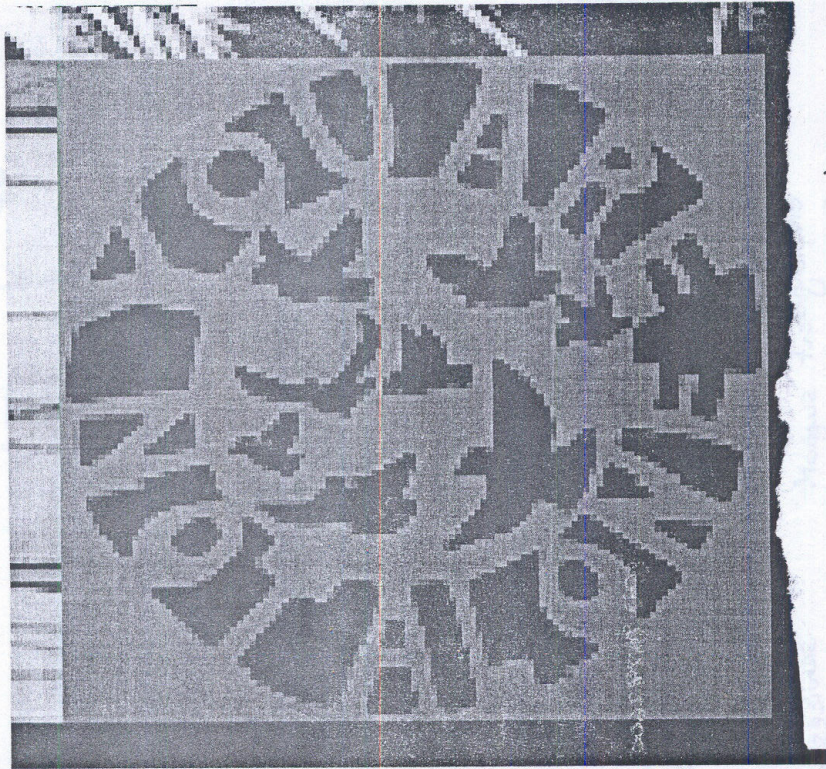
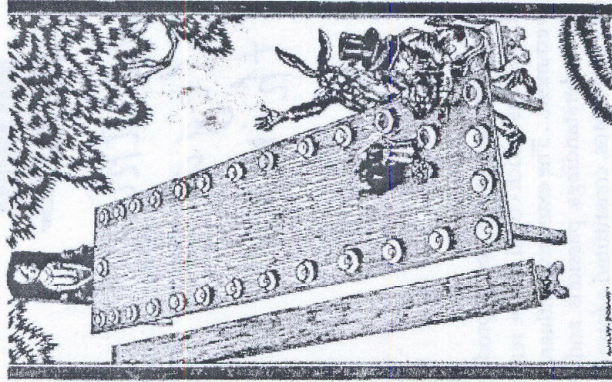


# ANARCHIA



Sydney@theicarusproject.net  
for contributions to the next zine,  
comments & info. The community space we  
organise out of 22 Enmore Rd Newtown  
www.newq.org



## Factoids

What society calls "mad" has changed over time. How madness has been handled has changed dramatically too. Being labelled 'mad' isn't just a matter of your chemistry, it is often a matter of being socially appropriate. That is dictated by where you are in the world, when you are there, and (too often) how much money you have. We've compiled some fun (and not so fun) facts about madness

**Hysteria** literally means "wandering uterus" and was thought to be the cause of madness in women. There is a long history of doctors administering a "special massage" to women to cure this madness - including the use of the first vibrator, a steam powered contraption called "the Manipulator"!

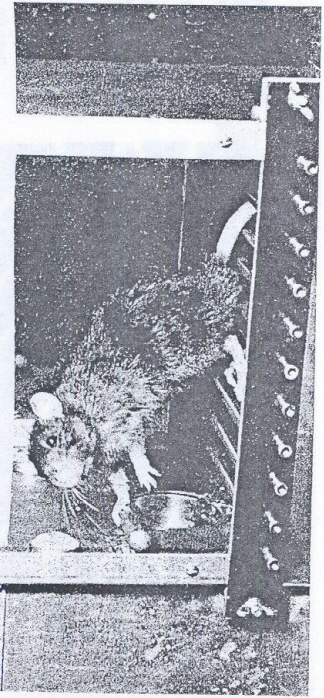
**Anarchia** : In the USA in the 1800's, many people who opposed a centralised federal authority and criticised the government were diagnosed with Anarchia, which was defined as having an "excess of the passion for liberty" that "constituted a form of insanity".

**Drapetomania** was a psychiatric diagnosis proposed in 1851 by physician Samuel A. Cartwright, of the Louisiana Medical Association, to explain the tendency of black slaves to flee captivity.

"Every psychiatric expert involved in writing the standard diagnostic criteria for disorders such as depression and schizophrenia has had financial ties to drug companies that



The Dachshund is a member of the Hound group of breeds, though most of the 200,000 that have been registered in the United States in the past ten years are house pets rather than field dogs.







if I have a fever I need a sweater to stay warm and so on. If my hair is falling out I need to spend more time to look presentable, and then you need to factor in another 5 minutes for feeling badly that it took you 2 hours to do all this.

I think she was starting to understand when she theoretically didn't even get to work, and she was left with 6 spoons. I then explained to her that she needed to choose the rest of her day wisely, since when your "spoons" are gone, they are gone. Sometimes you can borrow against tomorrow's "spoons", but just think how hard tomorrow will be with less "spoons" . . .

We went through the rest of the day, and she slowly learned that skipping lunch would cost her a spoon, as well as standing on a train, or even typing at her computer too long. She was forced to make choices and think about things differently. Hypothetically, she had to choose not to run errands, so that she could eat dinner that night.

