine if those voices in your head are actually real and you're the one that is imaginary?

Do I need a Psychiatrist or an exorcist?

All this frustration you have because you are trying to get a routine in your life. It he 's not even a challenging trio of tasks to do either.

So I'm currently at loggerheads with myself to do the following;

1. Go to bed at 9pm and take my medication (500mg Quetiapine and 600mg Lithium), then I'll be asleep by 11pm or midnight at the latest.
2. Eating breakfast, dinner and tea
3. Having a bath Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Do you know how I am getting on with doing this? Fuckin' pathetically and embarrassingly abysmal!!!

I can't meet these criterias Julia and I came up with. It's unexplainable but it's so so so so so detrimental to then attempt to make it through your working day without being noticed that your behaviour is 'strange', or you look odd.

I can't satisfy my desires so my mind goes walkabout. I'm becoming the kind of person who I have previously hated. I'm having these strange conversations with myself and I'm on autopilot. But I'm unaware of the destination or the direction I'm heading. Is it just an

obscure and cruel illusion in my mind that is controlling me? Or am I the one that has made an appearance in the imagination of the big picture?

Yet nothing is the way it seems.

The world is spinnin' round so endlessly and we're all clinging on to our own beliefs about what happens when you don't have the ability to see. You have no idea what is going to happen one second to the next. We are in an age where we can all be sitting down on a Sunday around our tables, excited about the feast that has been created by the matriarch of the family and our own family and closest friends could be sat with us. Oblivious to the fact that one of these Warlords could

end everything, at any moment, at any given time. I'm not going to persecute one individual and blame them as I believe any of these people who have access to the nuclear weapons are that ignorant they would press the button and then we wouldn't know anything about it. These are the people that kept a strain of Smallpox. Even though when it had been eradicated and destroyed through science. So, why did the Russians and America keep their samples and didn't destroy them? Am I being too cynical to suggest that they plan to use the Smallpox as a Bio Weapon?

I mustn't be real. No way can the real world be as bonkers as it is.

How do you differentiate between your own reality and how the world supposedly is? If it's real to you, then is it others that have a disturbed or distorted sense of experience?

The voices in my head are as real as the voices of the general public I interact with. I'm constantly judging myself with other people. Why? I don't know.

Chapter 5: Depakote, Mirtazapine & Quetiapine to Lithium, Fluoxetine & Olanzapine

I take a mood stabiliser, an antipsychotic and an antidepressant. If you imagine how a bipolar scale works, it's 1-10 with 1 being the deepest depression and 10 being the highest high. I take a tablet to stop me going lower than a 3 (antidepressant) and one to stop me going higher than about a 7 (antipsychotic) and then a tablet to stabilise myself between the 3 and 7. That's it in a nutshell.

However getting this established is a laborious process.

I was originally on Quetiapine, an antipsychotic, and progressively worked my way up to 750mg per day. Literature dictates that the dose can range from 200mg-800mg yet when I collected my 750mg from the Chemist, the pharmacist pulled me to one side to double check it was correct and why I was having so much. They'd never dispensed so much to a person before. Subsequently I switched from Quetiapine to Olazapine. It's a second generation atypical antipsychotic like Quetiapine. That's the difficulty, drugs work for one but not the next.

So I initially started of on the mood stabiliser Sodium Valproate (Depakote). This is an anticonvulsant and prior to the prescription of it I had experienced

3 seizures. Depakote is used for migraines, epilepsy and bipolar in increasing dosages. I was prescribed it due to the fits. When I started it I was on Mirtazapine (an antidepressant) and together these two will exacerbate the bipolar mood shifts to mania. Further to this I researched both drugs and I read that Depakote and Quetiapine interact and they have the potential to make either of them not work as efficiently as they can. After speaking to my Psychiatrist about this, I switched to Lithium instead of Depakote. Lithium is a great medication but it brings with it a catalogue of potential side effects. You have to have regular blood tests and monitoring. I'm lucky to have no adverse reaction to it whatsoever.

I stopped the Mirtazapine too as I was having a prolonged period of mania. I'd been taking Mirtazapine for nearly 10 years and had a great, positive relationship with it. Everything has its limitations though and I changed to Fluoxetine (Prozac) which is clinically proven to have a brilliant interaction with Olazapine. I have to report, so far so good.

