

Reading Time: 8 minutes

Before I go any further, I want to say thank you to those who have stuck by me this year. To call it a shit year would be an understatement. I've been in an Acute Mental Health hospital twice, dealing with pathetic doctors in an NHS Foundation Trust where the Chief Executive has recently resigned due to a number of their sources not being fit for purpose.

I was supposed to go and see some of my good friends this year in America, and a mixture of coaches and flight issues sent me into a tailspin. I wonder if I would have been on a better path if things lined up better. Perhaps, perhaps not. It sucks that I didn't get to see them, see some of my wider friend groups in the US, and saw some motorsport, but life is what life is. I can dwell on it 24/7, or move on.

I've not spoken to many people for months, and for that, I simply have to apologise. I really don't like being one of those people who vent all their pent up anger, sadness, and other stuff onto others, as quite frankly, I don't want to bring other people down with me. I also know that a lot of people either know a very small part of my current situation or none at all, and I'm almost certain that no-one in my friend / trust circle is a trained Mental Health professional, so I don't want to be the bombardment of stuff which makes you worry more than you have to! I'll be honest, having to repeat the same thing over and over goes beyond being monotonous to being actually a negative for me, and I joked with a friend earlier today that I may as well hook up a Midi-board to my phone, with answers to what I know would be the top 15 questions people would likely ask me, and just let the phone do the talking (Maybe bringing a charging bank to help along the way).

I have **A LOT** of outstanding issues in terms of my mental health. I've decided that I'm going to be very open about some of this, so that people can start to appreciate just how dire some of the publicly funded services in the NHS can be, as well as the assumptions that Doctors, especially Mental Health doctors make, which leads to either a 'rotating door' cycle, or a situation where their actions create longer term harm for people than anything else. I have to be very careful in some regards not to identify specific individuals because of Data Protection, GDPR, and the fact that I am also bound by NUJ / IFJ code of conducts, but there will be some frank and honest assessments and reading there.

Aside from this, there's a number of projects I'm committing myself to to help get to the point where I feel comfortable living something akin to a 'normal' life. Some of this is new, some of it is finishing off old projects, and some of it is getting back to where I want to be as an individual. Let's have a look:

Behind Brown Eyes: At Full Throttle

This is part 1 of my life story. So many people have been asking for me to write this, and it was recommended for me back around June of last year. I had gotten 75% of the way through part 1 by March, but circumstances (Including not wanting to risk having a MacBook smashed up whilst on a Mental Health ward) meant that I've only just gotten to the editing phase.

When I say part 1, it's a trilogy of sorts, just less interesting than Lord of the Rings. It has to be in

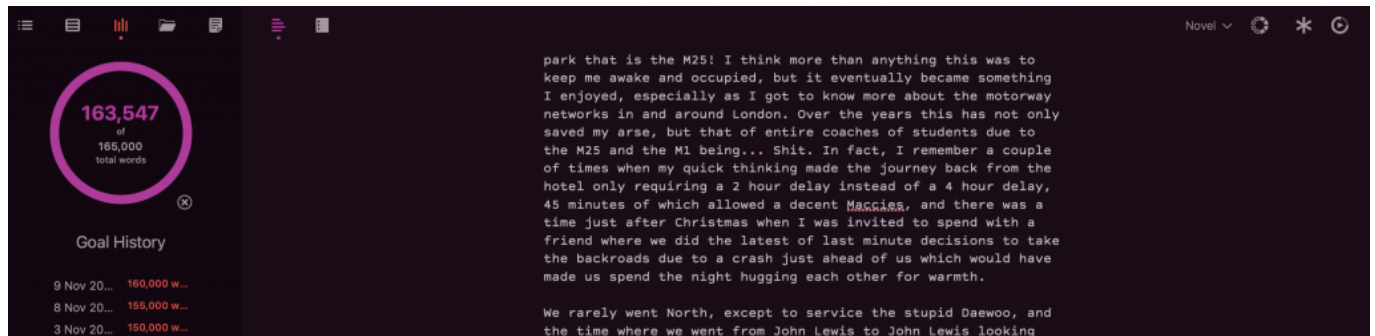
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Getting Back On Track: Onwards and Upwards(?)

parts, as this section is currently at 163,547 words, with an alleged reading time of 9 hours and 55 minutes.



The way I've structured this is as follows:

1. From birth until I start University on the 21st September 2009
2. University until getting engaged in March 2018.
3. 2018 to date.

Part of me jokes that part 1 is the easy bit. There's a lot to come in the next two volumes, but for now I'm focussing on just getting the first part edited and ready to go. All things being well, it should be available for initial purchase on Thanksgiving, starting with a 'pay what you think it's worth', followed by an Amazon release and a 'direct order' facility for those in the UK & EU (The latter depending on the book company resolving a cock up on their end of course).

