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AM I BORDERLINE?

MIKE DELANEY

The way days go on by reminds me of just how short the nights really are. Every second that ticks on by brings upon a new hour on the same old day. We have to wait for the day to end before we start the next with different experiences going on unless time happens to be repeating itself over and again. Sometimes we wonder if our time spent really means anything. We spend hours coddled up in waves of pseudo-happiness mixed in with astronomical advances in waves of everlasting haze. Experience never goes away along with memories filled with traumatic scenes that linger on forever.

I was snowboarding the day before Easter Sunday at Snowbowl. I was carving up tracks on my snowboard, which happens to be sort of an antique to me these days. I have been using this board since I was twelve years old. The time was around 2:00 PM when my good friend Dan who in my humble opinion is the most interesting man in Missoula and I saw my uncle Bill on top of High Park. We caught up with him to reunite when I found out my aunt was down at the bar due to her injuring her leg this year. I told my group that I was going down to keep her company.

I shred down at breakneck speed over to Upper Spartan, only to take a second thought rather than the headwall. I cruise down sunrise bowl where I arrive at the last run inn to meet up with my aunt Pam. I head in to greet her, taking off my two jackets and fleece. I almost took off my sweater when just then, I realized what occurred to me two weeks ago, Something that has been with me that I'm not proud of.

Depression tends to take a hold of someone in vastly unique ways. Everyone has their own personal way of masking chronic sadness. Being lonely is not just about being alone. It's about

being stuck in a surrounding universe where no one cares and dares not to compensate.

I need to explain something serious going on with me. I feel that it's necessary to explain personal issues that I face day to day, this is something that is incredibly hard and painful for me to open up about, but I'm deciding to help spread awareness about the subject matter. In my lifetime, I have had issues with self-harm. We all know that self-harm comes in ways of cutting and burning, but I find that the most overlooked aspect of self-harm is alcohol/drug abuse. I have self-medicated with various substances. In high school, I smoked cannabis to escape from my problems. When weed no longer helped I switched over to benzodiazepines until the addiction took over and I thought it was damn well time to get diagnosed with ADD so I could get Concerta to actually help me face my problems. I remember being eighteen and felt that all my problems would go away just by turning twenty one.

Talking down to myself is a problem that gets me nowhere but yet I still do it like it's supposed to change something. Sometimes I wonder if I'm content in my personal struggles. Addicted to the drama brought upon myself. I tell myself that I'm no good and that I don't even deserve to be living. To get the bottom of these problems I have to start at the beginning. I was born on December 20th, 1991. The cold war was coming to an end, but a new era was beginning for me. The era I know for myself is Autism.

Living on the spectrum means being aware of what's going on in the world around me. Having Asperger's comes with having trouble expressing my problems to other people. I have to work on my problem solving skills, without the obsession of getting my next pair of shoes. I remember in vague but precise detail of being an infant. I was being rocked away by my mother at night but was still wide awake and unable to tell my mom that I wasn't sleeping. I remember the Barney poster in my room on those nights that I was trapped in the crib thus being stuck in my own mind. When I was three I was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

I have trouble making friends. It's not that I don't try, but I don't really know how to go about making and keeping friends. I tend to spend most of my life hiding out in my apartment on Saturday's and Sunday's unless a concert is happening where I say to myself, "Fuck this place." Though I enjoy solitude I feel that this is harmful to myself and others, at least that's what my psychiatrist thinks in her own capitalistic little world. I am struck by the awful curse of chronic day-dreaming. I dream of what's wrong and how to make it better for everyone involved. I'm not that lazy I just can't focus despite rolling on thirty six milligrams of concerta. I empathize with other's I just don't know how someone like me could possibly make anyone feel better, but just give me a

second to ventilate, I'm sure I can make it up to you. Day eating day I find that I have trouble taking care of myself. There was a time when I was twenty two where I wanted to be emotionless in a sort of Dexter type of way but now, I am full of emotions. I always feel awkward no matter what I do. I at least try not to be afraid, which is my strong suit. I feel that I have trouble fitting in anywhere but I try not to hide away too much. Being socially awkward isn't about dressing a little different. Social awkwardness is about not being comfortable in your own skin.

