

## Viewpoint

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# Let's Talk About Depression

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You, Me and Her

Do not mistake me, I never meant to hide. I am always trying to reveal myself to the rest of you but are you looking close enough? Look for me in the chillness of her mattress, in the swingin her kilos, in her jokes about death, in the bags under her eyes or in the cuts on her wrists. You shall find me everywhere but in the words of her speech. She won't talk about me because she has been taught not to. I am like the scab behind her knee that she is restless to itch but cannot, although when she will, her past will liberate her for there is no other relief as such.

If you haven't recognized me yet, we may skip the pleasantries for I am anything but nice. It's me, Depression. Did my name shock you? Apologies if it did, as nobody likes to say it out loud in most places and neither does she. But I refuse to empathize with her reasons and so must you. If a broken leg makes her scream out in pain, then so should I, right? Although a significant difference being that I break her from the inside instead and leave wounds that nobody can see, we must agree that pain is pain, but that has seldom been the case. Please understand that I'm the darkness feeding off of her light, you may spot me quick or watch me grow.

I heard your laugh as you said, "She's just 19, what can be depressing at 19?" and the conviction in your voice when you spoke of therapy like it's a scam, but how would you know anything at all if you never lent an ear? The world has spoken about me enough for you to become curious already as to what I may look like. The Prozac's on her bedside should also give you a peek into her serotonin craving mind. The same mind is usually preoccupied with repression and trauma, which is where I come from by the way. It's my home now and it has made me stronger ever since I first came here. I could kill her, not immediately, not in the spur of the moment, but slowly and gradually yet somehow quickly enough to leave you surprised.

There are other things I do to her. I'm sure by now you want to know. I'm the cause of her sleepless nights, her fatigue, her overwhelming change in weight, her irritability and distraction, the empty vodka bottle inside her refrigerator or the cigarette butts in her ash tray. I wish it stopped here but it doesn't. I don't have the capacity to limit myself in the ways I affect her. I have also crept into her perfectly good relationships and destroyed them. How do you fail to perceive? Or maybe you don't. You simply choose to ignore me. Do I threaten your idea of sanity? Or shatter your utopian delusions? Would they call you "crazy" if they knew you needed a "psych"? Or is it that you're afraid of everybody getting tired of listening to you? Or is it because I am not a problem "real" enough for the world? Or are there far more important disorders the world needs to cure and it's probably embarrassing to list me as one of them?

But this could all change in a second for which, you will have to: acknowledge my existence, believe the spine-chilling statistics that claim I'm everywhere, fund the clinics that work towards making me disappear and actively strive to eliminate these stigmas you created around me. Or, you could do one simple task: speak - and all the above stated will follow. If WHO dedicating an entire year to me is what it takes for you to finally talk about me, I assure you now is the time, but when I say speak I mean, encourage. Don't ask her to "snap out of it" for I am not something you can be snapped out of. I am an abyss that you will have

to pull her away from and do keep an eye out, for my ways will tempt her to switch back. Push her to open up, accept and seek help for I am not the best of things to live with.

Am I beginning to sound like I care? Well, I haven't made up my mind about that yet. But for the most part, I never meant to be the dark, dangerous villain of her life. My intentions were not to take over, simply because I cannot. I have been a part of so many minds and one thing I know for sure is that it has never been awfully easy to engulf someone unless none of you decided to help. So, did you look closely after all? If you did, you would know – the real battle is only between you, me and her. You, the world around her, Me, good old Depression and Her, just another soul stuck with me. If you ask me to pack my bags, I eventually will. But somehow not many of you do so and until then, I am forced to be the bloodsucking parasite draining her mind while your ignorance is the shadow in which I hide.

Well, I must say, it was wonderful meeting you although we meet each day through her, while my stare makes you increasingly uncomfortable, perhaps because deep within you know you must make me leave. Your denial in the face of contrary evidence is ridiculous to say the least but it does make me understand humans better. Your ways of dealing with the likes of me seem to be that of shunning me to the back of your mind because somehow it is considered better to leave me lurking around in mid-air. Why? Because it's convenient. Well, I do hope the next time we meet you will choose consideration over convenience and bring me up, surprising her as well as me, and we will be set free.

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