

Susan

EPISODE 23: SHORT STORY (MEMOIR) - *THE CONSTANCY OF ENTROPY*

***Summary: This is my story about discovering I have ADD and learning to cope with it.***

“Just because something bears the aspect of the inevitable one should not, therefore, go along willingly with it.” — Philip K. Dick

“We just don’t understand why she’s struggling so much in the class.” To that, my Chemistry teacher replies, “‘Struggling’ implies effort, and she hasn’t put in any.” I feel myself tense up defensively. I already know what comes next. Annoyance. Anger. Guilt. Frustration. All the emotions on point like clockwork. And then the tears. You can’t seriously be crying again. I quickly cover my face, but I can still feel the reactions of those around me. My teacher rolls his eyes, my guidance counselor tenses up with concern, and my parents sigh with frustration.

This was one of the many parent-teacher meetings I had my junior year of high school. Some involved the principal, my academic advisor, my counselor—sometimes even two or three of my teachers. It was mid-November and I had already had two of these meetings. I cried at both. Hence, the eye roll. This was the third: I was the only kid in my Chemistry class who’d managed to fail every single test in the marking period. I was infamous. My chemistry teacher was also a big fan of peer-grading, which meant I had a stack of graded tests with comments on them like “Bravo!” and “You’re the real MVP!” next to scores like 40 and 15. Sometimes they even sank into the single digits. Bravo, indeed. I was *The Girl Who Made Everyone Else Feel Better About Failing*. If someone didn’t study or do their homework, they could just tell

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themselves, “Hey, at least you know Bri definitely didn’t.” And with that thought, they could go on with their day feeling a little less guilty. Glad I could help. I embraced this persona my peers had given me. I embraced it because it gave me some semblance of pride. This self-deprecation is what the school psychologist would later refer to as my “go-to” coping-mechanism.

After finally catching my breath, my guidance counselor suggested I talk to the school psychologist, and with that, the meeting was over. I went back to class and ~~relaid~~relayed what had happened in the meeting to my friends. They were concerned when they saw my puffy red eyes, but I reassured them that I was fine. I cried because I just didn’t feel like dealing with another lecture from my parents and how they didn’t like confrontation, so tears would help. I laughed it off as just another one of my antics, and to that, I got a sarcastic slow clap and a few chuckles.

I hadn’t intended on actually seeing the school psychologist until I got called to her office during one of my free periods a few days later. I’d seen enough movies to know how it would go. She’d ask me to sit and then ask me about my day, and I’d entertain her mundane questions until I’d finally just tell her to cut the crap and convince her I was fine and I was just having trouble “balancing my school and social life” and that would be that.

But when I got to her office, she asked me to sit, asked me about my day, and then asked me what I planned to do with my life.

The suddenness of the question caught me off guard, so I just shrugged and said I didn’t know.

She asked me if I planned on going to college.

I shrugged again. “Of course.”

She replied, “Do you think you’ll get into college with the grades you’ve been getting?”

**Commented [s1]:** You see how breaking up the paragraph changes how the reader reads the story? I think it brings the reader in more, as if they’re part of a conversation. When it’s all one paragraph, it’s more in her head.

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And with that, I felt the defensiveness building up again. *I thought you were supposed to help me, not lecture me.* But I said nothing.

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And then, as if she could read my mind, “I’m not trying to lecture you, I just want you to know, because not many students understand this, that there are other options. School just isn’t for everyone. You could take online classes or go to a trade school.”

And, again like clockwork, the tears came—but this time they weren’t met with an eye roll. Knowing that in a world where education is the only way to succeed, someone acknowledging the fact that I can’t be traditionally educated, and may never fit into the regimented system of learning, made me feel that no one may ever recognize how fully capable I am of forming great ideas, which was soul-crushing.

She asked me why I was upset, and I told her that I wanted to go to college.

“So then why don’t your grades reflect that?”

I had no answer for her.

She gave me a book she thought I’d like and then I left. The book was called *Driven to Distraction: Recognizing and Coping with Attention Deficit Disorder*. I wasn’t surprised. I mean, I’d thought about it before and I’d done enough Google searches to know what it was and the similarities there were between its symptoms and some of my habits. I went home, put my homework aside, per usual, and sat down thinking I’d skim a few pages.

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~~I read the whole book in one night~~

Commented [s2]: Keep this sentence on its own. It emphasizes the importance of this moment in her life (I moved it down).

~~I couldn’t sleep that night knowing now that there were other people out there like the author, Edward M. Hallowell, who went through the exact same things as me. It was like he’d literally written a book about my life. It was in the first few lines of the book that I knew I wasn’t alone. He talks about the skeptics of ADD, with one particular quote that struck me:~~

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"For some people, this was, and still is, heresy. The old moral model dies hard. It still lives on in the minds of certain groups and individuals. At the heart of the moral model beats the conviction that willpower controls all human emotion, learning, and behavior. Under this model, the cure for depression is to cheer up. The cure for anxiety is to suck it up. And the cure for ADD is to try harder. While trying harder helps just about everything, telling someone with ADD to try harder is no more helpful than telling someone who is nearsighted to squint harder. It missed the biological point."

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I read the whole book in one night.

Commented [s3]: Keep this sentence on its own. It emphasizes the importance of this moment in her life.

I couldn't sleep after I'd finished it, knowing now that there were other people out there like the author, Edward M. Hallowell, who went through the exact same things as me. It was like he'd literally written a book about my life. He had put into words what I could never explain to people like my parents and teachers without sounding like I was making excuses. Suddenly there was justification for everything I'd done (or hadn't done) when it came to my school work and social life. His words had brought me back to middle school, when school work had suddenly become somewhat difficult and there were no more easy A's. School had become a deflating—rather than a rewarding—environment to me.

"Keep those faces in mind, the little girls and boys in the early grades, all trusting the adults to show them the way, all eager and excited about life and what will come next, and then just follow those faces over time. Follow the face of a little girl who doesn't read very well and is told to try harder; who tends to daydream and is told she better pay attention; who talks out in class when she sees something fascinating, like a butterfly on the windowpane, and is told to leave the class and report to the principal; who forgets her homework and is told she will just never learn, will she; who writes a story rich in imagination and insight and is told her handwriting and spelling are atrocious; who asks for help and is told she should try harder herself before getting others to do her work for her; who begins to feel unhappy in school and is told that big girls try harder. This is the brutal process of the breaking of the spirit of a child. I can think of no more precious resource than the spirits of our children. Life necessarily breaks us all down

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somewhat, but to do it unnecessarily to our children in the name of educating them--this is a tragedy. To take the joy of learning--which one can see in any child experimenting with something new--to take that joy and turn it into fear--that is something we should never do."

