

Realisations, hesitations and hate, for blog no8

It's been over one year since my intentional decision at attempting to kill myself. I live daily with the reminder of what happened on the 20th February 2024 partly due to my tracheostomy. But physical appearance aside, mentally there isn't a day that has gone by since my attempt to suicide that I don't think about what happened. Be that what happened on the 20/04/24 or even the months leading up to that evening. Furthermore, I also give great thought as to what has happened since my incident, be that while in hospital and after. As mentioned in a previous blog and something that still remains to be the same, I have no memory from leaving my friend's house on Sunday the 18th February till the early hours of Tuesday morning, on the 20th February 2024. I have no reasoning to this but let me assure you, I've racked my brains to try and remember those missing hours. Although I've seen messages sent and received from one individual prior to carrying out my decision, none of which really make much sense or can be really justified as to why I pursued with my decision or even why I can very clearly remember the very moment I made my decision and pretty much every minute up until I fell from that tree.

In May I was very fortunate to be able to fly over to Spain, where I once lived and to stay with a friend that I have known for a number of years, eleven to be exact. Despite knowing her for a considerable amount of time, our relationship hit its hurdles as all relationships do, resulting in very little communication being had since COVID. This being mainly due to the influence of a certain individual that I have previously referred to. Looking back now and with Mr Hindsight making yet another appearance, I actually lost quite a few friends while he was on the scene. Caused much grief, influenced my behaviour and made me question a number of situations to which I already knew the answers but for whatever reason I had his back, as any partner would.

I've always been of the mindset that all relationships, regardless if family, lovers or more so in this case friends, that it's the aftermath of a falling out that matters the most. How a situation is sorted going forward between two friends shows the reality of what sort of relationship you really have or "think" you have / had. It also shows the trust and genuine love held for one another. Regardless of the minimal communication had over the few years since moving back from Spain, my friend was straight on the phone and checking in with me once finding out about my suicidal attempt. Sending her love, well wishes, apologising profusely to what occurred (even though I know it was not her fault) to even letting me know it was ok if I didn't want to reply, but reassuring me that she would always be on the end of the phone should I ever need a familiar voice to talk to, sending her love, detailing her sorrow felt when finding out and letting me know how much she missed me, often thinking about the memories we once made together while in that period of having no contact with each other.

Having been through quite an ordeal (to put it politely) not to mention seeing those pearly white gates a few times while in hospital, but more so than anything having no reason to not reply to such a heartfelt message regardless of not speaking for a while, a reply she did receive. And just like that it was like we spoke the day before, making crude jokes, reminding each other of the memories once made together and just basically talking to each other like we always did. A normal service was resumed with apologies exchanged and any gripes once had simply put to bed, with no need for explanation's or recaps of what once happened. Just a simple, straight forward invitation to stay with her and her lovely Mum as and when I felt up to it. From receiving

her message on the 9th of January 2025 it was not long till that invitation was taken up on, with me flying to Spain on the 13th May 2025.

Before I go on and just so you, the reader has a clear picture of events, I'm going to rewind back to January 2025 right up to the 13th May. My first big step forward was the fact that I was moving out of my friends house, where she and her partner very kindly put me up from the day I left hospital on the 17th April 2024. Ill be sure to write about those months in between me leaving hospital to me moving to my own home at a later date, but let me assure you that I was no easy patient, staying true to my star sign, the stubborn bull!!! However with many tears come many smiles. A moment of time that ill never forget and will forever be grateful for.

Now let me get back on track starting with January 2025! Being as blunt and as clear as day, the paper work that I had to fill out for not only financial assistance from the Government but also in order to be able to get a place to live is quite simply enough to send anyone to suicide! Let alone someone who has already attempted previous times before. Again, I'll get to those details later as I can assure you, as the reader you will get lost in it all, just like I do when trying to rethink! However, after much support from my mental health team and the guidance from a member of the housing association, I was given the go ahead to finally be able to find a property. This meaning I was given an allocated amount towards the rent of a property in which the council will pay, meaning I'll have to make up the remaining costs should the rent be more than what is offered. As daunting as it was to know ill be leaving the safety of where I was staying and following a few minor set backs along the way (again, something ill refer back to at a later date) I was rather excited to be able to get back to standing on my own two feet, even if it meant living alone once again. In no time at all and after much searching, I finally found a property that was in close proximity to my friends as well as all amenities I should require, given the new car I purchased just two days before my suicide attempt was returned to the dealership, being in walking distance to a super market for example was a must, as was being able to walk to my friends. Thankfully for me I was approved to move into the property I liked and a date was set to take on the tenancy for the 17th January 2025. New year, new home!