When we got to the end of her pretend day, she said she was hungry. I summarized that she had to eat dinner but she only had one spoon left. If she cooked, she wouldn't have enough energy to clean the pots. If she went out for dinner, she might be too tired to drive home safely. Then I also explained, that I didn't even bother to add into this game, that she was so nauseous, that cooking was probably out of the question anyway. So she decided to make soup, it was easy. I then said it is only 7pm, you have the rest of the night but maybe end up with one spoon, so you can do something fun, or clean your apartment, or do chores, but you can't do it all.

I rarely see her emotional, so when I saw her upset I knew maybe I was getting through to her. I didn't want my friend to be upset, but at the same time I was happy to think finally maybe someone understood me a little bit. She had tears in her eyes and asked

Dear  
Reader,  
Welcome  
to our  
world!



This is a zine that has spawned from a group of Sydney folk who decided to start a local chapter of The Icarus Project (Icarus was started in the United States about 5 years ago by 2 anarchists diagnosed with bipolar disorder) ...and we have a plan. A plan to fix things. And we have an idea. The idea that whether we might be labelled with a mental illness, call ourselves crazy, take or shun medicines, we are living in a mad world where a pill is not going to be the answer.

Our questions are deeper and broader than just "how can I stay sane?" We ask "what is it to be sane in an insane world", where being classed as "sane" often means working 8 hours a day for 40 years, with no say in how your life is run. We can be given drugs to fit in with a mad world, but no drug to make that world sane! We are a diverse group of people interested in creating stigma-free spaces in our community /ies in which to support, share resources and advocate around mental health issues. We are here to challenge assumptions, and create our own maps. Come explore your madness with us!





I brought my bundles and my pins  
 Not like before when it was daffodils and posy rings  
 And endless summers running  
 Laughing madly through the long grass

I brought my scars and open wounds  
 No longer an open smile with rosy cheeks  
 And wide innocent eyes  
 With rough beauty not yet broken

I brought my sorrow and my tears  
 And asked you to sit quietly  
 Beside them and understand  
 And, quite simply, hold my hand

Once I bought open books  
 Now secrets held and closed  
 To my aching heavy chest  
 Held tight and together with crooked looks

Upon a time I bought a boundless heart  
 Now sewed up and held together  
 Bound by strings and ribbons of red  
 Impenetrable at its seams

Once I bought dreams and hope  
 Not baggage pulled and dragged along  
 Held behind with a rope  
 Fixed with chains to keep them shut

I will bring you thin ice  
 Vacant stares and cold shoulders  
 For these are the medals of my scars  
 No longer able to be claseted

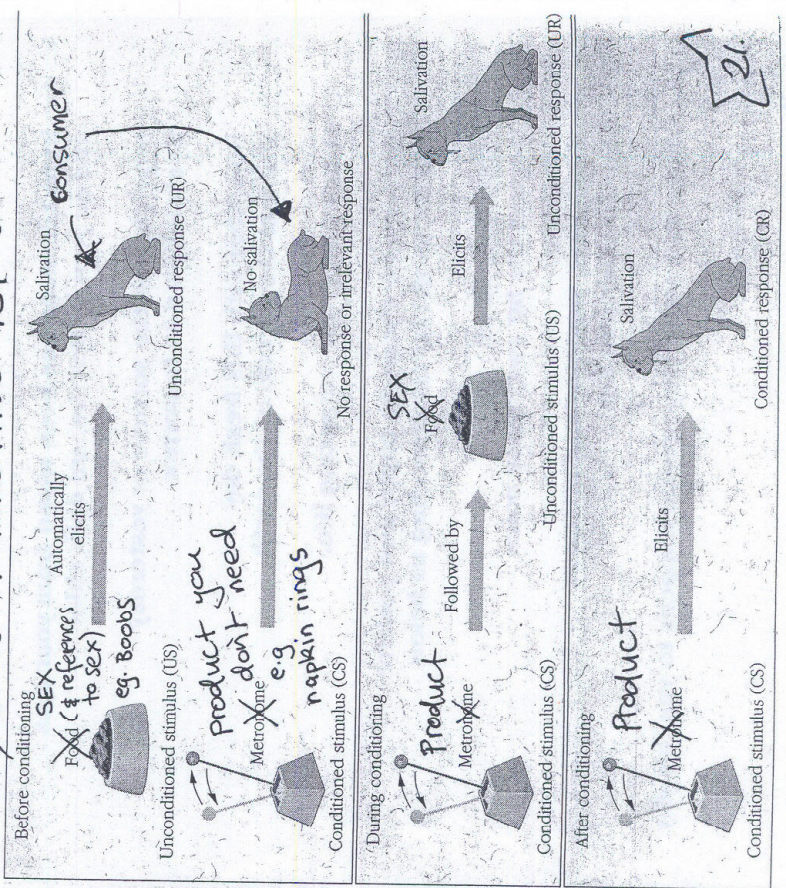
Now I bring a beaten soul  
 Once a fire spirit  
 Skipping above the earth, bound for the stars  
 Now grounded

sell medications for those illnesses, a new analysis has found. Of the 170 experts in all who contributed to the manual that defines disorders from personality problems to drug addiction, more than half had such ties, including 100 percent of the experts who served on work groups on mood disorders and psychotic disorders. "Experts Defining Mental Disorders Are Linked to Drug Firms Shankar Vedantam Washington Post Staff Writer Thursday, April 20, 2006; Page A07

For a woman, masturbating "too much" could be seen as a sign of madness. Up until 1952, this was 'cured' by clitoradectomy.