I realized there were so many things about myself that were bringing me down, and there were so many others out there that were the same way. I finally understood why I could read a whole 300-page book in one night but never finish a chapter in a textbook. Why I couldn't remember certain things, no matter how hard I tried to commit them to memory (because short term memory loss is another common symptom of ADD). Why I could feel so incredibly pathetic and useless when I couldn't remember something I'd learned in class an hour ago, or a person's name whom I'd met several times, or how to multiply, or write all my notes in one notebook rather than scraps of paper that would end up in the trash, or how I could forget what I was trying to say to someone in the middle of a sentence, or how one little accomplishment made me feel so good that I couldn't even remember what it felt like to be a failure, or understand how I could be so lazy to the point where I'm right back at not having done a single thing, and sink lower and lower, because with every unfinished task you feel another one coming. Time ceases to exist because you feel like nothing's getting done now and you convince yourself nothing will get done later, either. The entropy of the universe takes its ultimate toll. And the worst part is - everyone else has somehow always got their shit together. You're all climbing this mountain, but for some reason you have to keep stopping or you'll fall off, but you're still watching everyone go completely unhindered, until you suddenly realize you've been carrying a backpack full of rocks and their backpacks are all empty. They don't see all that's holding you back, so they don't understand. Finally knowing the problem was liberating.

Commented [s4]: I think all of this is valid and good, but need you to break it up a little so that I can digest it better

> didn't know that

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Reading this book had validated everything in myself that I had scoffed at. But this is where it gets tricky: You know you've got this problem, but now you must come to terms with the fact that there is no cure, only treatment. The first thing anyone might suggest is medication, which I suggested to my parents. They, however, refused. I can't say I was all for taking those brain-morpher meds either, but I was at a point where I saw no other way to fix myself. Eventually, I'd come to terms with the fact that if I wanted to change, I had to do it on my own.

→ why? this in itself is a conversation, a potential conflict to show to the readers.

One thing I've read that is common in people with ADD is our survival instinct. When we see that something isn't working, whether it's of our own accord or not, we can only focus from that point **on, on** another course of action that may work better. With another string of google searches, I taught myself different strategies to motivate myself, stay focused, and stay positive. I conceded that the only way to get my grades up was to swallow my pride and ask my teachers and friends for help.

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I ended the year with a C in Chemistry and a few B's and C's in my other classes. I'd passed, and that was good enough. For everyone else at least. I spent the summer wallowing in the fact that I'd screwed up the most important year of high school and that I'd never get into a decent college. But being a survivalist no matter what the situation, I found other ways to prove myself to schools I'd never have a chance of getting into with a 2.4 GPA. I put my GPA and my senior year school work aside and put everything I had in me into studying for the SAT, writing my college essays, and going to interviews. I refrained from telling some of my classmates what schools I was applying to. I knew exactly what kind of reactions I would get if they knew I had hopes of getting into some fairly selective colleges. In retrospect, it probably was naive of me to believe I could do it. But I did.

→ potential conflict to show

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When spring came, I'd gotten acceptances from all of my top-choice schools. I spent the rest of the year being bombarded by questions like "How'd you do it?" I'd brush them off by saying I had a decent SAT score, a Princeton Review's College Essays That Made a Difference-worthy essay, and played the Hispanic card. It's always been a habit of mine to undermine myself to others. But this time, invalidating myself didn't feel so bad because I knew exactly what I was dealing with in my own head, and I knew I was capable. This aversion to revelling in these rare opportunities to brag comes from opposition to competition between myself and my peers, and the insecurity it brings that seems to burrow itself deeper the harder I try to wrench it out. That's another thing I have to work on, but I guess there's always another "thing." Ernest Hemingway once said, "There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow man; true nobility is being superior to your former self." So I'll work on myself for now.

Commented [s5]: There is for everyone.

My life had been one long inner-dialogue interrupted by the disappointment of those around me when I couldn't succeed, and the constant reminders to my teachers and parents when I actually accomplished something: "Don't get too excited, I'm probably gonna screw up the next five things I do." I no longer feel the need to do that, but sometimes it's instinctive. Over the past two years, I've developed the rarest combination of confidence and humility to seek help when I need it, and to understand that it really isn't my fault.

Commented [s6]: This paragraph feels a little displaced me. I'm not sure you need it.

ADD has been regarded as one of the most detrimental disorders a person could have, but once diagnosed, there's much beauty in it. I see it in myself. All the positive attributes that come with having ADD: like resilience, creativity, bravery. I had let myself drown for so long because I felt like I couldn't cope. The problem was, I had no idea what I was trying to cope with. Diagnosis is the most important step when it comes to ADD, because sometimes it's all a person needs.

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Jan's Comments

Recommended Books of kids dealing with disabilities. See how these authors bring us on the journey.

- *Out of my mind* by Sharon M. Draper
- *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio
- *Fish in a Tree* by Lynda Murray Hunt

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from what her or paren.

It's she herself.

Present tense

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Some involved the principal, my academic advisor, my counselor—sometimes even two or three of my teachers. It was mid-November and I had already endured two of these meetings. I cried at both. Hence, the eye roll. This was the third. I was the only kid in my Chemistry class who’d managed to fail every single test in the marking period. I was infamous. My chemistry teacher was also a big fan of peer-grading, which meant I had a stack of graded tests with comments on them like “Bravo!” and “You’re the real MVP!” next to scores like 40 and 15. Sometimes they even sank into the single digits. Bravo, indeed. I was The Girl Who Made Everyone Else Feel Better About Failing. If someone didn’t study or do their homework, they could just tell

Past tense



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themselves, "Hey, at least you know Bri definitely didn't." <sup>then</sup> And with that thought, they could go on with their day feeling ~~a little~~ less guilty. Glad I could help. I embraced this persona my peers had given me. I embraced it because it gave me some semblance of pride. This self-deprecation is what the school psychologist would later refer to as my "go-to" coping-mechanism. <sup>why?</sup>

After finally catching my breath, my guidance counselor suggested I talk to the school psychologist, <sup>and with that</sup> the meeting was over. I went back to class and <sup>relaxed</sup> what had happened in the meeting to my friends. They were concerned when they saw my puffy red eyes, but I reassured them ~~that~~ I was fine. I cried because I just didn't feel like dealing with another lecture from my parents, ~~and how~~ they didn't like confrontation, so tears <sup>helped</sup> would help. I laughed it off as just another one of my antics, and <sup>for</sup> to that, I got a sarcastic slow clap and a few chuckles.