With the keys handed over and the final nitty gritty papers signed, the deal was done and just like that, I had my own property to call home once again. Moving house is something I've done countless times since leaving home just before my 16th birthday. I use to joke by saying all my life's possessions could fit into my Smart car and still have my much loved Betsy (my pug) in her usual spot beside me, with ample room for her to move and get comfy before setting off for yet another place to live. Aged now 35 I can count up to 24 house moves since originally moving out of my family home and even then I'm sure I'm missing some properties off the list! I moved three times while living in Spain in the two years I was there, and that's not including those moves made while being in the UK! Be it so, life for me was on the turn from where I once was in February 2024.

To add to the excitement of a new home, I was also nearing the completion of a course I signed up to on self-harm awareness and suicide prevention with Portsmouth Collage, something that might sound rather odd to some given it was within the same year of me starting the course that I actually attempted to take my own life!? However, for me I learnt so much. It gave me a greater understanding of those potentially suffering in some way, shape or form to why people not only self-harm but decide in attempting to take their own lives. Signs to look out for, feelings and thoughts explained that I myself once felt. It made me realise that although it was a severe course of action to take, many others have also been exactly where I once was myself. Having passed all my assignments, speaking mainly first hand from my own experiences without the

need to research certain areas regarding the thoughts and feeling one might feel at times, gaining those certificates was a very personal achievement for me that come with an array of emotions. I'll never forget that initial sense of feeling proud of myself for completing all assignments and passing them all, with constructive comments from my tutor who lead the course at Portsmouth Collage, praising me in my ability to show such empathy, mentioning matters that were not spoken off in the information given to help assist with the answering of various questions asked. Bearing in mind that she didn't know I had tried to kill myself that very same year that I started the course in 2024 and completed in February 2025. The sense of feeling proud was a feeling I had not felt in a considerable amount of time. Feeling proud of myself for achieving something all on my own, off my own back, with no pressure to do so but more so a desire to want to learn, understand and potentially help others. Which soon enough lead me on to deciding to make this blog.

In addition to completing my course of which I was determined to do so, I looked up what other options were available to me in order to make some sort of difference, some sort of impact on what surrounds mental health. Its only when you're in the middle of a crisis or start to pay attention to something specific that you actually see the reality of so much more than what is actually being advertised or more so spoken about. Right up until the Christmas period of 2024 from leaving hospital in the April, id often get asked from random individuals why I have a tracheostomy or more so being asked what is that I have around my neck? What does it do? How did I do it? To even once being asked about how I'm living financially, bearing in mind I've never met this individual before! I personally, would never dream of asking such questions to someone I don't know. From cashiers in Sainsburys, to random people in the street, to just punters in a pub, I'd be approached and asked. Quite often following their initial question (which for quite some time left me speechless, if not hesitant to say) they would quickly follow it up with what they thought my tracheostomy was due to. Usually it was cancer. On one occasion someone suggested long term covid. I'm ashamed to say that more often than not, I would usually just agree to what they suggested and quickly went about my business. Each and every time I was asked, I'd say nine out of ten would follow it up with blaming it on cancer. And every time I just agreed with them. Purley more from not knowing what to respond with, not wanting to make that person asking feel awkward, regardless of the fact that a complete stranger was making me feel awkward by asking me such questions, yet still feeling the need to answer them, rather than just saying mind your own business. I remember on one occasion having a conversation with a very good friend to whom I explained that for whatever reason I can't summon the correct response for when asked what or why I have my tracheostomy, often meaning I just agree with whatever answer they chuck my way, after asking their initial question. Maybe I was in denial? Maybe I was still getting my head around what had actually happened? One thing for sure was that I was not taking ownership of what I had done to myself and by not taking ownership, I was not treating it as seriously as what those close to me were. Id often miss appointments, avoid the crisis team that would initially show up every other day to avoiding therapy and so on. I could and still can find a justified reason for not wanting to leave my home or back then, my bedroom. Not long after this conversation was had with my friend, she later introduced me to a gentleman who once again confronted me with the question as to why I had what I had around my neck, again (like normal) quickly followed up with "is it cancer" to which I said yes and then very quickly tried to change the subject. However on this specific occasion, I was outed straight away by my friend to which my face must have said it all when looking at her as she quickly tried to retract what she had just said. Totally forgetting what was not long before mentioned, I was mortified. Although no specific details were given I found myself digging my