Clint from "Crazy Clint's Bargain" stores has not actually been diagnosed within the DSM-IV

### Classical conditioning MARKETING 101 :



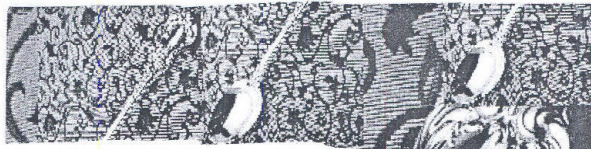


me to then take away, since most people who get sick feel a "loss" of a life they once knew. If I was in control of taking away the spoons, then she would know what it feels like to have someone or something else, in this case Lupus, being in control..... I asked her to count her spoons. She asked why, and I explained that when you are healthy you expect to have a never-ending supply of "spoons". But when you have to now plan your day, you need to know exactly how many "spoons" you are starting with. ...

I asked her to list off the tasks of her day, including the most simple. As, she rattled off daily chores, or just fun things to do; I explained how each one would cost her a spoon. When she jumped right into getting ready for work as her first task of the morning, I cut her off and took away a spoon. I practically jumped down her throat. I said " No! You don't just get up. You have to crack open your eyes, and then realize you are late. You didn't sleep well the night before. You have to crawl out of bed, and then you have to make your self something to eat before you can do anything else, because if you don't, you can't take your medicine, and if you don't take your medicine you might as well give up all your spoons for today and tomorrow too." I quickly took away a spoon and she realized she hasn't even gotten dressed yet. Showering cost her a spoon, just for washing her hair and shaving her legs. Reaching high and low that early in the morning could actually cost more than one spoon, but I figured I would give her a break; I didn't want to scare her right away. Getting dressed was worth another spoon. I stopped her and broke down every task to show her how every little detail needs to be thought about. You cannot simply just throw clothes on when you are sick. I explained that I have to see what clothes I can physically put on, if my hands hurt that day buttons are out of the question. If I have bruises that day, I need to wear long sleeves, and

To one degree or another, whether it is a temporary or life-long condition, we have seen the world in a way different to anyone else. We are crazy, raving, nuts, deranged, loony, psycho, demented, whacko, unhinged, daft, mental. We are not playing with a full deck, we're a few sandwiches short of a picnic, we have bats in the belfry. We are insane in the membrane. It's cost us a lot- jobs, friends, lovers, family, lives. So is this really something we should be celebrating? Perhaps not. But it is something that's here now, and despite therapy and counseling and institutionalisation and medication and ECT and support and basket weaving, for a lot of us it isn't going to go away. It can be managed, but it's something we have to live with, one way or another, for the rest of our lives. There's not much cause for a fucking parade there, but there is a lot to embrace.

When I use the term Mad Pride, I use it in a different sense to that of the late-90's/early 00's "Survivor" emancipation movement of the same name. This is largely because I am just too lazy to come up with a new name for this half-arsed pseudo-manifesto, but also because I feel that their idea of "Madness as Anti-Capitalist Protest", while noble, nonetheless alienates a large section of people who should be a part of this. While we may feel more at home with Mad Bisexuals, Mad Republicans, Mad Anarcho-Feminists or Mad Over 60's Women's Lawn Bowls, the fact remains that the single unifying factor for most of us is the madness. I may meet someone who clicks with me in every way, but there will be a chasm between us that can never be bridged because they have never known what it is to feel their mind fall away from them. *That* is what I mean by Mad Pride- a group of almost wholly disparate people united by the battle they fight every day



36.5

32



ashamed of. The cause may be genetic, hormonal, social or a combination of factors, but the effect is still the same. Being ill is like having someone slip a roofie into your drink.... every day... maybe for the rest of your life.

And when I say 'ill' I make a distinction between lifestyles/identities that are labelled deviant and the experience of suffering an illness. In a racist/sexist/transphobic/homophobic world the two may well be linked but that doesn't mean the lifestyle/identity is the illness. It can be hard to tease this apart when you are in a vulnerable situation and you only turn to the mental health system for help (as seeking help from your community as well means outing yourself and braving stigma). Frequently lifestyles/identities that fit outside the norm are pathologised inappropriately by well meaning health care professionals. This is none too surprising considering the history of the mental health system policing deviance from social norms, with homosexuality listed as a mental illness in the DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual) until as recently as 1987, and Gender Identity Disorder and Transvestic Fetishism continuing to be classified. It is important for our queer/radical left community/ies to open a dialogue about madness so we can work on reducing stigma. We need to look after each other so we can be dangerous together.

- Nat

16

## Milk

by Puppet

I think. I think so many things. Options are explored. conclusions are deduced. Memories are under constant scrutiny. Details, obsessive attention to details. History is placed under revision. And with all that hustle in my head, i can only think of one thing to say i wish i had brought my jacket....

Its 7am on a Sunday. I walk up to get milk to go with my coffee. I've been up at least since 6. While it was hardly my fault to wake at such an early hour, i nag myself with the thought that i have still sinned, i should of stayed in bed... and on the lords day none the less.

Too many thoughts. Self doubt - questioned truth. Desires & yearnings. Anger & spite. Existential dilemmas. Emotional roller coaster rides that just continue on, round & round, up & down, and round again.

I acknowledge that none of this may truly matter. Thought is not action. Still that does not deny the pivotal nature of the situation for me. Its an anxious state of being. Engulfed by the stream of consciousness. Compulsively thinking things apart, looking for some hidden meanings in the glyphs. Looking through the symbol to find the symbolic, when in fact there was never any meaning to begin with. A excess of thought is a blessing & curse. My pharmakon of sorts. That elusive thing which is both poison & cure Its that cup of coffee that awaits me at home, now i have milk.