I hadn't intended on <sup>ever</sup> actually seeing the school psychologist until I got called to her office during one of my free periods a few days later. I'd seen enough movies to know how it would go. She'd ask me to sit and then ask me about my day, <sup>and</sup> I'd entertain her mundane questions until I'd finally <sup>just</sup> tell her to cut the crap and convince her I was fine and I was just having trouble "balancing my school and social life." <sup>and</sup> that would be that. But when I got to her office, she asked me to sit, asked me about my day, and then asked me what I planned to do with my life. The ~~suddenness~~ <sup>"#"</sup> of the question caught me off guard, so I <sup>just</sup> shrugged and said, "I don't know." She asked <sup>me</sup> if I planned on going to college. I shrugged again. "Of course." She replied, "Do you think you'll get into college with the grades you've been getting?" <sup>and</sup> with that I felt the defensiveness building <sup>up</sup> again. I thought <sup>she was</sup> you were supposed to help me, not lecture me. But I said nothing. <sup>and</sup> then, as if she could read my mind, "I'm not trying to lecture you, I just want you to know, because not many students understand <sup>this</sup> that there are other options. School <sup>just</sup> isn't for everyone. You could take online classes or go to a trade school." <sup>and</sup> again like <sup>new parasitic when speaker changes</sup>

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like what?  
what are her  
interests

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I suspect  
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what yea  
15+ things

I couldn't sleep that night knowing ~~now~~ that there were other people out there like the author, Edward M. Hallowell, who went through the exact same things as me. It was like he'd ~~literally~~ written a book about my life. <sup>told me</sup> It was in the first few lines of the book that I knew I wasn't alone. He <sup>ed</sup> talks about the skeptics of ADD, with one particular quote that struck me:

"For some people, this was, and still is, heresy. The old moral model dies hard. It still lives on in the minds of certain groups and individuals. At the heart of the moral model beats the conviction that willpower controls all human emotion, learning, and behavior. Under this model, the cure for depression is to cheer up. The cure for anxiety is to suck it up. And the cure for ADD is to try harder. While trying harder helps just about everything, telling someone with ADD to try harder is no more helpful than telling someone who is nearsighted to squint harder. ~~It missed the~~ biological point."

Shorten it  
I'll pull  
the real  
out of  
stars  
Jovan  
Shorten +  
without los  
its important

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Gives examples.

He had put into words what I could never explain to ~~people like~~ my parents and teachers without sounding like I was making excuses. Suddenly, there was justification for everything I'd done (or hadn't done) when it came to my school work and social life. His words had brought me back to middle school, when school work had suddenly become ~~some~~ difficult and there were no more easy A's. School had <sup>changed into</sup> ~~become~~ a deflating—rather than a rewarding—environment to me.

Quote from a book?

"Keep those faces in mind, the little girls and boys in the early grades, all trusting the adults to show them the way, all eager and excited about life and what will come next, and then just follow those faces over time. Follow the face of a little girl who doesn't read very well and is told to try harder; who tends to daydream and is told she better pay attention; who talks out in class when she sees something fascinating, like a butterfly on the windowpane, and is told to leave the class and report to the principal; who forgets her homework and is told she will just never learn, will she; who writes a story rich in imagination and insight and is told her handwriting and spelling are atrocious; who asks for help and is told she should try harder herself before getting others to do her work for her; who begins to feel unhappy in school and is told that big girls try harder. This is the brutal process of the breaking of the spirit of a child. I can think of no more precious resource than the spirits of our children. Life necessarily breaks us all down somewhat, but to do it unnecessarily to our children in the name of educating them--this is a tragedy. To take the joy of learning--which one can see in any child experimenting with something new--to take that joy and turn it into fear--that is something we should never do."

Don't quote this. Show this happens to her

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why?  
tell us.

felt the same way.

felt

long & this is sentence.

Show us a scene where this happens for her

why did you write to person?

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I

I

I

me

Finally

got

I knew I had

suggested

why?

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I ended the year with a C in Chemistry and a few B's and C's in my other classes. I'd passed, and that was <sup>fantastic!</sup> ~~good enough~~. For everyone else at least. I spent the summer wallowing in the fact that I'd screwed up the most important year of high school, and ~~that~~ I'd never get into a decent college. But being a survivalist no matter what the situation, I found other ways to prove myself to schools I'd never have a chance of getting into with a 2.4 GPA. I put my GPA and my senior year school work aside and <sup>poored</sup> ~~put~~ everything ~~I had in me~~ into studying for the SAT, writing my college essays, and going to interviews. I refrained from telling some of my classmates what schools I was applying to. I knew exactly what kind of reactions I would get if they knew I had hopes of getting into some fairly selective colleges. In retrospect, it probably was naive of me to believe I could do it. But ~~that~~ <sup>when</sup> when spring came, I'd gotten acceptances from all of my top-choice schools. I spent the rest of the year ~~being~~ <sup>being</sup> bombarded by questions like "How'd you do it?" I'd brush them off by saying I had a decent SAT score, a Princeton Review's College Essays That Made a Difference-worthy essay, and played the Hispanic card. It's always been a habit of mine to undermine myself to others. But this time, invalidating myself didn't feel so bad because

I knew exactly what I was dealing with in my own head, and I knew I was capable. This aversion

what were her essays about?

back to present tense? why?

~~This is~~

like what?

- Show us what she did to achieve this

- Tell us how she did it. You are leaving. She did it. Stuff.

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to revelling in these rare opportunities to brag comes from opposition to competition between myself and my peers, and the insecurity it brings that ~~seems to~~ burrow itself deeper the harder I try to wrench it out. That's another thing I have to work on, but I guess there's always another "thing." Ernest Hemingway once said, "There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow man; true nobility is being superior to your former self." So I'll work on myself for now.

huh?

My life had been one long inner-dialogue interrupted by the disappointment of those around me when I couldn't succeed, and the constant reminders ~~to~~ <sup>from</sup> my teachers and parents when I actually accomplished something: "Don't get too excited, I'm probably gonna screw up the next five things I do." I no longer feel the need to do that, but sometimes it's instinctive. Over the past two years, I've developed the ~~best~~ <sup>my condition</sup> combination of confidence and humility to seek help when I need it, and to understand that it ~~really~~ isn't my fault.