It's a lottery for finding the right meds. I feel that now I'm the most stable I've been for as long as I can remember. I still go depressive and I still go manic. You don't stop the Bipolar swings and the moods. They are however more manageable. If they're more manageable due to my experience with

coping with it or it is the medication,
you will never know.

Chapter 7: Creating my own breakdowns through the sheer weight of my own expectations

As we grow older we don't become more independent, we become less independent, and we are nearly entirely reliant upon external things that are influenced by the actions of other people or something we don't control. You see, we have to generally take on a vocation to earn money in order to buy goods. So we are obligated to do something in order to be able to trade our hard work for goods and commodities. To live our life, we need to perform. Like a circus monkey, taught to obey and respect the voice of the master. Poor performance will result in a disciplinary process to negatively

reinforce that a poor performance leads to a disparaging onslaught from the hierarchy.

A convention of trade and the tokens used for this trade are what we all work for. It's a social convention we invented which we have called money. We are slaves to money then we die as Richard Ashcroft once said. As an adult you have this innate sense of responsibility to keep others happy without ever having any thoughts about your own happiness. You go to work at hours dictated to you, you do your job as you're instructed, you even get told what time you will need a break and when you are hungry by having your dinner time and breaks mapped out for you. You can work as hard or as

lethargic as you want but there's then the fear you might get sacked for unproductiveness if you don't pull your weight and then you'll be unemployed and struggle to live your life as society and its conventions dictate. Your God given right is to live your life but that's been taken away from you and now you need money to buy food to eat, you have to pay for your house to provide your shelter for you. You see it's the bureaucrats in suits who will ruin this Earth with their own sense of enlightenment and arrogance. Making decisions about how you live your life without ever meeting you. A politician in a suit is deadlier than a soldier with a rifle.

These rules we live by were made by the previous generations of people who had the power. Tyrants who were hell bent on control. Their blueprint continues to the present day with no ultimate purpose or direction. They are able to do as they see fit and make it up as they go along.

I didn't choose my lifestyle. I was born and raised as society dictates. Parents can't decide what they want for their kids because they're under the regime too. They probably won't have ever thought about living self sufficient and raising their children by the way of the land. The family home, mortgage, 2.4 children, debt, 3- piece suite on higher purchase, living next door to someone you don't like and taxes on just about

everything. Education systems with impossible timetables to find a job to fit in with half-terms and a 9-3 term day. Expensive uniforms on a conveyor belt of kids being fed pointless information then pressured at 16 to pass an exam they're told will define their life by the teachers they have become convinced know everything.

You age and you are told you have to have this or that to make your life better. You are buying things that you don't need, with the money you don't have, to impress the people that you don't like. Everything you own then begins to own you.

As a child nothing matters. Being carefree, that is what I mean. As a child you have nothing, so you are fascinated

by everything. You don't have a reason for being happy or exciting about things. As soon as you become reliant upon a reason for your happiness, you are in trouble, because reasons can be taken away.

It's that sentence; have nothing so you are fascinated by everything.

Your expectations aren't your own.

They are someone else's ideas that have been thrust into your face and rammed down your throat with aplomb. The golden children of our generation that relies on social media for interaction rather than actual physical interaction.

Square eyes and transfixed on a TV that in essence actually watches them.

Butting into life and thrusting fantasy lifestyles, conglomerates products

down excited throats. Invisible fear spread via the media subliminally drip fed to maintain and secure your insecurities for yourself. You are welcomed to come by anytime you want and surf the internet and social media platforms so that you can feed your addiction to idiocy and be prescribed nonsense pills to help your journey toward becoming brainwashed. It's indoctrinated that you have to keep up with the latest version of this and that and you are afraid of being left behind. You are coaxed into the belief that to settle for what you have is akin to an impoverished persona.

Instead of spending an hour a day on Facebook, why don't you start spending that hour on yourself?