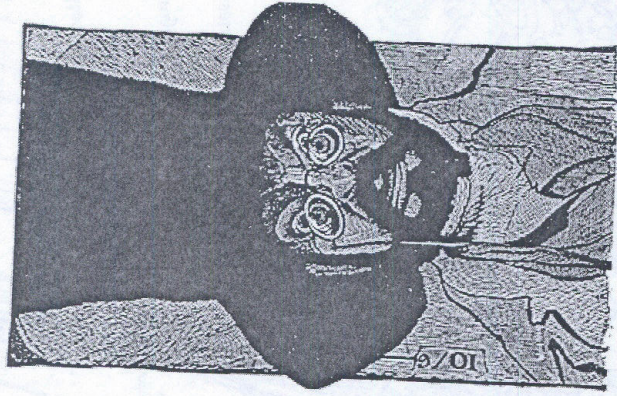
2







MANIC MONDAYS  
AND  
ECKY TUESDAYS



Sitting in my nonsense  
garden with a plane  
overhead  
wondering of the peace and  
calm  
thinking it would be better  
if everyone up there were  
dead

there is the bitch girl  
waiting for a call  
now shes going to bleed and  
get away from it all

but there is no bright light  
for she has been blinded  
and shes dead even when  
she goes home

A vast sensation in my chest  
as I turn to look for those who once cared  
I realise my family is one big night spot and I have been barred

And thats why I have this garden  
'ouz I don't want to be there anymore  
And thats why I have this burden because it's back behind every single  
door

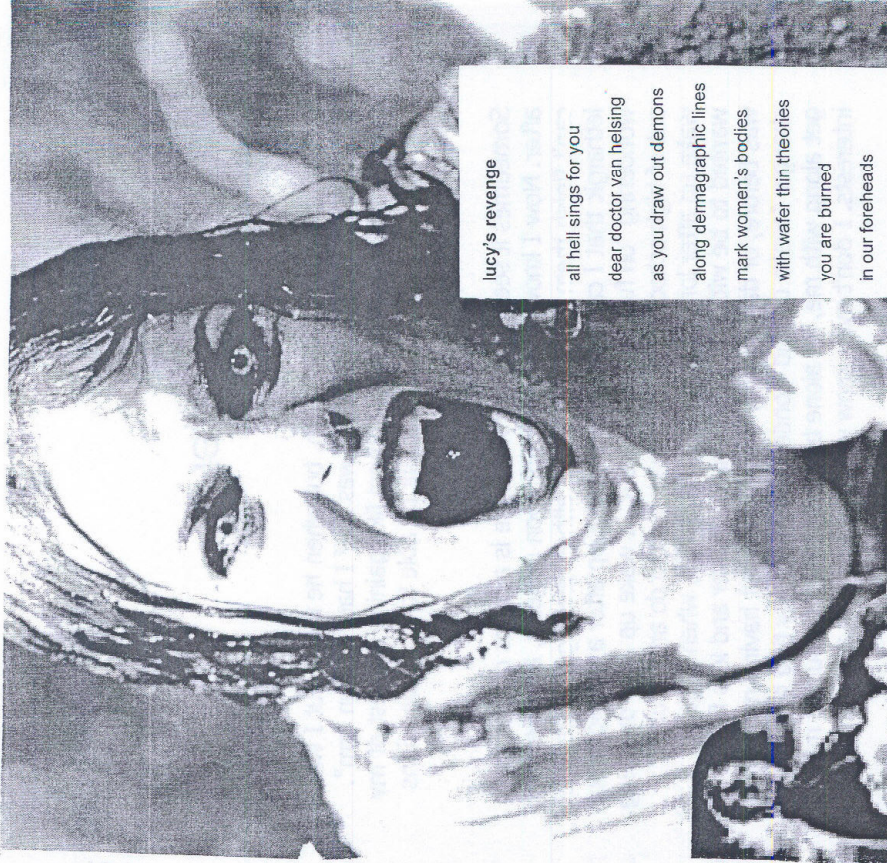
it's better if we know we're about to fail  
my scabs are bleeding and my tongue is pale





## Come Winter & Snowflakes

a land far away  
Locked away for many a day  
I watched the snowflakes  
Settle on the grass  
All that was left for me to do  
Was sit on my ....  
Watching the Athens Olympics on TV  
Milo became my friend  
Drinking it to no end  
This place of recovery was a haven  
Compared to other places I had been treated



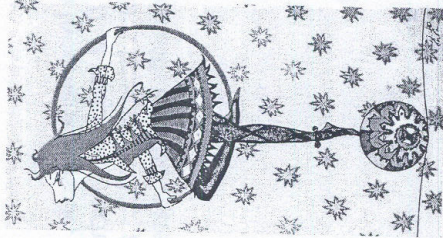
### lucy's revenge

all hell sings for you  
dear doctor van helsing  
as you draw out demons  
along dermagraphic lines  
mark women's bodies  
with wafer thin theories  
you are burned  
in our foreheads  
like lobotomy scars  
your transfusions  
attempt to diffuse  
our desire  
but once bitten  
twice as sly  
so be warned dear doctor  
i will come again  
i will make you scream





## Peril in Paradise



At a time when I was in a land of opportunities  
I was brought to my knees in despair  
Not only were my dreams shattered  
But the situation was utterly not fair  
At a time when all my hopes were up  
My sanity made way for insanity  
So much so, that I was locked up  
In a different land  
Shut away from friends and family  
Treated under a strange doctor's hand  
I flew away to fulfil a dream  
A dream to be a circus queen  
But soon after leaving  
My sanity began unweaving  
Such turmoil and upheaval  
Left me with less power than a weevil

## Living well – mental health practice

I am a queer dyke, sex worker, activist, femme, anarcho pagan, performer and writer (amongst other things) who collects labels to put on my mantle piece. I have double depression, with life long low-level depression, with chronic episodes.