Jumping between verses.

she was saying

ADD has been regarded as one of the most detrimental disorders a person ~~could~~ <sup>can</sup> have, but once diagnosed, there's much beauty in it. I see it in myself. All the positive attributes that come with having ADD: like resilience, creativity, bravery. I had let myself drown for so long because ~~I felt like~~ I couldn't cope. The problem was, I had no idea what I was trying to cope with.

Diagnosis is the most important step when it comes to ADD, because sometimes it's all a person needs. <sup>to take charge and change things.</sup>

I can't say ~~that~~ I've completely "reinvented" myself. I'm in college now and it's only gotten more difficult. But I find comfort in knowing ~~that~~ these failures and triumphs will ultimately balance each other out. Everything in life comes together to fall apart. That's the entropy of the universe. It is in a constant state of random disorder that can only be controlled by our actions. The one constant in my life will always be the lack of constants, and I'm okay with

that. I feel like you have only showed us the "results" of events that have occurred. But I can't care about the results if I haven't ~~experienced~~ experienced the events. Show the reader "in scenes" how she struggled. This can be a compelling story with more showing & less telling. Show me the journey, not just the destination.

JULIE

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“We just don’t understand why she’s struggling so much in the class,” To that, my Chemistry teacher replies, “Struggling’ implies effort, and she hasn’t put in any.” I feel myself tense up defensively. I already know what comes next. Annoyance. Anger. Guilt. Frustration. All the emotions on point like clockwork. And then the tears. <sup>stated my parents.</sup> ~~You~~ <sup>#</sup> can’t seriously be crying again. I quickly cover my face, but I can still feel the reactions of those around me. My teacher rolls his eyes, my guidance counselor tenses up with concern, and my parents sigh with frustration. <sup>#</sup>

New # every time there's new spectra

This was one of the many parent-teacher meetings I had my junior year of high school. Some involved the principal, my academic advisor, my counselor—sometimes even two or three of my teachers. It was mid-November and I had already had two of these meetings. I cried at both. Hence, the eye roll. ~~This was the third.~~ <sup>2</sup> I was the only kid in my Chemistry class who’d managed to fail every single test in the marking period. I was infamous. My chemistry teacher was also a big fan of peer-grading, which meant I had a stack of graded tests with comments on them like “Bravo!” and “You’re the real MVP!” next to scores like 40 and 15. Sometimes they even sank into the single digits. Bravo, indeed. I was The Girl Who Made Everyone Else Feel Better About Failing. If someone didn’t study or do their homework, they could just tell

redundant

JULIE

EPISODE 23: SHORT STORY (MEMOIR) - THE CONSTANCY OF ENTROPY

themselves, "Hey, at least you know Bri definitely didn't." And with that thought, they could go on with their day feeling a little less guilty. Glad I could help. I embraced this persona my peers had given me. I embraced it because it gave me some semblance of pride. This self-deprecation is what the school psychologist would later refer to as my "go-to" coping-mechanism.

combine

MISPLACED MODIFIER

An introductory modifying clause has to have to modify the first noun.

After finally catching my breath, my guidance counselor suggested I talk to the school psychologist, and with that, the meeting was over. I went back to class and <sup>relayed</sup> relayed what had happened in the meeting to my friends. They were concerned when they saw my puffy red eyes, but I reassured them that I was fine. I cried because I just didn't feel like dealing with another lecture from my parents and how they didn't like confrontation, so tears would help. I laughed it off as just another one of my antics, and to that, I got a sarcastic slow clap and a few chuckles.

Misplaced modifier As it is it modifies "meeting"

I hadn't intended on actually seeing the school psychologist until I got called to her office during one of my free periods a few days later. I'd <sup>watched</sup> seen enough movies to know how it would go. She'd <sup>invite</sup> ask me to sit and then ask me about my day, and I'd entertain her mundane questions until I'd finally just tell her to cut the crap and convince her I was fine and I was just having trouble "balancing my school and social life" and that would be that. But when I got to her office, she asked me to sit, <sup>inquired</sup> asked me about my day, and then asked me what I planned to do with my life. The suddenness of the question caught me off guard, so I just shrugged and said I didn't know. She asked me if I planned on going to college. I shrugged again. "Of course." She replied, "Do you think you'll get into college with the grades you've been getting?" And with that I felt the defensiveness building up again. I thought you were supposed to help me, not lecture me. But I said nothing. And then, as if she could read my mind, "I'm not trying to lecture you, I just want you to know, because not many students understand this, that there are other options. School just isn't for everyone. You could take online classes or go to a trade school." And, again like

reword

LONG sentence

Repeated Verbs "see" x "ask" x Find some synonyms

Who's this (could enter)



JULIE

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clockwork, the tears came—but this time they weren't met with an eye roll. Knowing that in a world where education is the only way to succeed, someone acknowledging the fact that I can't be traditionally educated, and may never fit into the regimented system of learning, made me feel that no one may ever recognize how fully capable I am of forming great ideas, which was soul-crushing. She asked me why I was upset, and I told her that I wanted to go to college. "So then why don't your grades reflect that?" I had no answer for her. She gave me a book she thought I'd like and then I left. The book was called Driven to Distraction: Recognizing and Coping with Attention Deficit Disorder. I wasn't surprised. I mean, I'd thought about it before and I'd done enough Google searches to know what it was and the similarities there were between its symptoms and some of my habits. I went home, put my homework aside, per usual, and sat down thinking I'd skim a few pages. I read the whole book in one night.

I couldn't sleep that night knowing now that there were other people out there like the author, Edward M. Hallowell, who went through the exact same things as me. It was like he'd literally written a book about my life. It was in the first few lines of the book that I knew I wasn't alone. He talks about the skeptics of ADD, with one particular quote that struck me:

"For some people, this was, and still is, heresy. The old moral model dies hard. It still lives on in the minds of certain groups and individuals. At the heart of the moral model beats the conviction that willpower controls all human emotion, learning, and behavior. Under this model, the cure for depression is to cheer up. The cure for anxiety is to suck it up. And the cure for ADD is to try harder. While trying harder helps just about everything, telling someone with ADD to try harder is no more helpful than telling someone who is nearsighted to squint harder. It missed the biological point."

too long  
Parse  
for  
breath.

Instead,  
have her  
dismiss you,  
and conversation,  
hand you  
back to

Underline  
title

its  
process  
no  
apostrophe

Real quote  
from  
real book?