very own grave (no pun intended) with lie after lie. With my friend now gone from sight and with me left with this gentleman, conversation moved on to my finances and where I'm living and how my treatment is going etc. I soon enough reached boiling point, as well as finishing my drink, informing him that he should really think before he talks and asks such personal questions to someone he does not know. And with that I spun on my heels and left the bar to go home.

Following on from my hospital stay, my memory was and still is very much scatty, to put it lightly. But certain moments stand out more than others for whatever reason. So although I was a little annoyed I was not angry at the fact my friend almost let slip that I actually tried to kill myself by hanging. This incident stayed in my memory for quite some time but having completed my course on self-harm awareness and suicide prevention, I found this new strength within me to start being honest or more so funny, really showing off my dark sense of humour and turning the awkwardness I would be made to feel around and passed back onto the person asking the initial question regarding my tracheostomy. With this said, it was not long until I built up the courage and finally admit to not only myself but to others that the reason I have a tracheostomy is purely because I tried to hang myself, completely dissembling my trachea and all around it, meaning my voice box is and will forever be paralyzed, meaning I will never be able to talk without my tracheostomy in place.

I'll never forget the very first time I was asked by yet another stranger while sat in a bar with friends, what had happened to me to have what I have around my neck. Without a thought and without any fear or hesitation I replied with a simple straight talking front "I was bird watching one evening and while standing on a branch of a tree a bird flew straight into me, meaning I fell out of the tree and ripped my throat out in the process" Silence. From not only the person who asked the question but also from my friends. I took a sip of my drink while my friends jaws were all on the floor and the guy who asked the question in pure shock, I placed my drink down and went on to say "Only joking, I tried to hang myself from a tree but the branch broke and caused loads of damage. I died four times, lungs filled with blood and was in a coma for five weeks, but I'm ok now, still alive and able to talk" Now this time there was even more silence as well as shock from everyone around the table and other listening ears. Yet although I was honest the second time round, the person asking me didn't believe me with my second answer, choosing to believe a bird actually flew into me while I was out bird watching, so much so that he asked what type of bird it was, to which I replied an owl. And it was from that very moment that I continued to use the bird story before quickly telling the truth, to which usually left the person asking speechless and me trying not to laugh at their reaction! On one occasion there was a lad who was so lost for words that all he could respond with was to ask me what type of tree it was!! Something that no one has ever asked me and something I unfortunately don't know the answer to. I just know that the branch was wider than my once 28" waist! Having jumped up and down on that branch continuously to check its strength, how that branch that was so thick managed to break when I weighed no more than nine stone at the time is something I'll never really understand. But it happened and as my friend who I refer back to in blog number six said while looking down on me laying on the floor, nudging me with his foot "Nah mate, it's not your time yet."

With regards to that particular tree, I have only ever returned to it once. While living in Abinger Hammer (just outside Dorking) I would often pass this woodland but never with the thought process of what lead me to such events. It was early May 2024 and having finished a final check out of the property I was living in, I decided to visit that very tree. It was suggested by a friend

while I was in hospital that I should go and visit that tree and pass on my thanks, for if that branch did not break events would have turned out very differently as to what they are now. And so I visited that tree, on my own and with no one around, to pass on my thanks and appreciation. Although I don't regret anything regarding my suicidal attempt and have at times wished my intentions worked, I live with the fact that my plan didn't work. It simply was not my time, choosing to look at it in a sense of being needed here, alive and with unfinished business to complete. If anything and as weird as this might sound to some, I'm upset with myself for causing that branch to snap on that tree that has been there for many, many years. Upon visiting this tree I passed on my thanks for giving me another chance to live. It was very eerie not only being in front of that tree but more so when I touched it. Almost like time stood still, with it being just me and that tree having a sort of 'moment' together with an overwhelming energy felt which reduced me to tears. Having thanked that tree and after wiping away my tears, I left a small crystal, tucked away in a little nook up high in the trunk, this crystal being Rose Quartz. For those that don't know, Rose Quartz is a powerful symbol of unconditional love, compassion and inner peace. Encouraging self-love and self-forgiveness. Rose Quartz is also attached to the heart and throat chakra, representing all types of love and self-care. A crystal I felt most fitting to gift to that tree, especially after the damage caused to my own throat. I've not passed that tree since, choosing to drive the long way around when visiting friends to avoid passing that tree. However I'm sure I'll visit it again one day when feeling ready to do so. Maybe I'll even find out what type of tree it was!?