Chapter 9: Self Harm of the Forearm

So, I have decided that I'm going to try and get some sense behind my self harm episodes. I haven't had any incidents of repeating this for well over a year. However, this doesn't mean that I can categorically say that it is never going to happen again. There was no precursor to any of the episodes that I had before. The first time, I had been in the bath, and as far as I am aware and what I can recall, I got out and I had left the bath as I found it, clean and ready for the next time I was to use it. Around 3am in the following morning, I bathed around 9pm the previous night, I needed a wee. I woke up and my arm was stuck to my bed sheet (It wasn't because of that). I never gave this a

second thought and I presumed that I had spilt my drink (Vimto). So.....

I went to the bathroom for a wee, and I was greeted with what I can only explain as like something you see in a horror movie. It was at this point that I rolled up the sleeve of my dressing gown to look at my arm. It was lacerated multiple times, but I couldn't feel any pain. I wasn't concerned about it either from what I can recollect. I cleaned the area with warm water and I luckily had some plasters that fit my inner forearm and the cuts perfectly (it was too late to get stitches). I cleaned the blood up in the bath. From the walls and the floor. It never dawned on me how I had actually done this? As I went through the door to the kitchen, I saw a

razor blade, the Gillette one with 5 blades, on the floor. I'm not exactly sure what I did to it but it looked like I had chewed the corner of the plastic and then pulled it back to expose the blade. Only one blade, not the entire five. Then again, you only need one I suppose. I looked up at the mirror above the sink and I saw blood all round my mouth. I had cut my gums, lips and inside my mouth getting the blade out. Once again though, I didn't feel any pain whatsoever.

So, this is the only thing that is bugging me about it all. It's something that was repeated in every single occasion that I self harmed. I'm right handed you see, but I cut my inner right forearm using my left hand?!? I'm beyond useless at

doing anything that involves a certain level of conscious effort with my left hand. I'm by my own admission, not exactly adept at anything manual at all! I have also made the cuts in the same area too. I have been to the walk-in centre of a few occasions where I've seen a nurse who very kindly either stitched me up or steri-stripped the mess I'd created. But the majority of times I was just dressing my arm with whatever I had in the cupboard. I went to the Chemists on one occasion when I had cut myself deep and I couldn't stop it bleeding. I asked what was best for dressing my arm and was asked what size I needed, I just got my arm out, still bleeding quite profusely, and said for that one there. I noticed that I had left a trail of blood on my walk to there.

The lady who worked there very kindly assisted me and put the plaster and bandage on for me. That gives you an indication of the mindset I was in from my behaviour. I have scars and I don't think anything about them as I have accepted it as part of me. I don't think that they appear as bad as they could have because I have gone back over previous scars and the most severe ones were stitched up. That's irrelevant though, I still look at my arm and remember that I have done that and, it's a reminder that I can do it again.

I'm a Roman Catholic. I believe religion is a personal thing and I would never project my feelings about it on to anyone. So, I'm not a fan of going to Church, so I started to read my bible. A

few days later I saw an account from an individual who had been through self harm and they quoted “the Devil gets in through your weaker side” or words to that effect. I then read some passages from the Bible that described the same. I then looked further into this and I came across more and more people explaining the same thing. I had a appointment with the Crisis Team due to the episodes and I mentioned it to them. They asked if I was religious to which I replied yes, then they were off asking if I had any messages from God or if I thought I was a prophet etc etc. Brushed my question under the carpet. So, I’m going to see the Priest next week and then I will bring it up with my psychiatrist and get a explanation.

Chapter 11: Romance, no chance

The females of the species commonly mention that honesty is the best policy. To be transparent. I'm completely, 100% honest about everything concerning me. However, after I ventured back on to Tinder (I've already completed it twice before), I wrote my bio to reflect the stark reality of life. Ten minutes later, I got banned from tinder!

Here's my bio, what do you think?

Stuart, 40

Seeking hostile woman for unfulfilling sex, future divorce and Co-dependency.

Looking preferably for a whiny, moaning, crazy lass with a misplaced sense of entitlement and expectation. Bonus points if you have already slept with every lad within a 5 mile radius, it's understandable that you want to take it slow with me.

I would be open to an utterly empty and unsatisfying fling, but I'm holding out for that long-term soul snatcher who will drive me into a diet of opioids and alcohol!