I spent about ten years with significantly debilitating depression, for the first year or so of that time I was undiagnosed. During this time I spent a year in bed, seldom leaving it except for toilet breaks, I didn't have the energy to eat much, so I was surviving on toast, coffee and cigarettes, standing up for more than a few minutes felt hard, so when I did have to talk with someone, I'd find myself squatting on the ground. Once a week, I'd do a shift at an escort agency, which provided enough income for me to survive, without dealing with the bureaucracy of Centrelink – which is particularly hard to manage with mental illness. I always got out of bed once a month, to attend the community consultation group of my local sex worker organisation.

After diagnosis, I was put on Zolof, which was amazing. Prior to diagnosis, I had been living with vision disturbance – transparent spots floating before my eyes (this is a less known symptom of clinical depression), which affected my



(it just seems to slow your body and brain right down) also reinforces the condition. Statistically, the two most useful things you can do for depression is to exercise and have human contact. So I started saying yes to every invitation that came my way, and making sure I got the numbers of anyone I had just met who seemed nice, I would then make sure I called and arranged to meet up for coffee. I would also make sure, over the course of a day that I was regularly moving around the house. If I noticed I had been sitting for 10 minutes, I'd force myself to get up and do some chore. When that was done, I could sit again, but for no longer than 10 minutes. Then I had to get up and do something else. Motivation is really hard with depression, so talking yourself into doing things, one step at a time can help. When my physical capacity improved, I started going on daily brisk walks for hours and hours. Such simple things, but they made such a difference to my energy levels. And being able to have control over my depression felt so empowering.

I've been off of meds for over a year now, and although I have had some 'wobbly' mental health at times, I have felt so much better. If I start to notice symptoms reoccurring, I know what I need to do. I think that Australian culture presents women in particular with few options to feel physically capable. Most traditional 'women's jobs' (except for sex work) don't involve much physicality, and women are often trained to feel more vulnerable because of their biological differences (i.e. an extra orifice makes you a rape target). Women's sport

might because I fear that if I lose it I might never find it again.

Somewhere, there is another life that I might have lead if I had been able to stay in control. Now that I have been diagnosed, that other life is in front of me. It is no longer elusive. I am reading lots about bipolar, and what I am discovering is that I can have control. I can have medications, though they might make me sick and I might stop taking them. I can have therapy, and talk through what I am going to do before I do it. I can work with my friends and family to cope with me when I cannot cope with myself.

I used to think that I was destined to be out of control. Every 10 years, I would feel the depression opening a hole in the floor beneath me. Like lots of people, I never noticed the signs because I thought that's how normal people responded to not being depressed. I'd trespass, drink all day, go for 6 hour walks at night, talk to strangers and go to parties where I didn't know a soul. The colours and sounds were all meaningful. Rules and authority didn't threaten me - I was a wreck, and capable of withstanding any pressure. School slid by me like water off a duck. Sleep was for wimps, though, and I educated myself at nights. The police often found me hiding under streetlights, and stopped to ask what I was doing. "Reading". They were puzzled, but then, they were nice.



I thought that this energy was what all people had. It didn't feel so extraordinary to me, really. I thought it was a reward for going back home, for going back to school, for living a life of dull co-operation. For a while, I did that. I used my energy to work, and work hard. I advanced at work, and felt healthy because I was economically active. I filled 3 roles at work, did anarchist volunteering, kept house, kept friends, and all kinds of other stuff (as well as study). And I felt normal because I was productive. It was a reward until I felt that depression again, opening up beneath me, to swallow me whole.

I wanted to kill myself - just because I didn't want to do it again. Not again! Sylvia Plath says something like that in "Lady Lazarus" - "I am only thirty, and like the cat, I have nine times to die". Well, I felt like that.

So I went to a doctor - again. Something I didn't mention before was this: I had gone to doctors in the past. They all told me I was upset because of my parent's divorce, and that I was only seeking attention like all young girls do. I had had this experience from the time I was 10 to the time I was 22. So when I went to this doctor, I held out little hope. Though, it seemed that being a little older and having my own adult money made an excellent difference!

I got zolof.

therapist, I would put them through sex work 101, as often sex work is seen as either the symptom or cause of mental distress. They also had to get that the fact that I have sex with str8 men at work doesn't negate my queer identity, and that the problems for me are about the stigma attached to queerness and sex work, rather than either of these identities of themselves.

What felt particularly helpful in the long run for me, in terms of making a recovery from chronic depression, was also taking a self-help approach. I don't believe that self-help is incongruent with seeing a mental health professional, or taking medication. Firstly, once diagnosed, I did as much research as I could into clinical depression, I didn't want my doctor to have more information about my condition than I did. I also was very out about my depression, to everyone I knew. By refusing to buy into the idea that mental health issues should be stigmatised, I attempted to create identity and community, like I had with my queer and whore identities. Also, finally, it occurred to me after reading yet another book about depression, and noticing that I felt better when I did certain things, I realised, that with depression, recovery is about targeting the symptoms. So in my case, the isolation - partly the result of being so out and noisy about so many hard things - was a symptom of depression, as engaging in social activities felt really draining and hard to manage - and isolating myself reinforced depression. The lack of movement that emerged as a symptom of depression



ability to do much reading, and even maintaining eye contact during the course of a conversation felt draining. The vision disturbance cleared up almost immediately on meds. The other aspect of diagnosis was knowing that I wasn't lazy and unmotivated. As the youngest child in my family, I had dealt with all those stereotypes of being the 'irresponsible, charming, gets-away-with-everything one', so I absorbed all of those messages that my inertia and distress was all my fault. Knowing that I had an illness felt like I was liberated from the burden of guilt I was carrying around about all of those things I wasn't managing. I then realised, that I had managed to achieve so much while unwell.

