

Reading Time: 14 minutes

Three years ago today, Queen Elizabeth II was laid to rest at Windsor Castle, after her laying in state and subsequent funeral service at Westminster Cathedral. Aside from the sheer sadness surrounding her death, I think people will remember just how many people queued to see her late majesty lay in state, with the most British of thing possible; non stop coverage of the queue itself.

Yes. I'm a Royalist. I always have been and always will be. We are lucky enough to live in a scenario whilst there is a monarch as head of state, we have a full democratic process that sits underneath it, as much as we may love / hate those whom actually represent us. You hear arguments from both sides of the coin about how much the Royal Family cost, how much they bring to the UK economy and so on. That's another conversation for another time, but I will say, aside from Prince Andrew, I respect the Royal Family for who they are. Perhaps none more so than the Princess Royal, Princess Anne, who is perhaps the hardest worker of the Royal Family in her roles and obligations.

Me & Queen Elizabeth II.

In July 2005, I had a choice; make a pledge to god, or make a pledge to the Queen when joining the Royal Air Force. At the time I was still rather conflicted about the whole 'god' situation, and I said to myself 'Besides, surely individuals would make a commitment to god via their prayers anyway?'. So I made a Pledge to the Queen, as Royal Air Force service number L8516700. Even though I left the RAF far earlier than I would have liked due to physical health reasons, I maintained that commitment to the Queen throughout my early adult life.

An example of this is Christmas Day. I may hate Christmas, but there is one enduring tradition I've kept likely since the year I was born. 3PM, the Queen's Christmas message, on BBC One (Even though BBC, ITN and Sky alternate the recording and production of the message, it airs across networks). It's 10 minutes maximum of your your Christmas Day (Followed more often than not by James Bond somewhere), but out of respect to my Monarch, I've always given it my attention. Even when I spent those few married years in Bulgaria, it would be 5PM Local Time I'd be doing the same. Even though YouTube and international commonwealth distribution means that the entire Christmas message is out there way before 3PM GMT, I like to ensure I listen to it at 'the appropriate time'.

Fast forward to 2022. I ended up at Russells Hall Hospital with a severe care of Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA). I was unceremoniously thrown out of the passenger seat of the car which my Ex Wife was driving, believing the bullshit from her 'contact' at the university that I wasn't looking after myself or whatever. The reality was I was working 80 hour weeks to prepare for Welcome Week, dealing with asinine colleagues who couldn't meet the simplest of deadlines or complete a stupidly simple task. You know, the same people who would complain to me in my role before I was a lecturer about students not completing work. Yes, I was eating shit, but that's because around my uni, there was nowhere open after 4PM, and I was working on instinct.

DKWhat Now? It's Dangerous.

I was fine until the Tuesday of Welcome Week, where the DKA started taking hold. It's as if you are about 10cm behind your actual body, and it's working in a way where you're having to operate it like a puppet. So called friend decided to bully me and treat me like shit, which of course the university will always defend, as I was bottom of the food chain. I didn't need to be in on Wednesday thankfully, but by Thursday morning, I was ill. Seriously ill. To the point that after I was chucked out the car, and went to reception, I couldn't even write my name or details on the form. There's a big blank around what happened next, but before long I had multiple cannulas in my arm, on something known as an Insulin sliding scale. Basically I get a finger prick test every hour, and a BBG (Blood Gas) blood test every two hours, which have to be done via your hand, and are fucking painful. At one point I couldn't feel any real pain, such was the state I was in.

Eventually I was moved from the Emergency Department and Acute Medical Unit to the Diabetes and Endocrinology ward at Russells Hall Hospital. One of the good things about this ward is that you don't have to mess around if insulin if you, like me normally know what you're doing. Every time I've been in hospital with DKA either Dawn / Alister from the Diabetics team come and see me, take one look at my drip bags, go and shout at some nurses and doctors, then tell them that I have unfettered reign on what I can take in terms of my short acting insulin with meals. I tell them, it's sorted. This is much better than the odd time when I'm given a dose which is equivalent to giving some with half their leg hanging off a paracetamol.

I've had many a 'conversation' with nurses over both the need to swap my drip bags back and forth between the glucose and non glucose bags, and also what I'm taking for my insulin. There's a programme called DAFNE, which basically teaches you to look at a plate of food / a meal and work out your dose from this. With short acting insulin as a T1D, this is important to avoid hypos and hypers. It's also where I almost cook everything from scratch. And when I mean everything, not a jar of 'Add this to **X** to make **Y**' in sight. There are some people whom the regime needs to be more rigid, and I think it was on this admission that one person was kicking up a fuss that they couldn't have their long acting insulin at 10PM, not realising that especially in a post Lucy Letby world, insulin normally needs to be double signed unless like me you can titrate your doses by yourself.