It's more accurate than 99.9% of profile bios on there I reckon. It's near impossible to define yourself. It's impossible to define yourself. We have a tendency to only share positive things and ignore or exclude the negative. Our behaviour is responded by the people

around us. Their response is indicative of the behaviours we display, if positive then we repeat the behaviour, negative behaviour isn't necessarily never repeated but we display aggressive behaviour say for no apparent reason and we have negative responses from our peers who have been effected by this. So other people form the behaviour we display. However, think about it as looking in a mirror and your reflection is distorted. You're not looking at you but a distorted image of your own self. You can also use your mind to help yourself and others understand. A true mind isn't one that acts perversely or tries to be unique in each given situation, nor does it act in accordance to a set of rules or what society dictates it should do. A sincere

mind acts as to its surroundings and offers others around it, not security, but liberty.

You see I kind of know what I have to do, but going back to my personality being classed as a disorder, it might carry some credence.

Although one incident in Amsterdam in the early 2000's was definitely not because of my personality. I was arguably in my prime. Either 18 or more so 19 years old, I was playing semi-professional football so I was in great shape, fresh faced and in my opinion, at my best. Anyway, I saw this lady in one of the many shop windows that they have in Amsterdam. As I was unaware of what was on offer (I'm

bullshitting), I went to her window to get a closer look and go inside.

Abruptly I was stopped by a knocking on the window by the lady, followed by her pointing her finger at me then wagging it in a motion that translates to 'no, no, no'. She was bloody gorgeous as well. As I walked off, head down, confidence obliterated, basically bewildered as to why, I walked by a shop selling a variety of antiquities and naturally growing foliage that you can't have in England. As an avid mushroom lover, I used the money I'd earmarked for the lady who shunned me, later I found out I'd actually been knocked back by a prostitute! So her loss was the cause of my 72 hour trip! I bought these mushrooms and I was told they were magic. Now, I remember the

magic beans that Jack bought and got a bollocking from his Mrs. As I didn't have a Mrs and the magic beans were actually magic, I purchased the mushrooms. I'm not sure if they were magic but I experienced some bizarre things in the days following taking them. So much so, once I got home from Amsterdam, I didn't touch a mushroom in any way, shape or form for a good month just in case.

Firstly, I stopped worrying about getting knocked back by a prostitute. I was more concerned about the monkey chasing me with water bombs. People said that it was raining and that but I knew it wasn't. I had a nuisance chimp following me around Amsterdam throwing water bombs in my direction.

The little shit never actually hit me directly with one but they all landed by me so on them bursting, I got wetter and wetter. I remember that I was commando crawling along the side of the canal and I saw a doorway to my right to shelter in. Well, on entry I saw that on the shelves of this place were AK47s, automatic rifles, big guns and little guns, basically an arsenal of weapons that the Terminator would encounter. I looked up and then the bloke behind the Perspex counter was wearing a gas mask! I put my head in my hands and shook my head in utter disbelief I guess. Suddenly I snapped out of my trip and I saw I was in a newsagents. The bloke was a China man wearing a mask (SARS mask), and the automatic weapons were bottles of

vodka, gin, whiskey etc etc. I panicked, picked up a Mars bar and threw €10 at him and ran out the shop. So, I've also paid €10 for a Mars bar and I don't particularly like them.

So when I go to a foreign country I always like to at least know how to say please and thank you in that countries language. I know everyone, everywhere speaks English. Anyway, when you get to Amsterdam airport you have to get a train/tram to the centre of the city.

Anyway, this chap appears from nowhere and ask us if we need a ticket? Pulling from the pocket of his beige Mac coat, this 6ft, blonde, centre parted, spectacle wearing atypical Dutch man (from a English point of view), and before the woke generation

get offended by my description, if you are offended it doesn't mean you're right. I asked him how to say please and thank you. As he pocketed my €5 for the ticket that was only €2.50 out the machine, he told me. I can't remember what please was but I'll certainly never, ever forget what he said thank you was! It was apparently "neuken in de keuken" (nur-kin in de kurken pronounced). Any one from Holland (or do we say The Netherlands now?), I guess you're giggling about it. I spent 4 days saying this. I even went as far as to get some pronunciation tips from some locals outside the Grasshopper bar in the early hours of one morning. They didn't even tell me what I was saying. Paying to go toilets in some bars, "neuken in de keuken". Getting a