Julie

EPISODE 23: SHORT STORY (MEMOIR) - *THE CONSTANCY OF ENTROPY*

He had put into words what I could never explain to people like my parents and teachers without sounding like I was making excuses. Suddenly there was justification for everything I'd done (or hadn't done) when it came to my school work and social life. His words had brought me back to middle school, when school work had suddenly become somewhat difficult and there were no more easy A's. School had become a deflating—rather than a rewarding—environment to me.

47  
too  
long

"Keep those faces in mind, the little girls and boys in the early grades, all trusting the adults to show them the way, all eager and excited about life and what will come next, and then just follow those faces over time. Follow the face of a little girl who doesn't read very well and is told to try harder; who tends to daydream and is told she better pay attention; who talks out in class when she sees something fascinating, like a butterfly on the windowpane, and is told to leave the class and report to the principal; who forgets her homework and is told she will just never learn, will she; who writes a story rich in imagination and insight and is told her handwriting and spelling are atrocious; who asks for help and is told she should try harder herself before getting others to do her work for her; who begins to feel unhappy in school and is told that big girls try harder. This is the brutal process of the breaking of the spirit of a child. I can think of no more precious resource than the spirits of our children. Life necessarily breaks us all down somewhat, but to do it unnecessarily to our children in the name of educating them--this is a tragedy. To take the joy of learning--which one can see in any child experimenting with something new--to take that joy and turn it into fear--that is something we should never do."

JULIE

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I realized there were so many things about myself that were bringing me down, and there were so many others out there that were the same way. I finally understood why I could read a whole 300-page book in one night but never finish a chapter in a textbook. Why I couldn't remember certain things, no matter how hard I tried to commit them to memory (because short-term memory loss is another common symptom of ADD). Why I could feel so incredibly pathetic and useless when I couldn't remember something I'd learned in class an hour ago, or a person's name whom I'd met several times, or how to multiply, or write all my notes in one notebook rather than scraps of paper that would end up in the trash, or how I could forget what I was trying to say to someone in the middle of a sentence, or how one little accomplishment made me feel so good that I couldn't even remember what it felt like to be a failure, or understand how I could be so lazy to the point where I'm right back at not having done a single thing, and sink lower and lower, because with every unfinished task you feel another one coming. Time ceases to exist because you feel like nothing's getting done now and you convince yourself nothing will get done later, either. The entropy of the universe takes its ultimate toll. And the worst part is everyone else has somehow always got their shit together. You're all climbing this mountain, but for some reason you have to keep stopping or you'll fall off, but you're still watching everyone go completely unhindered, until you suddenly realize you've been carrying a backpack full of rocks and their backpacks are all empty. They don't see all that's holding you back, so they don't understand. Finally knowing the problem was liberating. Reading this book had validated everything in myself that I had scoffed at. But this is where it's tricky: You know you've got this problem, but now you must come to terms with the fact that there is no cure, only treatment. The first thing anyone might suggest is medication, which I suggested to my parents. They, however, refused. I can't say I was all for taking those brain-morpher meds either, but I was at a

# WAY TOO LONG

its

gets present tense

suggest x2  
SVN  
Replace one with "recommend"

JULIE

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point where I saw no other way to fix myself. Eventually, I'd come to terms with the fact that if I wanted to change, I had to do it on my own.

One thing I've read that is common in people with ADD is our survival instinct. When we see that something isn't working, whether it's of our own accord or not, we can only focus from that point on, on another course of action that may work better. With another string of Google searches, I taught myself different strategies to motivate myself, stay focused, and stay positive. I conceded that the only way to get my grades up was to swallow my pride and ask my teachers and friends for help.

I ended the year with a C in Chemistry and a few B's and C's in my other classes. I'd passed, and that was good enough. For everyone else at least. I spent the summer wallowing in the fact that I'd screwed up the most important year of high school and that I'd never get into a decent college. But being a survivalist no matter what the situation, I found other ways to prove myself to schools I'd never have a chance of getting into with a 2.4 GPA. I put my GPA and my senior year school work aside and put everything I had in me into studying for the SAT, writing my college essays, and going to interviews. I refrained from telling some of my classmates what schools I was applying to. I knew exactly what kind of reactions I would get if they knew I had hopes of getting into some fairly selective colleges. In retrospect, it probably was naive of me to believe I could do it. But I did. When spring came I'd gotten acceptances from all of my top-choice schools. I spent the rest of the year being bombarded by questions like "How'd you do it?" I'd brush them off by saying I had a decent SAT score, a Princeton Review's College Essays

A  
TOO  
LONG

Yay!

received

Avoid  
word  
"get"

That Made a Difference-worthy essay, and played the Hispanic card. ~~It's always been a habit of~~

mine to undermine myself to others. But this time, invalidating myself didn't feel so bad because

I knew exactly what I was dealing with in my own head, and I knew I was capable. This aversion

"mine" x2  
word  
choice  
on undermine  
maybe  
self-efface?  
other?

JULIE

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to revelling in these rare opportunities to brag comes from opposition to competition between myself and my peers, and the insecurity it brings that seems to burrow itself deeper the harder I try to wrench it out. That's another thing I have to work on, but I guess there's always another "thing." Ernest Hemingway once said, "There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow man; true nobility is being superior to your former self." So I'll work on myself for now.

↓\*

My life had been one long inner-dialogue interrupted by the disappointment of those around me when I couldn't succeed, and the constant reminders to my teachers and parents when I actually accomplished something: "Don't get too excited, I'm probably gonna screw up the next five things I do." I no longer feel the need to do that, but sometimes it's instinctive. Over the past two years, I've developed the rarest combination of confidence and humility to seek help when I need it, and to understand that it really isn't my fault.

ADD has been regarded as one of the most detrimental disorders a person could have, but once diagnosed, there's much beauty in it. I see it in myself. All the positive attributes that come with having ADD: like resilience, creativity, bravery. I had let myself drown for so long because I felt like I couldn't cope. The problem was, I had no idea what I was trying to cope with. Diagnosis is the most important step when it comes to ADD, because sometimes it's all a person needs.

I can't say that I've completely "reinvented" myself. I'm in college now and it's only gotten more difficult. But I find comfort in knowing that these failures and triumphs will ultimately balance each other out. Everything in life comes together to fall apart. That's the entropy of the universe. It is in a constant state of random disorder that can only be controlled by our actions. The one constant in my life will always be the lack of constants, and I'm okay with

emphasize w/ italics or bold

that.