I am currently twenty four years old. I have been going to college since I was eighteen. The reason it took me so long was because I wasn't taking the traditional method of four or five classes. I was only taking one or two each semester. After this semester, I will be a junior with the whole university being granted access to me. There will be no more restrictions for me having to be only allowed to take only two classes at the mountain campus while also not having to go back to the haggard old Missoula college campus next to the fairgrounds. This feels so good for me that it comes as a surprise that I even have the right to go to a public university. However, I keep thinking to myself that I'm not good enough and that my being here is toxic to others surrounding me.

I try to tell myself that I have potential and have even been told by everyone around me that the potential is obvious. I find myself stuck in a rut of being way too hard on myself to the point that it's getting me absolutely nowhere. I may have Asperger's, but Asperger's doesn't have me. I'm no longer afraid to open up no matter the consequences I may have to face. I accept that I may have something else going on due to the trauma I have experienced in my life ranging anywhere from the psychological/emotional abuse I have received throughout my years to the physical and somewhat sexual harassment I have experienced.

I have been told by my case manager that there is no possible way for me to have a borderline personality because he finds me so enjoyable and funny, which is a real treat for him due to the nature of his job having to take care of people such as schizophrenics. It's not that I want to just label myself with something because I want drugs, (I already have concerta) I want something that explains my behavior and why I feel that it's high time to do something about it.

Having a Borderline personality messes with your sense of identity. My name is Michael Delaney. I am twenty four years old and... what else is there? What is the reason for my need to be. No, I don't want to commit suicide but what happened? How did I get here? What went wrong? Life happened. Life is what happens to everybody. They make plans when they are ten, think everything is figured out at fifteen when slowly but surely, they find themselves bordering on a quarter of century of life with people wondering if you are worth anything at all.

I find it hard to believe that I'm a male. I have always felt more feminine than masculine and wish that I were born a female. I decided that I should come out of the closet and admit that I'm bi-sexual. I am no longer running away from these feelings of attractions that I have towards other men. I don't see anything wrong with having a little gender dysphoria and I hope to see that one day men and women are treated as equal human beings.

I feel that in the end, you die in your own arms. Every three months I see my psychiatrist to renew my concerta due to being a controlled substance with a high potential for abuse. She asks if I'm making friends. I lie and say yes but she responds, "Who are they, and what to you do with them?" First off, it's none of her business who I consort with, and second give me a break. I feel that I have been left to die from everyone in my life. I have been pushed, used, manipulated, and seen as an autistic joke. My family may still love me but they share my last name, they are stuck with me. I feel that I need to buy as much items as possible to be happy. I think I need more shoes even though I have more than enough to compensate. My underwear collection is literally overflowing. My belts resemble a snake pit sitting on the seat of a vacant computer chair for I was tired of stepping over them. My wardrobe is nearly full, but I want more. I go from happy to sad in just a flip of a switch. No one can do anything for me but me. What's the point? The scars remind me of the damage left behind. This doesn't make me a psycho it's just what I felt I wanted to do. Looking in the mirror come on, I know I'm not that ugly, but I'm not worthwhile. How about I say I'm the best looking man in Missoula, ha, yeah right.

I have always had depression, anxiety, anger, substance abuse, and rage. This has been a common affliction for me. I feel as if I'm constantly being told that I suck and that everybody is not comfortable with me being around. I feel that everyone I'm with has to treat me a certain way otherwise I feel very unwanted. My emotions tend to be up and down while going round as the second of time ticks and tocks spiraling out of control. I am constantly on edge wondering who I am and what I truly value. When I'm stressed which is an everyday cycle, I get paranoia running rampant with insane delusions and even have had dissociations (minor out of body experiences).