drink “neuken in de keuken”, in Burger King “neuken in de keuken”, in a shop “neuken in de keuken”, basically every single place in Amsterdam I went, I said to everyone “neuken in de keuken”! So, at the airport on the way home, I checked my bag in and the lady at check in smiled and I said “neuken in de keuken”, and she burst out laughing. I said what you laughing at? That is thank you in Dutch isn't it? It wasn't. I hadn't been saying thank you to anyone. You want to know what I had been saying?

“FUCKING IN THE KITCHEN”

Just as the enormous eruption of laughter from the lads on the holiday had subsided, I got a hand on my

shoulder to which I turned round. I'd thought that all the mushrooms had wore off by this point but they mustn't have done because stood behind me was the local barber from the village I live in, Mr. D!

I've never been back to Amsterdam.

A few years ago, I saw on a Facebook group I was in for singletons in my area, an alternative dating event to be held in a supermarket on a Monday night. The supermarket remained open as usual and no advertising or fuss was made of the event. Basically, you showed up, strolled the aisles and if you were looking for love, you would place a bunch of bananas in the front right corner of your trolley. If you passed a

fellow love seeker who was displaying their bananas, you could then start to chat, discuss the benefits of bananas in a healthy, balanced diet, possibly exchange numbers and interact without the pressure of being in a bar or club.

I got there about 8.30pm (it was a 8pm start) and strolled leisurely around the aisle. Once, twice round and no sign of anyone else doing the same. An hour had now passed by and I thought It'd be best I put some more things in my trolley and not just the bananas. Well, I lasted for about 2 hours and left my trolley by the baby changing room and darted out the door. I looked on Facebook to see if the event was actually on that night and I'd not got it wrong. Well, where I lived in Salford

there's a Morrison's at one end of Eccles New Road and one at the end of Trafford Road, they're about 2 miles apart. I'd walked the two miles difference 5 times over, I'd got the night right, I'd just gone to the wrong fuckin' supermarket hadn't I!

I've come to the conclusion that it must be my personality being a disorder that is holding me back so I don't really bother about my looks too much. I'm still presentable and I like my clothes but I'm not going for tanning injections or Turkish veneers to impress someone. I'm confused with women anyway. The most beautiful thing I believe they can do is smile. Nowadays the pout is King (or Queen), as it gets more likes on social media. Makeup too. Mascara

means mask in Portuguese, I rest my case. Why mask your beauty? It's in the eye of the beholder!

Fake tan, fake nails, fake eyelashes, hair extensions, false tits and an Instagram obsession. I think it portrays them as false people who are fake. Just be yourself. It's crazy. This is the way I see girls today. Especially the 20-30s. The 30s-40s still have the Botox and again I despair about that.

conversations start with asking about the job you do, car you drive and house you live in. A checklist of material possessions to judge you on. No one is asking if you are happy anymore. It's crazy.

I'm more attracted to ladies older than me (I'm 40) as they seem to have their heads screwed on.

With regards to myself and the dating scene, I'm just going to relax and get as close to 100% as I can (you don't know what's 100% but I'm guessing you find everything falling in to place effortlessly), and then see if it happens. I'm not really bothered about it at the moment but that doesn't mean that I wouldn't like a little bit of a fumble every now and then, but only if J-Lo, Shakira, Michelle Rodriguez, Kate del Castillo or Michelle Keegan are asking?

I'll leave you anyway with my top 5 chat up lines.

5. 'Can you catch love?' 'Yes, why?' 'Couple of balls coming your way'

4. 'Have you ever had a parrot on your shoulder?' 'No, why?' 'Stick your tongue out' 🍑 'You've had a Cockatoo on that though'

3. 'Do you wanna go halves on a bastard?'

2. 'Pick a number between 1-10' '5' 'Wrong, take your top off'

1. 'I might not be the best looking lad in here love, but I'm the only one that is talking to you'

Chapter 13: Anxiety is just a posh word for having a shit imagination!

Woah! That sounds disrespectful and downright rude doesn't it? Well let me explain.