GREAT TITLE.  
THANKS FOR SHARING YOUR STORY.  
THIS WILL INSPIRE & COMFORT MANY WITH ADD  
AND THOSE WHO DON'T "GET" ADD  
CAN PERHAPS RECOGNIZE IT.  
A FEW ISSUES OF MECHANICS - Pong #s  
spelling choice

MOVING.  
ENLIGHTENING!  
YOU GO, GIRL!

EPISODE 23: SHORT STORY (MEMOIR) - *THE CONSTANCY OF ENTROPY*

Dave

This piece starts slowly, but as the author becomes either more familiar with the topic, or more confident in the writing, the text begins to pick up speed and flows nicely. I'm impressed with the improvements. Good work.

*Summary: This is my story about discovering I have ADD and learning to cope with it.*

“Just because something bears the aspect of the inevitable one should not, therefore, go along willingly with it.” — Philip K. Dick

“We just don't understand why she's struggling so much in the class.” (*Who is speaking?*) (*New paragraph*) To that, my Chemistry teacher replies, “‘Struggling’ implies effort, and she hasn't put in any.” (*New paragraph*) I feel myself tense up defensively. I already know what comes next. Annoyance. Anger. Guilt. Frustration. All the emotions [on point] ~~delete~~ like clockwork. And then the tears. You can't seriously be crying again. I quickly cover my face, but I can still feel the reactions of those around me. My teacher rolls his eyes, my guidance counselor tenses up with concern, and my parents sigh with frustration.

This was one of the many parent-teacher meetings I had my junior year of high school. Some involved the principal, my academic advisor, my counselor—sometimes even two or three of my teachers. It was mid-November and I had already had two of these meetings. I cried at both. Hence, the eye roll. [This was the third:] ~~delete~~ I was the only kid in my Chemistry class who'd managed to fail every single test in the marking period. I was infamous. My chemistry teacher was also a big fan of peer-grading, which meant I had a stack of graded tests with

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comments on them like “Bravo!” and “You’re the real MVP!” next to scores like 40 and 15. Sometimes they even sank into the single digits. Bravo, indeed. I was The Girl Who Made Everyone Else Feel Better About Failing. If someone didn’t study or do their homework, they could just tell themselves, “Hey, at least you know Bri definitely didn’t.” And with that thought, they could go on with their day feeling a little less guilty. Glad I could help. I embraced this persona my peers had given me. I embraced it because it gave me some semblance of pride. This self-deprecation is what the school psychologist would later refer to as my “go-to” coping-mechanism.

After finally catching my breath, my guidance counselor suggested I talk to the school psychologist(.) [, and with that, the meeting was over.] *delete (new paragraph)* I went back to class and relaid *relayed* to my friends what had happened in the meeting. They were concerned when they saw my puffy red eyes, but I reassured them that I was fine. I cried because I just didn’t feel like dealing with another lecture from my parents and how they didn’t like confrontation, so tears would help. I laughed it off as just another one of my antics(.) [, and to that,] *delete* I got a sarcastic slow clap and a few chuckles.

I hadn’t intended on actually seeing the school psychologist until I got called to her office during one of my free periods a few days later. I’d seen enough movies to know how it would go. She’d ask me to sit and then ask me about my day, and I’d entertain her mundane questions until I’d finally just tell her to cut the crap and convince her I was fine and I was just having trouble “balancing my school and social life” and that would be that. But when I got to her office, she asked me to sit, asked me about my day, and then asked me what I planned to do with my life. The suddenness of the question caught me off guard, so I just shrugged and said I didn’t know. She asked me if I planned on going to college. I shrugged again. *New paragraph* “Of

## EPISODE 23: SHORT STORY (MEMOIR) - *THE CONSTANCY OF ENTROPY*

course.(,)" [S] she replied, "Do you think you'll get into college with the grades you've been getting?" [And with that] *delete. New paragraph* I felt the defensiveness building up again. I thought you were supposed to help me, not lecture me. But I said nothing. And then, as if she could read my mind, "I'm not trying to lecture you, I just want you to know, because not many students understand this, that there are other options. School just isn't for everyone. You could take online classes or go to a trade school." And, again like clockwork, the tears came—but this time they weren't met with an eye roll. Knowing that in a world where education is the only way to succeed, someone acknowledging the fact that I can't be traditionally educated, and may never fit into the regimented system of learning, made me feel that no one may ever recognize how fully capable I am of forming great ideas, which was soul-crushing. She asked me why I was upset, and I told her that I wanted to go to college. "So then why don't your grades reflect that?" I had no answer for her. She gave me a book she thought I'd like and then I left. The book was called *Driven to Distraction: Recognizing and Coping with Attention Deficit Disorder*. *New paragraph* I wasn't surprised. I mean, I'd thought about it before and I'd done enough Google searches to know what it was and the similarities there were between [it's] *its* symptoms and some of my habits. I went home, put my homework aside, per usual, and sat down thinking I'd skim a few pages. I read the whole book in one night.

I couldn't sleep that night knowing now that there were other people out there like the author, Edward M. Hallowell, who went through the exact same things as me. It was like he'd literally written a book about my life. It was in the first few lines of the book [that] *when* I knew I wasn't alone. He [talks] *talked* about the skeptics of ADD, with one particular quote that struck me:



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"For some people, this was, and still is, heresy. The old moral model dies hard. It still lives on in the minds of certain groups and individuals. At the heart of the moral model beats the conviction that willpower controls all human emotion, learning, and behavior. Under this model, the cure for depression is to cheer up. The cure for anxiety is to suck it up. And the cure for ADD is to try harder. While trying harder helps just about everything, telling someone with ADD to try harder is no more helpful than telling someone who is nearsighted to squint harder. It missed the biological point."

*(I like the emphasis of the exact point of discovery. Good.)*

He had put into words what I could never explain to people like my parents and teachers without sounding like I was making excuses. Suddenly there was justification for everything I'd done (or hadn't done) when it came to my school work and social life. His words had brought me back to middle school, when school work had suddenly become somewhat difficult and there were no more easy A's. School had become a deflating—rather than a rewarding—environment to me.