The night of Saturday March 12, 2016 was a night I wish I could forget, but I will always keep the night in the depths of my mind. This was a point of my life where I felt that I had to always be in contact with someone. This is at least what my psychiatrist wants me to do even though in reality, she doesn't care. I look back at the night and admit that I completely dissociated due to my intense emotions and feelings of perceived abandonment. I was feeling very lonely and isolated. I couldn't stand being stuck in my apartment on a Saturday night alone in my misery. I wanted to

hang out with at least one person in my contacts list or at least have someone to talk to. I called everyone from my contacts list but nobody answered. Not one number I dialed called me back. I wish that I had better sense during that turbulent time to say to myself, “Don’t worry, you’re not a loser, nobody finds you difficult to be around.” Instead I had this delusion that nobody was answering because they must hate me. After I had a couple of drinks at the double tree I called many people who didn’t answer. I felt extremely upset. I went home in a blind rage to my lonely apartment where I proceeded to let it all fall on out.

As soon as I walked through the front door and locked it, I was repeatedly pelting my face with my fists until I felt like I needed a much bigger rush. I grabbed a belt out of my collection where I proceeded to whip myself across the back giving me the familiar feeling of getting my ass pelted by the freaks I hung out with freshman year back in my high school days. I was getting a massive rush of the old sensation that I crave due to my masochistic tendencies. Crying and laughing, I realized that I needed something stronger, something that I needed to do to give me that old awful high.

The knife and the lighter reign superior to any shitty little crack I can give across my stupid ugly face. I took the knife out of my kitchen drawer where I proceeded to slash myself across my forearms and legs while also heating the knife up to give me the feeling I so desired. Most people think of cutting as a sensual, slow, dramatic experience but with me it happened to be extremely fast and horrifically ugly. I was burning my skin with the fire from the lighter which caused my apartment to stink of burned hair while also pushing the metal against my neck waving supreme the rush of calmness and stimulation I needed for I was in a really vulnerable place at the time. It was like a mix of clonazepam and concerta. I took to my g-mail account to find that my cousin Matthew sent me some pictures of his daughter. I was so happy that he contacted me that I rebooted my facebook to add him on. He accepted and I’m glad that he’s there for me. All in all family will always be there for you. Maybe I’m wrong with other people but with me they are the ones I can rely on.

The massive wave of emotions I was feeling that night happens to be very traumatizing for me to this day. I hate the fact that I have resorted to this and it breaks my heart that I’m not the only one suffering from these issues. I won’t lie. Self-harm did feel very good due to the intense rush that it brings.

9:00 P.M. I can’t take it anymore. I want to shop. I head down to the department store to use my charge card not caring how much debt I may get myself into. There was no one at the

Jewelry counter at the time and I was just staring at the watches with no one there to help me out. I thought I could just ask someone to help me, but I don't want to have to call someone over, I want them to come over out of the fairness of their hearts to ask me "Can I help you pick something out?" I walked out of the store feeling empty. I was talking to myself while walking back to the car. I was speaking in weird cult like style language. Just pure gibberish was flowing out between my teeth when I realize that it's 9:30. At 10:00 a funk band by the name of Your Mamma's Big Fat Booty Band is going to play at The Top Hat where I am recognized as the regular loner.

I drive down to buy a ticket. I bring myself to the bar for an eight dollar glass of red wine. I could've had the five dollar glass but I wanted the most expensive taste that there was. I tell the bartender to close out my card after I asked for the wine. When I gave him my card, He forgets to close it out. There must have been a case of miscommunication being that it was a reasonably busy night and from all the experiences he's had with me, he probably just assumed I would want at least one more drink. I felt very angry at myself but was also pissed at the bartender for not closing out my card like I asked. I kept waiting for him to close out the card and didn't just ask him to close it out. I sip the wine waiting for 10:00 to bring on show time. When the time comes around I did something pretty mean that I regret, but at the same time, I consider myself not caring anymore since I was just seeing red cut into the black and white noir world that I find myself in. I couldn't take anyone else's feelings into perspective because all I was feeling was pure rage. Not knowing I was being an asshole, I snap my fingers to get his attention. (I must have just been excited for the show starting.) "No snapping." "Don't snap at me, I'm not a dog man." "What do you want?" I respond, "Could you please close out my card?" He gives me the check and I sign. I felt alive. I was walking up to the stage happy as a clam feeling like I had power to unimaginable proportions sipping my wine and enjoying the funk. After I finish my wine I go out back for a smoke when suddenly, in the tick of a second, I felt absolutely terrible. I wasn't upset that I got mad at the bartender, I was upset because there was no true reason for me to be around. I didn't want to be there anymore. I sit on one of the balcony areas of the top hat feeling like Tony Montana in the scene after the incident he has with finding his sister with some guy at the Babylon Club. The music from that scene of the film played in my head covering over the positive sound of the funk going on around me. That song played over and over as I held back the tears feeling all alone in my misery wishing the concert would come to an end. An hour into the show, the group members announced a break. Thank god I finally have an excuse to leave. It's late and I'm miserable. I just want to get a pint of cheap vodka, go home, and completely self-destruct into oblivion.