For many years, I was maintained on meds, however I had what they call 'poor compliance' – like many people living with depression, I find it nearly impossible to keep up daily rituals – eating proper, balanced meals, and getting out of bed at the same time everyday – let alone taking tablets. I was also pretty much always in therapy – seeing either my doctor (who also had psych qualifications) at a clinic that specialised in seeing HIV and Hep C + people, LGBTIQ folk, sex workers and injecting drug users, so it was pretty close to a stigma free zone – or later with a psychiatrist and eventually, when I had moved interstate, the counsellor at another local sex worker organisation. All of this talking therapy, plus anti-depressant medication was helpful, and I was careful – after a couple of incidents, to ensure that my therapists were not anti-sex work. When I had my first session with a new

A year later, I had a hypomanic episode, and I got the diagnosis of bipolar II. It makes so much sense to me. It fits so well with how things have been. Like a knot coming loose after you've struggled with it for 20 years. I am bipolar, and I am glad.

28:





## The morning after

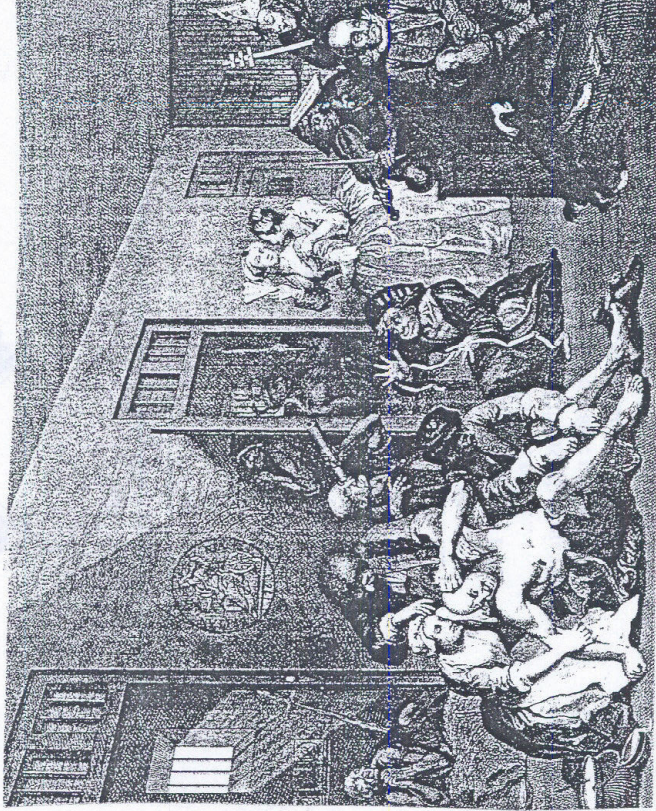
by Anna Aniston

I don't talk with my dad much, but when he found out I was diagnosed bipolar II, he said it was as if I had "lost an arm". For me, though, it was much more like gaining the rest of my life. I have a future where I might be able to make decisions and stick with them.

Sometimes it seems like my whole life is a series of mornings after. Now I know why. I embark upon projects, and then can't finish them off. I find myself either needing change or so lethargic that I can't complete. I wake up after a big night out wondering "oh fuck, what did I do?". I wake up after dropping out of high school when my dream was to do arts at uni. I wake up after long relationships with men, when I really wanted to be with women. I wake up fatter and less fit than I was before, or dangerously thinner, without having noticed a change. I wake up and wonder why my family find it hard to get along with me, let alone be caring and look out for my interests. I don't even know what my interests are.

I wake up and wonder "how much older am I going to get, when am I going to grow up?". My friends around me say "growing up is giving up". But I envy them that they seem to have a choice to be grown up or childishly playful. I feel so

is given less attention and prestige than men's sport. However, I think movement, feeling fit and capable is really empowering and good for mental health.



William Hogarth's engraving of a scene in Bedlam, London's notorious asylum (from *The Rake's Progress*, 1735).

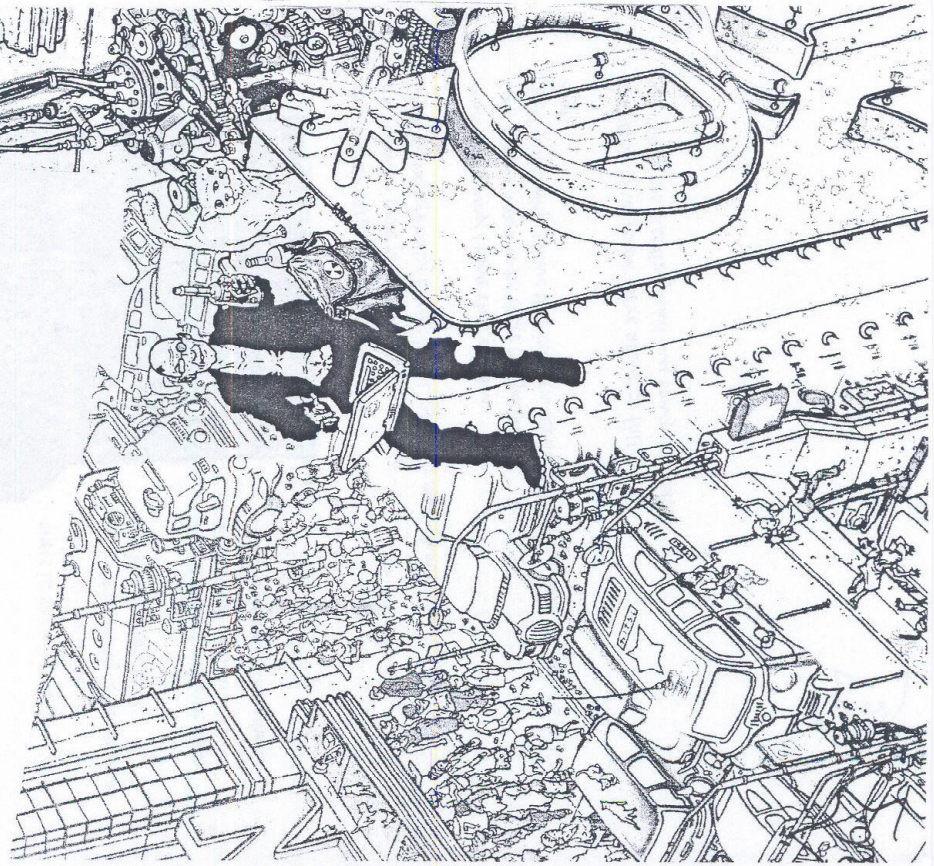
30.