Anxiety for a start is just a word. Nothing more, nothing less but as a word, it is used to describe the angst that we've created in our own mind. I feel that the over-use of the word Anxiety is playing down it's severity in some cases. Don't think for a second that I'm dismissing the impact and effect it brings people. But you know what I'm saying here, even pets are being diagnosed with anxiety. I'm sure people agree with it and it's not a topic

for ridicule or mockery but it's a real ailment that animals are experiencing.

Previously I have said via my blogs that you find there are not enough words in the language I have to concisely and comprehensively explain what it is that I am going through and experiencing with any of these multitude of experiences Bipolar Disorder constantly introduces me on a daily basis.

So, expanding on this, I have, and still do, suffer with Social Anxiety and then to a lesser degree, General Anxiety Disorder).

I'll start with the Social Anxiety. I have no issues with going to my appointments, nor do I feel

uncomfortable visiting my Godchildren and seeing their parents, who are also my best friends, Carl and Julie too, Parents to my best mate, their son. It's about 25 years now we've been best friends, Ash's brothers too are my best friends. Curtis is the youngest and a pro golfer who (being an ABA Schoolboys Boxing Champion), traded in his punchbag for the putter. Many people have said that Ash and Curtis both were good enough to win a World Title. Alas, I had an intelligent conversation with Curtis about this, and he said that he is able to teach for many years and then there'll always be golfers who are learning, to see how they improve is a nice feeling and to know how you are making people feel better and play better is humbling. I couldn't argue

with that logic. A prize fighter is looking at mid 30s or so when you notice boxers are hanging up the gloves. You don't play boxing. It's not a sport that safeguards you from aggressive behaviour. You get punched in the face but you can't roll around on the floor like a football does. You have to hit back. The eldest brother, Royston, was the same age as me. I got to spend a lot of time with him when I moved back from Manchester. Julie, their mam, had a business and they were moving to a better equipped premises. I volunteered to type out letters, send email or text et al, to their current client base informing them of the move. It was just for 3 or 4 hours a day when I fancied it. I went everyday (I was regularly at the house anyway with

knocking about with Ash & Curt). So this no leads me on to being given the most proficient, helpful, you could say priceless advice. Roy was normally in his room when I was typing up letters for the client base. Then I'd here him charging down stairs, telling me to get a break and he was making me a cup of 'Rosie Lee', which had never been surpassed. We normally watched "Dog the Bounty Hunter" as he loved it. On this one occasion it was transfer deadline day in the football. He said he was treating me to a bacon butty because of how hard he said I'd been working today. So I'm in the front room, there's a foot rest that he pulled up to me and said get your feet up pal. As he comes back from kitchen he's just handed me a brew and a bacon

butty, as Julia his mam came in. He was buzzing with excitement when it happened and telling Julie I'd been sat there all day demanding cups of tea and I hadn't done any work whatsoever. Julie just laughed but she had to tell me I was sacked (on Royston's advice) before he'd calm down. These are the memories I have of him. He was battling with a different foe that I am. Regardless, he said that they produce the same feelings, pain, confusion etc and the cause of the situation isn't as important as the coping with that situation. He said he would never tell people that they were to do this or that, you don't dictate to anyone. You simply just offer a person a way out that you found worked for you. It doesn't mean it'll work for them but its just an option.

Even if it's not the answer for others, others now know that they aren't the only ones who have problems. I'm not saying anything about that being a positive thing but it's something that tells you aren't alone.

Royston looked at my medication and pointed out that they were all the same or working against each other.

Computer generated after I ticked boxes on questionnaire!

We would have 5 or 10 minute fag breaks, he said things to me that I resonated with and completely understood. I haven't had anything equally resonating or beneficial to me in the 10 years or so of treatment. I'm not going to list or type what he said. If

you are reading this and you want to know, please come and ask me.

Royston Edward Dean (18/05/1982 ~ 12/05/2013)

Ash and Curtis are two different people. You won't put 2+2 together and guess they're brothers. But to me they my best mates.

Also, I have a female best friend who is from the opposite side of the globe (planet). Reminiscing about being in school and learning countries on globe and trying to pronounce "Ven ez uela". Ven-was-u-el-a was Venezuela, a country I had no idea about or how to even say it's name!