As I'm walking out I stop to stare at the bartender making drinks for a lot of people. I'm thinking to myself, "I'm going to make you a rich motherfucker." "Next time you see my face, remember, this town is mine." I walk to the door where the staff security girl Heidi was working the front door taking tickets and checking ID's. She recognizes me so much that she doesn't even bother to card me and will go out of her way to make sure that nobody else cards me. I tell her to have a good night. She replies, "You too buddy thanks for coming out." She patted me on the back bringing me the respect I felt that I deserved.

Outside of the Top Hat, the city was a cruel monster. There was a drunken asshole in an argument with a girl. He was telling her that this is his town, he was born and raised here, and that she wasn't worth shit here. She replies with a fuck you and that's when I went all out yelling. I yell out "Fucking piece of Shit!" among many other words I can't really remember. I wish he would've gotten pissed off and tried to fight me but he didn't. I would've loved for that man to split my head open on the pavement where the paramedics would have to keep me from bleeding out all the way to the hospital. Unfortunately, that didn't happen.

Back at home I was drinking and hurting myself even more. I called many people who didn't answer. At some point I even called the top hat to leave a message that I owed a bartender there money. I looked at my bank account to see that I was all out of money. I knew I was running low, but couldn't control my spending. I called my mother. I told her that I won't make it home for supper before ranting out of control about weird, threatening, abusive, and paranoid delusional words that she happens to be used to dealing with me on occasions. I told her that I was out of money and that I owed someone who works at the top-hat. She was very calm, patient, and most likely operating on an ambien (She probably needed another one after chatting with me.) I walked to the store to get cigs. I bought the pack with my dad's credit card for I was completely out of money. When I was walking back and smoking, I started stumbling back. My behavior that night was completely disgusting. I called my brother but he had no way of helping me. I was telling him how I used dad's card for smokes and he told me that he deserves to be stolen from for being such a bad father. After explaining to me how I was going about everything all wrong he told me to toughen up and go to bed. I wonder what toughen up means. I called someone who I had to look up in my missed calls from December. Sorry to get off the story at hand but this is important. Last semester, I was taking intro to poetry workshop. This particular kid transferred in on the third day of class. I didn't start hanging around him until a week or two after classes began. He was perfect. He was the only one that was in my age range with me being 23 and him being 22. He was mentally unstable,