From gaining the courage to be upfront and honest about why I have a tracheostomy to whoever asks, with me speaking before anyone gets the chance to even utter the word cancer, I now skip the jokes (unless I'm in that winding up mood) and tell my story, honestly and directly. No big bravado, requesting no sympathy and most of all standing my ground over what is asked or more so how their questions are asked. I've even at times asked individuals to respect my privacy with regards to what I decide to tell them and to not feel the need to lecture me on life or how I should be living it, that ship sailed back in 2024. With me being so honest I am doing what I set out to do with this very blog in breaking down all the stigma around mental health. If I can't take ownership of my own actions, then this whole blog would be pointless. Why bother being so open online if I can't be open and honest in person? Life is hard. Times can get rough. But most of all, everyone is on their own individual journey, meaning that no two people could ever be the same with how their minds process information, trauma, emotion and so on. Mental health is REAL. I've found that since I've been open and honest about my tracheostomy, both online but more so in person, the messages I receive, the questions that I'm then asked once knowing why I have a tracheostomy very often lead on to seeing a side of vulnerability within people that I imagine not many would often see, once being asked not to mention what was said to the mutual friends we had in common. I'm often told about the thoughts and experiences others have felt with regards to their own mental health. Unleashing information to me, a stranger, about their own struggles they have faced, thoughts they have to deal or dealt with, experiences they have lived through. Being trusted with such information having more often than not never met each other before is something so very special and something I treat with the upmost respect along with a sense of understanding to their deepest darkest secrets that are told. I'm no professional, yes I completed a course but regardless of a sheet of paper stating a qualification I've gained, I have real life experience of not only attempting suicide but so much more. Something you certainly can't buy or feel you know or fully understand from simply reading a book, be that about child abuse both physical or sexual, rejection / abandonment issues, addiction, narcissistic behaviour, deceit and betrayal, adoption or various other

traumatic experiences that I would simply not wish on anyone to have to go through themselves. Although it takes quite a lot to shock me, never would I degrade one person's own experiences to someone else's. Trauma experienced by any individual is not a competition to be had with others but more so a lifetime sentence of which has to be constantly managed, be that independently or with various coping skills that are available and found suited to that individual. As stated at the beginning of my blog, I'll remain as honest and as open with you all as I possibly can be. So with this being said, I can honestly say that I have not yet found a coping strategy that suits my needs or requirements to date so by no means do I mean to preach to anyone reading on with what they should or shouldn't be doing. Coping for me right now is living off 19 tablets that I have to take each and every day. A big difference considering it used to be 24 tablets! Once again, everyone is an individual and should be treated individually, catering to their own needs. However, it has to be said that I do enjoy writing, it would be a bit weird if I didn't considering my decision to start this blog. So I guess in some ways writing is a coping skill for me, to express my feelings and to lay out my thoughts and feelings, even if at times they may cause upset to others when reading. Be that for my blog, my journal or just simply to be written in the notes on my phone, just for my own reference. However, I know myself well enough to know that if I was in a moment of rage / anger, then writing would be out of the question. Preferring to be alone, usually in bed to sleep or just simply to chill out with a film till I've calmed down. But with this said, for me writing is no easy task or is it as straightforward as it might appear, meaning I have to be in the right state of mind to do so as well as have that drive within me to want to write. Which might explain to many why I've not posted anything recently apart from a poem I made while in a period of vulnerability.