"Keep those faces in mind, the little girls and boys in the early grades, all trusting the adults to show them the way, all eager and excited about life and what will come next, and then just follow those faces over time. Follow the face of a little girl who doesn't read very well and is told to try harder; who tends to daydream and is told she better pay attention; who talks out in class when she sees something fascinating, like a butterfly on the windowpane, and is told to leave the class and report to the principal; who forgets her homework and is told she will just never learn, will she; who writes a story rich in imagination and insight and is told her handwriting and spelling are atrocious; who asks for help and is told she should try harder herself

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before getting others to do her work for her; who begins to feel unhappy in school and is told that big girls try harder. This is the brutal process of the breaking of the spirit of a child. I can think of no more precious resource than the spirits of our children. Life necessarily breaks us all down somewhat, but to do it unnecessarily to our children in the name of educating them--this is a tragedy. *To take the joy of learning--which one can see in any child experimenting with something new--to take that joy and turn it into fear--that is something we should never do.*"  
*(Great line!)*

I realized there were so many things about myself that were bringing me down, and there were so many others out there that were the same way. I finally understood why I could read a whole 300-page book in one night but never finish a chapter in a textbook. Why I couldn't remember certain things, no matter how hard I tried to commit them to memory (because short term memory loss is another common symptom of ADD). Why I could feel so incredibly pathetic and useless when I couldn't remember something I'd learned in class an hour ago, or a person's name whom I'd met several times, or how to multiply, or write all my notes in one notebook rather than scraps of paper that would end up in the trash, or how I could forget what I was trying to say to someone in the middle of a sentence, or how one little accomplishment made me feel so good that I couldn't even remember what it felt like to be a failure, or understand how I could be so lazy to the point where I'm right back at not having done a single thing, and sink lower and lower, because with every unfinished task you feel another one coming. *New paragraph* Time ceases to exist because you feel like nothing's getting done now and you convince yourself nothing will get done later, either. The entropy of the universe takes [it's] *its* ultimate toll. And the worst part is everyone else has somehow always got their shit together.

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My life had been one long inner-dialogue interrupted by the disappointment of those around me when I couldn't succeed, and the constant reminders to my teachers and parents when I actually accomplished something: "Don't get too excited, I'm probably gonna screw up the next five things I do." I no longer feel the need to do that, but sometimes it's instinctive. Over the past two years, I've developed the rarest combination of confidence and humility to seek help when I need it, and to understand that it really isn't my fault. *(good paragraph)*

ADD has been regarded as one of the most detrimental disorders a person could have, but once diagnosed, there's much beauty in it. I see it in myself. All the positive attributes that come

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with having ADD: like resilience, creativity, bravery. I had let myself drown for so long because I felt like I couldn't cope. The problem was, I had no idea what I was trying to cope with. Diagnosis is the most important step when it comes to ADD, because sometimes it's all a person needs.

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*Really well done! The writing actually improved once you explained the discovery of ADD and the realization that you have ADD. There's a remarkable transformation from one level to another.*

*There are really two iterations here: The 'before' the discovery and the 'after. You really kicked it into gear and displayed remarkable talent and not a certain amount of pride in your accomplishments. Good work.*

EPISODE 23: SHORT STORY (MEMOIR) - *THE CONSTANCY OF ENTROPY*

Ed

**Summary:** *This is my story about discovering I have ADD and learning to cope with it.*

“Just because something bears the aspect of the inevitable one should not, therefore, go along willingly with it.” — Philip K. Dick

“We just don’t understand why she’s struggling so much in the class.” To that, my Chemistry teacher replies, “‘Struggling’ implies effort, and she hasn’t put in any.” I feel myself tense up defensively. I already know what comes next. Annoyance. Anger. Guilt. Frustration. All the emotions on point like clockwork. And then the tears. You can’t seriously be crying again. I quickly cover my face, but I can still feel the reactions of those around me. My teacher rolls his eyes, my guidance counselor tenses up with concern, and my parents sigh with frustration.

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—very good essay!

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themselves, "Hey, at least you know Bri definitely didn't." And with that thought, they could go on with their day feeling a little less guilty. Glad I could help. I embraced this persona my peers had given me. I embraced it because it gave me some semblance of pride. This self-deprecation is what the school psychologist would later refer to as my "go-to" coping-mechanism.

[After finally catching my breath, my guidance counselor suggested I talk to the school psychologist, and with that, the meeting was over. I went back to class and relayed what had happened in the meeting to my friends. They were concerned when they saw my puffy red eyes, but I reassured them that I was fine. I cried because I just didn't feel like dealing with another lecture from my parents and how they didn't like confrontation, so tears would help. I laughed it off as just another one of my antics, and to that, I got a sarcastic slow clap and a few chuckles.

I hadn't intended on actually seeing the school psychologist until I got called to her office during one of my free periods a few days later. I'd seen enough movies to know how it would go. She'd ask me to sit and then ask me about my day, and I'd entertain her mundane questions until I'd finally just tell her to cut the crap and convince her I was fine and I was just having trouble "balancing my school and social life" and that would be that. But when I got to her office, she asked me to sit, asked me about my day, and then asked me what I planned to do with my life. The suddenness of the question caught me off guard, so I just shrugged and said I didn't know. She asked me if I planned on going to college. I shrugged again. "Of course." She replied, "Do you think you'll get into college with the grades you've been getting?" And with that I felt the defensiveness building up again. I thought you were supposed to help me, not lecture me. But I said nothing. And then, as if she could read my mind, "I'm not trying to lecture you, I just want you to know, because not many students understand this, that there are other options. School just isn't for everyone. You could take online classes or go to a trade school." And, again like

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clockwork, the tears came—but this time they weren't met with an eye roll. Knowing that in a world where education is the only way to succeed, someone acknowledging the fact that I can't be traditionally educated, and may <sup>might</sup> never fit into the regimented system of learning, made me feel that no one may <sup>might</sup> ever recognize how fully capable I am of forming great ideas, which was soul-crushing. She asked me why I was upset, and I told her that I wanted to go to college. "So then why don't your grades reflect that?" I had no answer for her. She gave me a book she thought I'd like and then I left. The book was called Driven to Distraction: Recognizing and Coping with Attention Deficit Disorder. I wasn't surprised. I mean, I'd thought about it before and I'd done enough Google searches to know what it was and the similarities there were between it's symptoms and some of my habits. I went home, put my homework aside, per usual, and sat down thinking I'd skim a few pages. I read the whole book in one night.