an alcoholic, and an all-out interesting guy. The biggest reason we connected was that the poetry teacher gave us both a hard time, at least that's how we felt. One time I was hanging out with him after fall semester came to an end on Friday December 18th 2015. I just finished snowboarding for the first time that year and I called him to check-up on him. He was drunk at flippers where I was spending time with him when his friend came in all anxious about having to help him out. Little did I know that thing he needed that person to do was to score cocaine. He had me drive to a drug deal without telling me about it until I drove them all the way to the north side of town. I was told to end contact with him from my case manager and a girl who was also in my poetry class. This kid doesn't answer but I left him a message explaining that I really liked spending time with him and that he's a good person. My final call that night was to the girl. I remember earlier that week I called Gill after speaking with Max. I called her to talk and she asked if I wanted to come over. I drive over to tell her about the kid where she explained to me why I should stay away from him. After our chat she gave me a hug and told me to come back any time or to call her whenever. The next day I saw the kid outside the Lommasson center where I catch up with him. He told me that he failed the poetry class because he didn't do his final eight page paper. I was so happy that karma came around that all my dislike towards him went away. I called Gill to tell her that I had some good news and wanted to share with her in person. She told me that she was too busy but would like to hear it another time. I eventually got together to talk to her one last time, but her interest in being my friend seemed to be away somehow at least that's how I felt. That night of March 12th I called her despite telling myself to leave her alone and left a message sounding very troubled and told her voicemail that I want to continue to be the kid's friend. I text her in words saying I love the kid and I want to marry him. (I have to admit I'm sort of attracted to him.) I knew that Gill was too busy dealing with her own shit to be my friend and offer me advice. She also has been diagnosed with Asperger's. After that, I turn my phone off, set it on the carpet, and smashed it with my foot. All of a sudden it hits me. Holy shit it's late, and I might have made a neighbor scared. I got to get the fuck out of here before the cops come and haul my ass in gestapo style. I was shirtless so I throw on my leather jacket and run out of the apartment. While walking I realized that I have nowhere else to go. I take out the cellphone I just smashed, but it won't turn on. It came to me that I have to find a phone, but I'm drunk as a skunk. Who in their right mind is going to want to be around me? So I decided to turn around, face the music, and walk back to the apartment. No one did anything because I wasn't loud enough. It was so late that they were all probably just sleeping. I remember feeling so sick that night I had a black garbage bag next to me while I was vomiting up all my shame

and guilt. Eventually, I took an ambien and drifted off to sleep. When I woke up the next morning, I realized it wasn't a dream. The scars covering me were a reminder that the past was real. My heart felt torn open and I was even more alone than I ever had been in my entire life.

I went to see my mother and I was still very upset over last night. I showed her my scars and it upset her deeply. She told me before giving me one hundred dollars to put into my bank account that when I hurt myself I'm also hurting her. I feel very bad that I have this sort of behavior and I wish that I could get rid of it, but I have trouble finding out how to. It's unfair that my mom has to go through so much abuse such as but not limited to being married to a functional alcoholic, taking care of her two screwed up sons, and dealing with her schizoaffective sister. How can I be so cruel to her when half the reason I do so well in school is because she helped me out so much? I go to the bad-lander around 5:30 for the second wind reading. I was feeling so terrible that all I ordered was a ginger beer. Though I was tempted to leave early so I could lie alone in my misery, I stay for the whole reading. When I get home I lie in the bed with the pain from my scars and the tears on my pillow. The classic song Sea of Love by Phil Phillips plays in my head while I say to myself, "There you go, you can now be officially labeled as a borderline, happy?"

I am told that I'm being taken advantage of by other people. I know that they try to take advantage of me but they can't get away with that anymore. Close friends have tended to do that to me. I wish I could reverse time so I could change the past. The past lingers around and won't ever go away.

Back in 2010, I had a friend sleeping at my parent's house. This person was my only contact I had to give me a social life. I had a long history with this guy and he introduced me to some interesting people in my life. I felt that I needed him to get my name out there even though I found him to be totally disgusting. I was drinking a lot with him and remember the fateful night in May, 2010. That was the first time I died. I thought everything was going to be picture perfect. I was graduating from high school with a diploma that I obtained from Big Sky High School through the Missoula County Public Schools online system. (After junior year I decided that I wanted to get my education through alternative means so my parents hooked me up with an online program so I could get an actual diploma.) After a house party, I was driving some of our friends up to their house on the south hills. My friend was in the passenger's seat drunker than a box of rocks. I was also drunk to some degree. I can never forgive myself for what I have done. We were rolling down the hill, I was changing a cd when suddenly in a blink of a second, I crash into two parked cars. From what I can say, my experience was very intense. The smell of the airbag deployed, the sounds

of the alarms going off, while the dogs were barking away. My drunk friend was wondering what the fuck just happened. I knew I was going to jail but I was so shell-shocked that I chose to run away from that situation. I call my parents to tell them what happened in a mad panic. They try to pick me up, but the cops have already found me walking. The first patrol car goes up to the scene of the crime. The second car sees me, does a u turn, and creeps up behind me most likely thinking, “Maybe this little fucking shit’s going to run, increases our revenue.” I take off through the residences. I was hopping over fences, scratching myself all over from trees and calling my parents once more before finally being surrounded. The officers had their guns drawn while their voices were distant and muted. I got on the ground face down like they told me. I was still talking on the phone as I got on the ground until they told me to drop the cellphone. I dropped it while it was still on the line. The officer slowly walks over, gun drawn, and kick’s my cell phone away before handcuffing me. Only the car accident was traumatizing. I absolutely loved being arrested for a very strange bizarre reason.