In reference to my latest poem, *Whispering Whimpers Whimpering*, this was written at a time where I felt a great sense of vulnerability and if being completely honest, encouraged those suicidal thoughts to reappear, thoughts that I had not thought about in quite some time. Prior to me going to Spain, I requested my weekly prescription as I usually would do via the NHS app. Due to an intended overdose last summer, my prescription for my medication is now only allowed to be prescribed on a weekly basis for my own safety. With this in mind and knowing that a weekly prescription would not cover my time away in Spain, I requested an additional prescription from my mental health doctor to pick up on the same day as my other medication, the day before I was due to fly. Now I have never had an issue with collecting my meds, however on this one occasion, three of my most important meds were not signed off, meaning I would run out on the Wednesday while in Spain before my flight back home on the Friday. With this in mind and with not being able to be rectified in time, I took that chance and missed out on what should have only been two days of medication, as I was due to fly back on the Friday and pick my prescription up like normal. However this was not the case. With the Monday following being a bank holiday, I ended up going into heavy withdrawals from not being on the medication I had been taking for quite some time. Nine full days of being straight off the prescribed drugs sent me into having heavy sweats, headaches, loss of appetite, anxiety in overdrive, a rash that looked like I had mange covering my entire body, unable to sleep and heavy psychosis episodes meaning that I couldn't even leave my house, which in turn meant I missed out on going to three appointments from pure fear. Paranoia had well and truly set in with me jumping out of my skin at the quietest of noises, a floor board creaking or even the automatic lights flicking on in my landing. The lights were the worst, with me laying on the floor watching the light shine under my front door until they went out but still very much being on high alert for whatever reason. Finally with my mental health team cracking the whip with my GP I was given the all clear to get my prescription on the Thursday. A journey that took every fibre of my being to be able to do,

pouring in sweat, jumpy at anyone walking past me or even looking at me. It was not until I got to the pharmacy, shaking like a shitting dog that I fainted. Being a regular to my local pharmacy, I knew I was in good hands and they helped me through, to which I'm very grateful for. Now back on my meds, my body still ached for a solid week after if not more. But here I am now, feeling much better and with another blog on the go!

Getting back on track yet again, while I was in the middle of doing my self-harm awareness and suicide prevention course in January, I see an advert on Facebook pop up for the charity Mind, in which it was advertising for applicants to sign themselves up to walking 56 miles in February, with all funds going to the charity. I spent little time in thinking about it and straight away I signed myself up for the task. Totally disregarding the fact that I get out of breath simply Hoovering or taking the bins out, let alone walking 56 miles over the course of one month! 56 miles equalling to two miles each day over the 28 days of February. What with having no car, I felt this rather straight forward and something I could actually accomplish, despite my breathing issues. One thing lead to another and before I knew it, I was then arranging for a social gathering to celebrate this accomplishment at the end of February. With a brisk walk on the Epsom Downs to then going back to a local pub where I originally only reserved a corner suitable for 15 people however having freely invited anyone and everyone to attend, never in my wildest dreams did I think I'd have a turn out of over 80 people and raise over £4000!!! Completing all 56 miles, which often included just me walking to and from the stables to see my pony to walking around Sainsburys! An article was posted in the local newspaper detailing my intended event and again, inviting anyone to attend. Shortly after my medal from Mind arrived, symbolising what I had achieved. What many people do not know is that the evening before this event, nerves set in! And I was so very close to cancelling the event and would have done so if it was not for my friend who stayed with me the night before, blowing up countless balloons and contacting / finalising details. To even asking her mum to arrange for some flower displays which were beautiful! I went to bed early full of dread and uncertainty, having received many messages from people apologising for not being able to join as well as realising that for the first time since before my accident I'll actually be seeing and talking with many friends I've not seen in months, just this alone filled me with anxiety beyond believe. Anxiety from seeing friends!? Yep, I can assure you is real, having personally experienced this on many occasions.

It was only when I got to the pub that I realised the original area reserved quickly filled with familiar faces. Not only the area reserved but half of the pub itself! Wherever I looked I knew someone, greeted with an overwhelming amount of love and gratitude to all that arrived. I was truly speechless..... And not because of my tracheostomy!