The only thing I'll say about the book is that I do keep some identities private. It's not one of those books where I want to out people or get my own back by being a vindictive bastard, as after all, I'm hoping to tell my story, not shit on someone else's.

Breaking Down Breaking Down

Hopefully, this should be off the ground by the time 2025 rolls around. This is a podcast that a friend of mine whom I met in aforementioned Mental Health ward suggested we do, especially as there's so much about lived mental health experiences which still aren't explored enough in common society. Most likely this will be an Audio-Only podcast, again because of privacy, and also the fact that I'm moving **somewhere** in the next few months, with no idea as to how well it will look ascetically, and I still refuse to do the whole 'do a podcast in a Starbucks' or similar idea, even though I most certainly have the tech to do it!

A side product of this will be **another** book, this time looking at how to survive an acute Mental Health ward. I'm still in the planning stage of this, debating if it will be solely me, or a couple of people whom are part of a peer support / survival network, doing what frankly HCAs and Nurses should be doing in such settings. The target date on this will be around June 2025, and will have a similar publishing timeline as above.

Medium Form Writing

I really need to get back into medium form style writing if I'm ever going to regain the mental and

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physical stamina to finish off that bastard Ph.D. The topics I'm hoping to write on over the next 6 weeks or so are wild and varied, but include:

- The similarities between Snowpiercer Season 4, and the Terminus Graphic Novel that the film and TV series took inspiration from.
- The psychology of supermarket placements around specific calendar events (Emphasis will be on Christmas of course).
- Why a £250 increase in tuition fees is the last thing students should be complaining about.
- Why single issue politics is dead as a campaign strategy

Commentary

I'll be simple on this: The concept of me wanting to do high profile events just so that I can feel important? Fuck that. It's been fun to do, but I'm not re-entering that world, as frankly it's a massive drain on my mental health, especially as there's plenty of things I've missed over the last few years, and also because I prefer a simpler, less intense life these days. Being an analyst? Great. I'll chuck on the kettle, and analyse the shit out of everything, powered by stats, brain power and a bit of fun along the way.

Whilst I'd love to get back into doing some form of commentary for the iRacing Indy 500 next year, even if it's not the main broadcast (A few of us have been bouncing around the radio style broadcast for years, and I'd love to see something like an Eli & Peyton style production), as well as exploring other ways to provide decent, insightful second-feed broadcasts to hit different audiences.

Next Steps

You'll see a lot more content on this site over the coming weeks, and I **may** do a couple of YouTube videos before the year's out. More than anything, I hope that you will enjoy my content as I continue to climb the slippery ladder back to a degree of normality. Thank you again to everyone who's even bothered to check in and say hi, and I apologise to those whom I may not have responded to. Sometimes even getting internet access / signal when I've been in hospital can be a challenge, and when you consider the fact that you can't just charge your phone in your room etc, you kinda lose track of the world.

My old Faculty Dean always used to say 'Onwards and Upwards' at the end of every email. I like that phrase, as it gives a sense of hope. Even though things are shit, it can always be worse. I'm lucky enough to go to sleep at night not wondering if a rocket's going to destroy it overnight, and I have the ability to at least put food on the table, which is something that so many people are not afforded. I've been blessed to have made some new friends this year who not only have similar lived experiences as my own, but who are neither judgemental nor 'preachy' when sharing their opinions. Male Mental Health remains the biggest killer of someone my age in the UK, and it's about fucking time that we not only challenge the perception of mental health, but stand up to those whom hold all the chips, and get things completely the wrong way around.

Buy Me a Coffee Tea



● If you're looking forward to the future and want to support my endeavours, [you can also buy me a nice cuppa](#). I've not really asked for money for stuff that I do, but because I've been off ill for so long, I'm not really getting much of the sweet sweet Khauna in the back pocket at the moment, but it also allows me to test the waters as to if there is the chance to go fully freelance.

There are also membership options available, partially as it means that I not only have to meet obligations to others, I can turn the bloody heating on once in a while!!! Some of these will come with discounts for the aforementioned first part of 'Behind Brown Eyes', as well as other perks such as access to a sexy Discord channel where I'll be doing more free-form discussion on a range of topics, from Mental Health to Politics, to Society and beyond. If you subscribe as a member, you can also suggest things to discuss. This isn't just about me, and I sure as hell am not a Stephen H. Smith or Skip Bayliss!

In all seriousness though, thanks again to everyone. You mean the world to me.

Peace & Love xxx