In short, all this meant that I missed the opportunity to go to London and play the game of queuing. This actually is a blessing as I would have done it at the weekend, and frankly would have been either in a diabetic coma, or as the German Newsreader stated when announcing the Queen's death; 'Tot'. Even though St Thomas' hospital was close to the queue, once you hit coma stage, recovery becomes a lot more difficult, especially in a neural sense. Getting into hospital on the Thursday saved my life most likely, even though it was an undignified drop off at A&E, [just like the friend I lost a few years ago](#).

Losing Trust. Once Gone, It's Gone.

How does this all fit in to trust and forgiveness? For starters, I lost a **LOT OF TRUST** that day. Even as I was laying in some semi-comatic-condition, there was already shit being said about me at university, be it in the group chats or the internal tittle - tattle that has always pissed me off about the university. Frankly if people spent less time talking shit about certain people, they would likely have

been able to do some of the simple tasks that meant that I wasn't working until 8PM for over a week 7 days a week. These included so called friends, and ironically continued once I made my return to work 2 and a half weeks later, which set me off the cliff mentally as well as physically. I would love to be in a position to name names, but legally I probably can't. Regardless, the toxicity I faced at the university contributed to being in hospital for that two week spell, as well as the way my mental health spiralled afterwards.

All the self harm that I ended up doing to myself in late 2022 - 2024, from drinking, to destroying my arms, to attempting suicide, all stem in some ways to this part of my life. No thanks for stepping up and taking on responsibilities without any increase to my pay, no immediate consideration to my health when I was feeling like shit that Tuesday (The department all know I'm a T1D so there should have been first aid), and then a torrent of bullying and abuse in both the first and third person afterwards? That was the day I finally realised that I was nothing more than cattle feed at the university.

At this point there was also my ex-wife. [I mentioned this in passing in another post](#), but rather than listening to her husband, and considering the doctors notes, my discharge letter and everything else, still decided to throw her weight behind these so called 'family friends'. Yes, I asked more than I should have of my ex-wife constantly during our time together, and there's a whole layer of my side of the story that will probably take years of counselling before I'm able to publicly talk about, but in **THIS SITUATION, AT THIS TIME**, there was fuck all support from her. Despite the doctors saying that I was near death, and insulin resistance being a part of this (Something which I myself could not control, as I can't just switch insulin types).

This was the time when I realised that no matter what I would do, I would never be right, and was another major factor in my health dip into constant suicidal ideations. This also was the time when I was monitored more than ever through security cameras, doorbells, neighbour WhatsApp groups and the like. I was trapped in more ways than one, which is why I spent so much time thinking that the only way to be free of this new controlling and cohesive relationship was to be constantly on the run or completely removed from the world. This lack of distrust quickly spiralled to everyone whom I shared a social media 'friend' with my wife. As more vile vitriol was spread by her about me on a weekly basis, ruining my Esports career in effect, I didn't have the energy left to fight. That's what depression, bullying and control leads to. It's not easy to get away from it, and 'just bucking up and carrying on' doesn't work pal. It's more complicated than that.

In retrospect, both of these scenarios would have likely played out at some point anyway, so it both happening at the same time no longer really bothers me. I was never invited to these secret WhatsApp groups, but have heard the third party 'Track Talk'. Most of these staff no longer work at the university, but it doesn't fill me with a sense of joy returning knowing that part of it may still be there. One of these supposed 'family friends' had constantly berated me about my hair when I had dreadlocks (Of a normal colour), or even the fact I would wear a leather jacket to and from work or when going out for a smoke break. I'm sorry, but my leather jacket is like my facepaint. I feel more comfortable in one, and it's not like I'm teaching or interacting with students in a ripped pair of jeans / scruffy T-shirt, it was always a shirt and jumper, one or the other or both, but never a suit.

To date I've not had an apology from these staff, my line manager at the time who pushed it under

the carpet, or HR. It just reminds me that offices are just like playgrounds, just in adult clothing and with coffee permitted.

Finding Forgiveness.

On the flip side, during the Queens Funeral, out of nowhere I was able to find a sense of forgiveness / closure towards my adopted parents. I didn't know that I was adopted until 2009 ([Read the damn book for more info!](#)), so for most of my life I've spent thinking that these were my real parents when they were not.

I've made it clear that I have a level of respect for my adopted father. The same cannot be said for my adopted mother. In fact there's only a couple of times that I've even felt a sense of sympathy towards her, once when she got her finger on the inside of a doorframe whilst said door was closing, and the other when she had a miscarriage. This represented about 0.003% of the abuse she placed upon me, and I spent years carrying that anger with me.

Aside from being a really sad and symbolic event, for me there was this sense of history that I'd never seen and may only see once more in my life. From the different marching speed, to the 'Arms Reversed' method of marching, to the symbolic removal of the sovereign objects from the Queen's coffin, there is a book that could be written about those two weeks as well. I was watching the funeral from a hospital bed, still very ill, but I mustered all my strength to stand at the edge of my bed for the National Anthem at the funeral in Westminster. I remember one of the Clinical Support Workers was worried that I'd fall over, but I was just about OK. The parade to Hyde Park Corner was one of the eeriest things I've ever witnessed. If we were to lose a nuclear war, and have the last of our troops go and surrender, it would look something just like that day. Haunting, but beautiful in it's same way.