31.



role on some fucked hill where the hollow wife lays wed to the butcher  
 e  
 it met  
 butcher is coveting a burning bed anger is just a pretension  
 P tastes good you say but mind in isolation works better in some  
 is

Frater Min



**disorderly conduct**

i stuck two fingers deep inside  
 and withed  
 to bring forth evidence  
 of this my guilty pleasure  
 consumed with fickle measure

the weight falls with some relief  
 but heart  
 still heavy with disbelief  
 reminds the mind ever curious  
 of her-story

a time and place where (legs apart)  
 heart (racing furiously)  
 felt body whole  
 alone with soul

before the tv's torturous tease  
 and adverse sizing bullied me  
 and I caught hold of that disease

now all I want to throw up are arguments  
 and pained laments  
 if I love myself is it evident  
 or is it true you're pleased to never see me?

**slipping**

in the bay of sick children  
 she lay for a time  
 a knee torn open....  
 wouldn't open to him

in the bay of sick children  
 no choice but comply  
 they take measure by measure  
 in unpunished rule

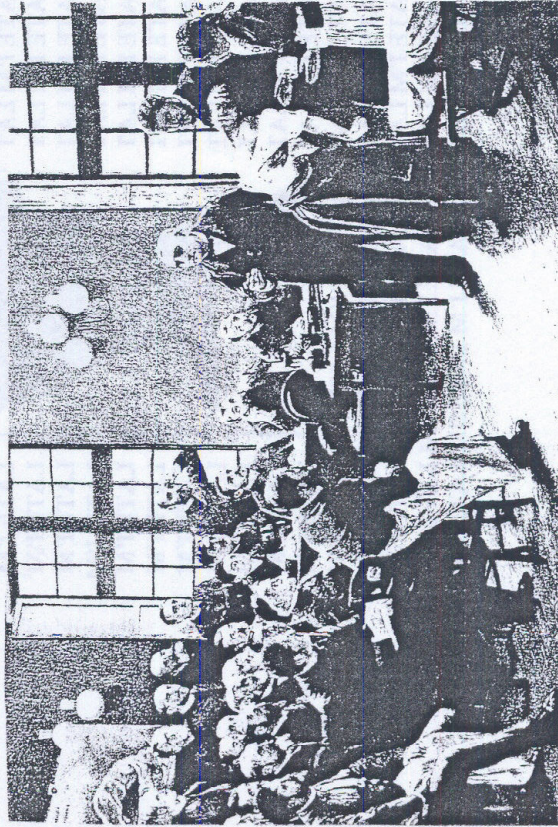
in the bay of sick children  
 lather covers her sin  
 he finds his way in  
 as she slips away

- Annie Free





We could go for walks  
And feed the horses  
Make snowmen in the garden  
Draw, paint, play piano,  
Make dream catchers  
There was a middle-aged woman  
Making dream catchers,  
So as my confidence grew,  
And my mania subsided,  
My concentration span extended  
I managed to work on dream catcher too  
I was not allowed to juggle clubs,  
For fear another patient may use them as a weapon  
We had a soccer ball or two  
That often over the fence it flew  
So opportunities to play were few  
I took up smoking, as there was nothing else to do  
First other peoples butts, then a pouch of my own tobacco  
In high security we waited for phone calls from those that still cared  
Or ate junk food, which was nicer than the food they prepared  
We smoked, as it was a few moments of peace  
Smoking was a great excuse to be outside,  
Rain, hail, shine, sleet or snow  
There was shelter for the smokers,  
To enjoy their nicotine hit  
I missed the beautiful circus school  
My training, my friends, my teachers  
I was lagging behind,  
But the doctors could not figure me out  
They knew that there were contributing factors

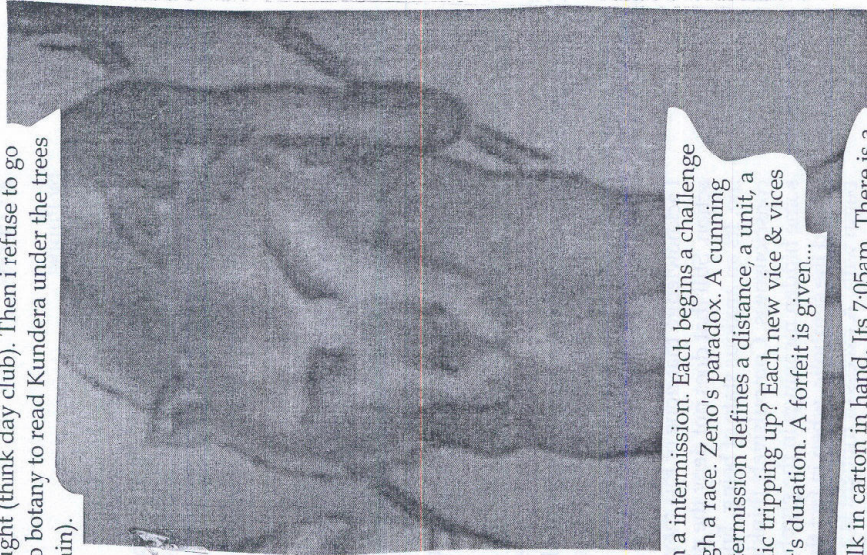


A lecture on hysteria by the French physician, Jean Martin Charcot  
After a painting by Andre Brouillet, 1887, in the Musée de Nice).