My drive to do more continued for mental health and with that, I applied to be a volunteer for the charity, SHOUT. This charity runs a text in service to all those preferring to write their thoughts or feelings rather than talk to someone over the phone like other charities offer. Talking has never been my strong point so I resonated a lot with the concept that SHOUT offered. With my course nearing its completion, my fundraising exceeding all expectations, I was now embarking on another mission. To help and support those in their time of need, having had that real life experience. However, as the course come to a close, realisations started to come to light over exactly what was being offered to those sending in their text messages, with what was allowed or more so, seen as more appropriate to respond with. For various reasons, their methods in helping others did not sit right with me. Rather than othering the required help or more so suggesting / directing them to what is available to help them with whatever it was they were dealing with, their main aim was to simply dampen down the situation at hand, calming down

the scenario that person sending in their message was in and not actually resolving anything. Although I feel their intentions are great and mean well, for me personally, I did not feel comfortable in what they expected their volunteers to be responding with to those that were vulnerable and so I decided to withdraw from the position offered, staying loyal to what I felt was more adequate when responding to those that would send in their messages of concern

On the 16th February 2025 I contacted a friend that has helped me multiple times with anything tech! She is a true genius and has helped me with various projects over the years. While in this whirlwind of ideas and wanting to do more, I decided I wanted to start a blog. She wasted no time in sorting out a logo and set to work. On the 9th of March 2025 my blog went live! And here we are now, writing my 8th blog and with a list of ideas and things I want to pursue in raising awareness regarding mental health. Be that giving talks in schools, aiding others with their own mental health battles in some form, being interviewed on a local radio station to even pursuing the opportunity of being offered my very own book deal!

Although I feel great comfort in being able to express my thoughts and feeling via my blog, not to mention the many messages received from those I know and many I don't all from various parts of the world, I must say that there is a price to pay for being honest and open, as I've always set out to be. Now while I'll never mention names or willingly use my blog to belittle someone or intentionally hurt someone's feelings, I will be honest, for mental health is no fairytale. I'd prefer not to mention someone than choose to write about them and the impact they had on me in one way or another, be that before or after my suicide attempt. By deciding not to mention an individual, it's not me intending on misleading anyone, it's more me accepting that they hold no relevance to my life or be it my story. For my story has more than enough characters! Since my suicidal attempt or more so since leaving hospital to moving out to live on my own, I have come to many realisations. These realisations have come in many forms and all about various matters, be it myself or others regardless of the type of relationship once held, situations once endured to what could have once been said by someone, anyone. Although my memory remains scatty, more so than before my incident, there is much I still do remember. Although hard, if not hurtful at times, its finding a way to deal with what I now realise to be true that's the hardest part to contemplate. Going to Spain to see my friends was the best thing for me, even though initial plans didn't go to plan, everything worked out perfectly and allowed me the opportunity to be able to breath, without any pressure and actually realise for myself just how resilient I actually am. Realising as well as acting upon what no longer serves me, what brings me down to what lifts me up. Those I can trust and those I despise, all with valid reasoning. To realising what it is I actually want for myself going forward, having been given this chance to still breath, to still live a life so many wish they could have.

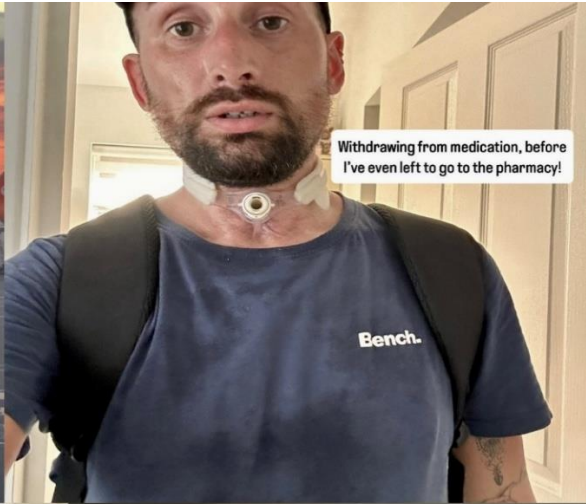
They say everything happens for a reason and its only now that I truly believe in this phrase. It has also been said before that you will only know a true friend in your time of need. But with this said, just like the seasons change, people grow, both mentally as well as physically. Everything happens for a reason.

NMD

16/06/2025



Off to Spain I go!



Withdrawing from medication, before I've even left to go to the pharmacy!



Laying on the floor, having heard the lights on the landing turn on!?!?



Still laying on the floor waiting for the lights to turn off!!