After the removal of the sovereign objects are removed, right at the end of the committal service at Windsor, the Lord Chamberlain symbolically broke his wand of office, which in effect signifies the end of his role of office with the Queen, in effect the end of his service, but one could argue the end of service to everyone who pledged allegiance to the Queen at some point of their lives, military or otherwise. This moment is so often overlooked, but is one of the most important parts of the entire funeral process. It is in effect the end of one chapter, and the 'real' start of another (Remembering that the King became king immediately upon the death of his mother; there is no overlap).

The national anthem played as the Queen was lowered into the crypt, and I'll be honest I was a fucking mess. You know how North Koreans are supposed to show incredible remorse at the death of their supreme leader? Like that, just magnified. I have only cried that way four times in my life; the other being the night of 11th September 2001 when I cried myself to sleep thinking 'What the fuck have we done with the world', the 16th into the 17th October 2011, when Dan Wheldon passed and most recently when Pope Francis passed, just as I was renewing my faith with God. Sure, I've cried after the various beatings and assaults I've faced in my life, but these three times were different. I've never 'lost' a family member or anything like that, so I don't know how that feels, but I can imagine it's similar.

This was my Queen. Someone who I've respected my entire life, whom we could always look towards to do the right thing. This was the Queen forced to grieve at Westminster Cathedral alone when she

lost her husband, whilst the floppy haired 'Three Word Phrase' mop known as Boris Johnson was busy having garden parti... Sorry, meetings. This was the Queen who managed to make us laugh by 'jumping' out of a helicopter at the London 2012 Games, and who melted all of our hearts over a marmalade sandwich. She modernised the monarchy, made the Commonwealth truly inclusive, and was a beacon of light to us. Why the hell would I not have the utmost respect for her?

As that coffin was being lowered into the crypt in Windsor, I thought about the messages that the Queen had taught us over the years, even within her own family. One of these was the power of forgiveness. The way she showed forgiveness even within her own family was a model for many, and I don't know why or how, but I just said to myself 'Fuck it, I forgive you' in relation to my parents. There was a twofoldness to this. One, it was a way for me to recognise the lessons I've been taught over the years, and at the same time, all that hatred, anger, disdain and hurt, it went down into that crypt with Her Majesty. From there God can take on the rest (Even though I'm a Catholic by birth and this is the Protestant faith, semantics).

Grief, Anger, And Developing Trust Are Natural. Forgiveness Is Earned.

We are all but humans (Unless there's a cat trying to read this, to which I just say **meow**) the emotions we face on a daily basis are a natural part of being human. We experience life, make our own decisions, and find our own path where we can. We develop trust towards each other based on our own moral compass and experiences. Like all those reflective models I used to teach about say, we learn by doing. We develop further by reflecting on our learning.

I've always said that it takes a lot to earn my trust, but minutes to lose it. I try to surround myself with people who have similar ideologies. It's what I like to call the zero bullshit attitude to life. All social media, WhatsApp and the like do is spread bullshit, be it political, racial / nationalistic / individual. It's just like MSN Messenger from back in the day, with your 'besties' in your username, followed by about 6 group chats individually slagging each of them off. If you are one of those people, good luck to you; but I can see way past your shit. In my life over the last few years, including being in both general and mental health hospitals, I've seen the good and bad here. I couldn't even trust my Mental Health doctor for a year because of pre-determined ideas about me, but luckily that one is *finally* resolved.

From patients, to staff I've had severe trust issues, for example where a Freedom of Information Act request shows just how poorly the mental health hospital 'observed' me as a patient, making me out to be well when I clearly wasn't, and in terms of patients, almost universally you have to learn that everything, including information is transactional. Everyone wants something, and will only be there if and when you can provide. There are but a very rare number of examples outside of this, but it all started with the zero-bullshit, openness and recognition of the other person as a human being, not a transactional tool down the road.

Forgiveness is earned. This could either be through a genuine sense of remorse for actions carried out, or because of the fact that the person(s) have made a genuine attempt to change their actions both short and long term. I say long term as so many abusive relationships go through the motions of long term promises that last about as long as a pint of milk out of the fridge. But forgiveness can also be earned simply through time. The process of moving on, and having to unload some baggage to make way for the next trough of shit that's coming. Age can also be a factor here, when you may

realise that in the big scheme of things it wasn't the worst thing overall, but the key is forgiveness can't be forced.

I forgive my adopted parents simply because carrying around that torment has gotten old. I have enough shit on my plate as it is, and I changed my name after all for a reason. To be rid of them. To the others whom I've lost trust towards, I think that's something that will linger for a lot longer, especially as no one has had the testicular / vaginal fortitude to either admit their actions, or take responsibility for them. Gossip really does kill, and once it becomes institutional, it's just a cess pit of false narratives and outdoing each other. And I can't deal with that. Sorry.

Peace, Rage And Love xx
God Save The King.

IMAGE CREDIT: CNN.