Have you ever wondered how heavy a glass of water is? Well, the actual weight of the glass of water doesn't really matter. It's light enough for you to easily pick up. So, let's begin and pick up the glass of water and extend your arm so that the glass is in front of you at shoulder height. Now hold that position. You see, what does matter and is important, is how long you hold on to it. Easily able to hold it there for one minute, not a problem. What if I now said to you to hold it there for an hour? How long would it be until you get an ache in your arm? Could you hold it there for a day? Would your arm go numb and the build up of lactic acid be too much? All this time though, the weight of the glass hasn't altered or changed at all. Yet the longer you are

there, holding on to the glass of water, the heavier it is becoming.

The stresses and worries in life are just like that glass of water. Dealing with them for a just a short space of time you find that nothing really happens. Deal with them for a bit longer, and they begin to hurt. Then if you then deal with them all day long, day in and day out, eventually over time, you'll feel to be paralysed with anxiety, anxiety that is going to make no difference to what will actually happen. You will become incapable of doing anything, all because of the weight of the hypothetical situation you have created in your own mind, one that worries you to the point you have become a prisoner in your own made up, hypothetical

world, running away from reality. A person who is thinking all the time, has nothing to think about but only their own thoughts.

So, back to our brain. You have a brain that has this inescapable, unnecessary, unwanted ability to promote the worst case scenario for whatever it is you are thinking about. These are the things that you haven't experienced before. Your past images you have in your thoughts and what you are able to recall about your experiences are called memories. The present moment is the one you're experiencing and is your reality. When you think about your future, occasions, commitments and the like, you are simply just imagining the experience.

It's your imagination. So if you have a shit imagination, that is what anxiety basically is!

So, what do you do to shift your negative feelings and thoughts to promote your positivity?

Just like the ripples on the surface of water, your mind will never be flat and still.

You can become a prisoner in your hypothetical world in your mind, on the run from your enemy, your enemy though is reality and you're running away from yourself and your own sanity. It's consuming and confusing but it's possible to stop running.

For me, I started with a pen and paper as I was sick and tired of cancelling plans and then arranging something and then spending the days leading up to it being paranoid about it and nothing was getting done about it. Please remember that everyone is unique and the things that are working for one person, may not be beneficial for another person.

So as I said I started with a pen and paper and I started writing down the shite and negatives that came into my head. Initially just single words.

Pathetic. Useless. Failure. Ugly. Loser. Boring. Nuisance.

These were the first words I wrote (still have all my stuff I did), and then I tried to right a sentence with them.

“It’s pathetic for letting my nuisance of a mind be so ugly. It’s boring but I still have to listen”

It’s not using all the words nor is it Wordsworth or Shakespeare.

You know what it did though? Once I started to write more and more and put all the previous stuff with the new stuff, then my anxiety and my imagination, that what anxiety is remember, imagination, became indulgent in the writing. Gradually over time it became less and less prominent in my psyche. As soon as I got the inclination I was

going to get negativity from thinking about hypothetical stuff, I got the pen out and wrote. I don't have any expertise or skill in writing, but from doing this I have afforded myself the ability to write about my Bipolar and explain stuff to my Mental Health Practitioner and my Psychiatrist.

Unfortunately I still have a serious battle going on with social anxiety and general agitation and restlessness. If I was to tell you I currently take 750mg of Quetiapine daily, 250mg in the morning and 500mg at night, coupled with 1mg of Lorazepam, and I'm still not sleeping great or calm, you can see what I'm up against. So I'm not sleeping, I'm in bed at 9pm and then I take my medication and hopefully I will

be asleep by midnight and then my alarm is set for 9am the following day. I'm not getting to sleep until 5, 6 or 7 am sometimes and not sleeping at all on other days. You lay in bed and force yourself to try to sleep but it doesn't work. Then you think you need to get up in 6 hours or something for work. It's torture for some people who don't get much sleep. I'm not bothered about it being too much of an inconvenience really. I always made it to work on time, and now I'm no longer working I still have to get a routine in my life. Bedtime, get up time, 3 or at least 2 meals a day and then personal care which is having a bath Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

No amount of anxiety is ever going to change the outcome of what will actually happen. Imaginative constructs of your future, designed your way, using your own rules and formulating your own outcomes for what is going to happen.