On route to the jail, a song comes on the cop’s radio, a song reminiscent to the scratches all over my skin that night. Papa roaches Scars. In jail I had the sobriety test done and past every test with flying colors only to refuse the breathalyzer because I wanted to avoid a DUI. Instead of being charged with DUI, I am charged with refusal of breath check among various other crimes and I lose my license for six months which is what I deserved. The only problem I had with jail was that it was very isolating. No clock, nobody in my cell, nothing. I wish I could’ve at least got my ass beat down, or maybe even raped. I wish that I were able to be shanked in the cafeteria as well as in the showers. That never happened. My father bailed me out before I was even changed out into the county orange.

I got a lawyer and was admitted into a mental health/treatment court a couple years after the incident. I will never forgive myself for crashing my car because I could have killed someone. Everyone still thinks this is hilarious, especially that friend who to be honest never had my back. One time at a party up miller creek, I was being threatened by someone and Jon did nothing. Jon is the type of person who will always be there to video tape you getting your ass kicked. The problem with him is that he’s a coward. My father never much cared what happened to my opinion he wasn’t there to tell me that I was being used.

Okay, let’s get back to my self-diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder. I feel that I relate with many of the symptoms of having it. This is not something that will just go away. I have to come up with ways to manage these symptoms that I have. Borderline is the most stigmatized

mental health problem of all time. No one will ever diagnose me because everyone fears it. So, my option is to diagnose myself and to use therapeutic measures of treating myself without the use of drugs.

No, I will never forgive myself for the actions that I have done in the past. I believe someone out there wants me to be taken out of existence but come on this is all part of my paranoid delusional thinking. Letting it all fall on out is the best way to express yourself. I have been living on my own for the most part since June, 2015. If I were to say everything is fine, that would be too narrow for me. I will admit that I couldn't stand being trapped in a dysfunctional household with my father the functioning businessman while my mom was there having the life sucked out of her by being married to him and yet so dependent on his financial gains.

I ask myself, "Am I Borderline?" I respond to myself, "No one can possibly say yes or no. All that I can tell myself is that it's good that I recognized the symptoms of this personality trait that I believe that I possess in one way or another and try to come up with ways to cope with these feelings."

There is no way of telling myself that I once had borderline but now I'm cured. That is not how mental illness works. I want to go into how I once had no idea with what these problems could be and now that I understand what borderline is rather than the stigmatized way my case manager explains it to me, I can go about using techniques to try to overcome these problems that I have to face.

I explain to myself that it's okay that college is going to take a lot of time for me. No one is going to completely abandon me. I will always still have the support of my family and I will do everything possible to make friends and meet new people. Making friends is the hardest thing for me to do. Not only am I troubled by my isolation both physically and mentally, I feel stigmatized for being alone most of the time.

I wish that I could be all that I can be, but what is exactly being all that I can be. Why am I not myself? What do I have to do to make Mike Delaney the best that Mike can be? How much weight do I have to take before I can be able to throw it far up towards the moon? The anxiety rushes me as the existential existence filled with everlasting pain continues to grow as I feel suffering all around.

As day swallows night I wonder why I keep struggling to keep my life in check. I wonder if everything that happens is a total mistake and the future is wrecked. If I were to do everything again I can say that not much would change, I would just be more prepared. The sun goes down

practicing bravado while the cool spring night shimmies air still to my delight. There's still plenty of time to make the life I'm given the most that it can be. Maybe my brother had it right, all I have to do is toughen up, but what exactly does that mean? I guess that it could mean that I shouldn't let things get to me so easily.