I couldn't sleep that night knowing now that there were other people out there like the author, Edward M. Hallowell, who went through the exact same things as me. It was like he'd literally written a book about my life. It was in the first few lines of the book that I knew I wasn't alone. He talks about the skeptics of ADD, with one particular quote that struck me:

"For some people, this was, and still is, heresy. The old moral model dies hard. It still lives on in the minds of certain groups and individuals. At the heart of the moral model beats the conviction that willpower controls all human emotion, learning, and behavior. Under this model, the cure for depression is to cheer up. The cure for anxiety is to suck it up. And the cure for ADD is to try harder. While trying harder helps just about everything, telling someone with ADD to try harder is no more helpful than telling someone who is nearsighted to squint harder. It missed the biological point."



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He had put into words what I could never explain to people like my parents and teachers without sounding like I was making excuses. Suddenly there was justification for everything I'd done (or hadn't done) when it came to my school work and social life. His words had brought me back to middle school, when school work had suddenly become somewhat difficult and there were no more easy A's. School had become a deflating—rather than a rewarding—environment to me.

"Keep those faces in mind, the little girls and boys in the early grades, all trusting the adults to show them the way, all eager and excited about life and what will come next, and then just follow those faces over time. Follow the face of a little girl who doesn't read very well and is told to try harder; who tends to daydream and is told she better pay attention; who talks out in class when she sees something fascinating, like a butterfly on the windowpane, and is told to leave the class and report to the principal; who forgets her homework and is told she will just never learn, will she; who writes a story rich in imagination and insight and is told her handwriting and spelling are atrocious; who asks for help and is told she should try harder herself before getting others to do her work for her; who begins to feel unhappy in school and is told that big girls try harder. This is the brutal process of the breaking of the spirit of a child. I can think of no more precious resource than the spirits of our children. Life necessarily breaks us all down somewhat, but to do it unnecessarily to our children in the name of educating them--this is a tragedy. To take the joy of learning--which one can see in any child experimenting with something new--to take that joy and turn it into fear--that is something we should never do."

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I realized there were so many things about myself that were bringing me down, and there were so many others out there that were the same way. I finally understood why I could read a whole 300-page book in one night but never finish a chapter in a textbook. Why I couldn't remember certain things, no matter how hard I tried to commit them to memory (because short term memory loss is another common symptom of ADD). Why I could feel so incredibly pathetic and useless when I couldn't remember something I'd learned in class an hour ago, or a person's name whom I'd met several times, or how to multiply, or write all my notes in one notebook rather than scraps of paper that would end up in the trash, or how I could forget what I was trying to say to someone in the middle of a sentence, or how one little accomplishment made me feel so good that I couldn't even remember what it felt like to be a failure, or understand how I could be so lazy to the point where I'm right back at not having done a single thing, and sink lower and lower, because with every unfinished task you feel another one coming. Time ceases to exist because you feel like nothing's getting done now and you convince yourself nothing will get done later, either. The entropy of the universe takes its ultimate toll. And the worst part is everyone else has somehow always got their shit together [You're all climbing this mountain, but for some reason you have to keep stopping or you'll fall off, but you're still watching everyone go completely unhindered, until you suddenly realize you've been carrying a backpack full of rocks and their backpacks are all empty. They don't see all that's holding you back, so they don't understand. Finally knowing the problem was liberating. Reading this book had validated everything in myself that I had scoffed at. But this is where it gets tricky: You know you've got this problem, but now you must come to terms with the fact that there is no cure, only treatment.

The first thing anyone might suggest is medication, which I suggested to my parents. They, however, refused. I can't say I was all for taking those brain-morpher meds either, but I was at a

define?  
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point where I saw no other way to fix myself. Eventually, I'd come to terms with the fact that if I wanted to change, I had to do it on my own.

One thing I've read that is common in people with ADD is our survival instinct. When we see that something isn't working, whether it's of our own accord or not, we can only focus from that point on, on another course of action that <sup>might</sup> work better. With another string of Google searches, I taught myself different strategies to motivate myself, stay focused, and stay positive. I conceded that the only way to get my grades up was to swallow my pride and ask my teachers and friends for help.

I ended the year with a C in Chemistry and a few B's and C's in my other classes. I'd passed, and that was good enough. For everyone else at least. I spent the summer wallowing in the fact that I'd screwed up the most important year of high school and that I'd never get into a decent college. But being a survivalist no matter what the situation, I found other ways to prove myself to schools I'd never have a chance of getting into with a 2.4 GPA. I put my GPA and my senior year school work aside and put everything I had in me into studying for the SAT, writing my college essays, and going to interviews. I refrained from telling some of my classmates what schools I was applying to. I knew exactly what kind of reactions I would get if they knew I had hopes of getting into some fairly selective colleges. In retrospect, it probably was naive of me to believe I could do it. But I did. When spring came, I'd gotten acceptances from all of my top-choice schools. I spent the rest of the year being bombarded by questions like "How'd you do it?" I'd brush them off by saying I had a decent SAT score, a Princeton Review's College Essays That Made a Difference-worthy essay, and played the Hispanic card. It's always been a habit of mine to undermine myself to others. But this time, invalidating myself didn't feel so bad because I knew exactly what I was dealing with in my own head, and I knew I was capable. This aversion

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to revelling in these rare opportunities to brag comes from opposition to competition between myself and my peers, and the insecurity it brings that seems to burrow itself deeper the harder I try to wrench it out. That's another thing I have to work on, but I guess there's always another "thing." Ernest Hemingway once said, "There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow man; true nobility is being superior to your former self." So I'll work on myself for now. } comp

My life had been one long inner-dialogue interrupted by the disappointment of those around me when I couldn't succeed, and the constant reminders to my teachers and parents when I actually accomplished something: "Don't get too excited, I'm probably gonna screw up the next five things I do." I no longer feel the need to do that, but sometimes it's instinctive. Over the past two years, I've developed the rarest combination of confidence and humility to seek help when I need it, and to understand that it really isn't my fault.

ADD has been regarded as one of the most detrimental disorders a person could have, but once diagnosed, there's much beauty in it. I see it in myself. All the positive attributes that come with having ADD: like resilience, creativity, bravery. I had let myself drown for so long because I felt like I couldn't cope. The problem was, I had no idea what I was trying to cope with. down? Diagnosis is the most important step when it comes to ADD, because sometimes it's all a person needs.

I can't say that I've completely "reinvented" myself. I'm in college now and it's only gotten more difficult. But I find comfort in knowing that these failures and triumphs will ultimately balance each other out. Everything in life comes together to fall apart. That's the entropy of the universe. It is in a constant state of random disorder that can only be controlled by our actions. The one constant in my life will always be the lack of constants, and I'm okay with that. only ^