Imagination involves creative thinking, identifying new and different ideas. It involves thinking outside of the box, stretching beyond your initial ideas and finding new ones.

However, want to be clear about something. Imagination isn't always easy. Sure, if I'm imagining what I'd do if I won the lottery, that's easy. If I'm imagining all of the places I want to travel post-pandemic, that's easy.

But imagining different outcomes, when my anxiety is trying to convince me that there's only one certain and awful possibility? That's MUCH harder.

If you're anxious, it's easy for your brain to imagine the worst. But it's much harder for your brain to imagine the best or even just the in between options. So, when you find yourself predicting and imagining the worst, here's what I want you to do.

Let yourself acknowledge and imagine the worst. That's fine for a second. (After all, it is a possibility.) But after that, challenge yourself to imagine a bunch of other explanations and outcomes. No matter how silly, small,

or unlikely you might think it is, name it. Acknowledge it. Imagine it as a possibility.

That effort, that act of imagination is how you poke holes in your anxiety. It's how you cast doubt on negative outcomes that seem certain in your brain.

So when your anxiety pops up this week, use your imagination. Use your imagination to think of all the possibilities, all the explanations, and all the outcomes that could occur. Do that, over and over, with intention, and you will be amazed at how quickly your anxiety comes down.

Anxiety is imagination. Let's imagine together.

*The Epileptic Log: Sausages,
Yorkshire Puddings and Peppercorn
Sauce*

My medication makes me fat. Well fatter. It's convenient to blame the weight gain completely on the pills, but it's a major instigator for putting the weight on. A major side effect of antipsychotic medication is weight gain. Simple. Scientific fact. Why? Well that's a little more complex.

I'm going to try to give you my understanding of it and then if I am wrong, the boffins can educate me about it and reveal what it is that has made me gain about two stone.

Antipsychotic drugs can make you feel hungrier, so this might lead to you eating more. It's a crazy sensation but you have a slight hunger rumbling in your tummy and you are ready for something to eat, but you can't stop eating! For me, I become hungrier the more I eat. Like I've awakened a beast from its slumber and it's now having a party in the kitchen, devouring anything in sight. Personally, I crave fatty, carbohydrate rich foods. I never crave a slice of cucumber or a carrot stick do I!?!? So all basic, tasteless, green foods, don't touch my lips. You see it's what you call unhealthy foods that are desirable. Convenient foods to stick in the air fryer or oven for a few minutes and have no need for any preparation or fuss. I've created the greatest tea for

our generation. Sausages, Yorkshire puddings and peppercorn sauce. Don't knock it until you've tried it!

Do you like sausages?

Do you like Yorkshire puddings?

Do you like peppercorn sauce?

If you have answered yes to all three questions, you're in for a taste sensation!

This craving for fatty, carbohydrate rich foods is because the antipsychotics alter some pathways in your brain and alter your hormone levels involved in the control your appetite. They are causing incorrect signals to be fired which then it causes the incorrect response of your appetite.

So when you normally eat your food, your body monitors the amount that you intake and then also works out how regular your food intake is. If you eat little and often, your metabolism is speeded up and food is digested quicker. If you eat your meals 12 hours apart, then your body becomes accustomed to metabolising your food over this period and dependant on the volume of food, the digestion could be slower than normal.

Furthermore, antipsychotics have the potential to raise the amount of sugar and fat in your bloodstream. Your body may not recognise the increase and act accordingly, but it could reset itself to the increased level being accepted as

the status quo and if your levels drop, then you would need raise them. This is majorly important to regulate due to the risk of diabetes to people.

The science behind the mechanism of antipsychotics-induced weight gain (AIWG) is generally summed up by the alteration of glucose metabolism and the increasing of cholesterol and triglyceride levels. Thus, increase the chance of insulin resistance and may cause arterial hypertension disposing to metabolic syndrome.

In English, carbohydrates (bread, sugar, pasta) in our foods are turned into bad fats and they cause harm to the normal function of your body.