I temper the cure/curse by partaking in vice. Just a little coffee to clear my head' i tell myself. Little vices spark my life. I start to read alot (think Kundera & other random authors pulled down from the books on my shelf). I drink a little too much (think cask wine, by the cask). I go out late at night (think day club). Then i refuse to go out at all. I ride my bike (to botany to read Kundera under the trees by the beach, and back again).

Thank god i dont sore!



These vices offer more than a intermission. Each begins a challenge to the anxious travel through a race. Zeno's paradox. A cunning trap. It forces a step. the intermission defines a distance, a unit, a duration. A kind of symbolic tripping up? Each new vice & vices repeated divide the anxiety's duration. A forfeit is given....

And i stop in the road. Milk in carton in hand. Its 7:05am. There is a blue wolf before me. It is smiles & sits & watches me. I pat it, consider taking it home, but deduce that someone most likely owns the well groomed beast. Its a symbolic event. It is not a true wolf, rather an Akita (just a wolf-ish dog). Neither is it blue, only blond. But of course in Croatian the word for blue & blond is the same (just a semantic slip). I begin to see behind the glyph. I wonder about it with half a smile & half a tear on my face... An angel perhaps?

Have you ever taken Ecstasy?

Euphoria, compassion, forgiveness, boundless confidence and energy, promiscuity, impulsivity, verbal diarrhoea, power, sensitivity, agitation, reduced sleep and appetite, irrationality, flight of ideas...

Mania is a fairly similar experience, except for the whole choosing to take the pill part.

And what goes up must come down.

Like ecstasy, mania has its come-down: Depression. Going from feeling so powerful and capable to so powerless is hard to reconcile. Some aren't able to. The literature says that 20% of people that meet the criteria for bipolar will successfully kill themselves.

This is not a case of 'just pull your socks up'... as much as I love socks. This is a serious disability. An oft-quoted statistic is that one in five people will experience mental illness in their lifetime!. If the 'one in ten' statistic is true then there are twice as many people who have been/are/will be mad than there are queer people... and yet we feel so alone. We are all in our mad closets, we are yet to create a community where we can gain comparative experience and celebrate our strengths.

I make the connection between mental illness and drug induced states to highlight that mental illness is not a choice or a weakness of character. It is not something to be

ional Institute of Mental Health



## Mad Pride: Where's My Fucking Parade?

—by Ingrid Dieckmann

*“And, isn't sanity really just a one-trick pony anyway? I mean all you get is one trick, rational thinking, but when you're good and crazy, oohh, oohh, oohh, the sky is the limit!”* — The Tick

There's no Cancer Pride. There's no Cerebral Palsy Pride. There's no Necrotizing Fasciitis Pride. So why Mad Pride?

The figures aren't important- 20% of adult Australians are living with mental illness. They are twelve times more likely to kill themselves than people who are not. You know this already, because you've known people who can't leave their house, or who can't stop crying, or who can't be left alone in the dark. You know them, or you are them. A lot of us have nothing in common, no race or religion or income bracket or dick size or hair colour that unites us. We don't look any different. We don't even all have the same symptoms. As people, we could not be more different- he's an accountant who likes cricket and hasn't been able to get out of bed for six weeks, she's really into the Pixies and is a superhero who is completely invincible, I've read every book by Hunter Thompson and I know that everyone is against me because I'm evil and must be stopped. We take our meds, don't take meds, get therapy, talk to friends, don't have any friends, have imaginary friends who narrate our trip to the shops. There's just one thing that we have in common: we are mad.

quietly “Christine, How do you do it? Do you really do this everyday?” I explained that some days were worse than others; some days I have more spoons than most. But I can never make it go away and I can't forget about it, I always have to think about it. I handed her a spoon I had been holding in reserve. I said simply, “I have learned to live life with an extra spoon in my pocket, in reserve. You need to always be prepared”

Its hard, the hardest thing I ever had to learn is to slow down, and not do everything... When other people can simply do things, I have to attack it and make a plan like I am strategizing a war. It is in that lifestyle, the difference between being sick and healthy. It is the beautiful ability to not think and just do. I miss that freedom. I miss never having to count “spoons” . . .

Ever since this night, I have used the spoon theory to explain my life to many people. In fact, my family and friends refer to spoons all the time. It has been a code word for what I can and cannot do. Once people understand the spoon theory they seem to understand me better, but I also think they live their life a little differently too. I think it isn't just good for understanding Lupus, but anyone dealing with any disability or illness. Hopefully, they don't take so much for granted or their life in general. I give a piece of myself, in every sense of the word when I do anything. It has become an inside joke. I have become famous for saying to people jokingly that they should feel special when I spend time with them, because they have one of my “spoons” . . .

This was a cut down version of her article, we highly recommend reading it in its original context at:  
[http://www.butyoudontlooksick.com/2004/11/the\\_spoon\\_theory.php](http://www.butyoudontlooksick.com/2004/11/the_spoon_theory.php)

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Let the rainbows rule over the black holes in your life

put your toes outside to feel the lovely sunshine

hope the sleep has been wiped from your eyes and on your lashes the sun doth shine

hope that all the sorrows or yesterday don't follow u to tomorrow

hope that with this fresh day you feel the warmth of the earth

a new energy for embracing life.

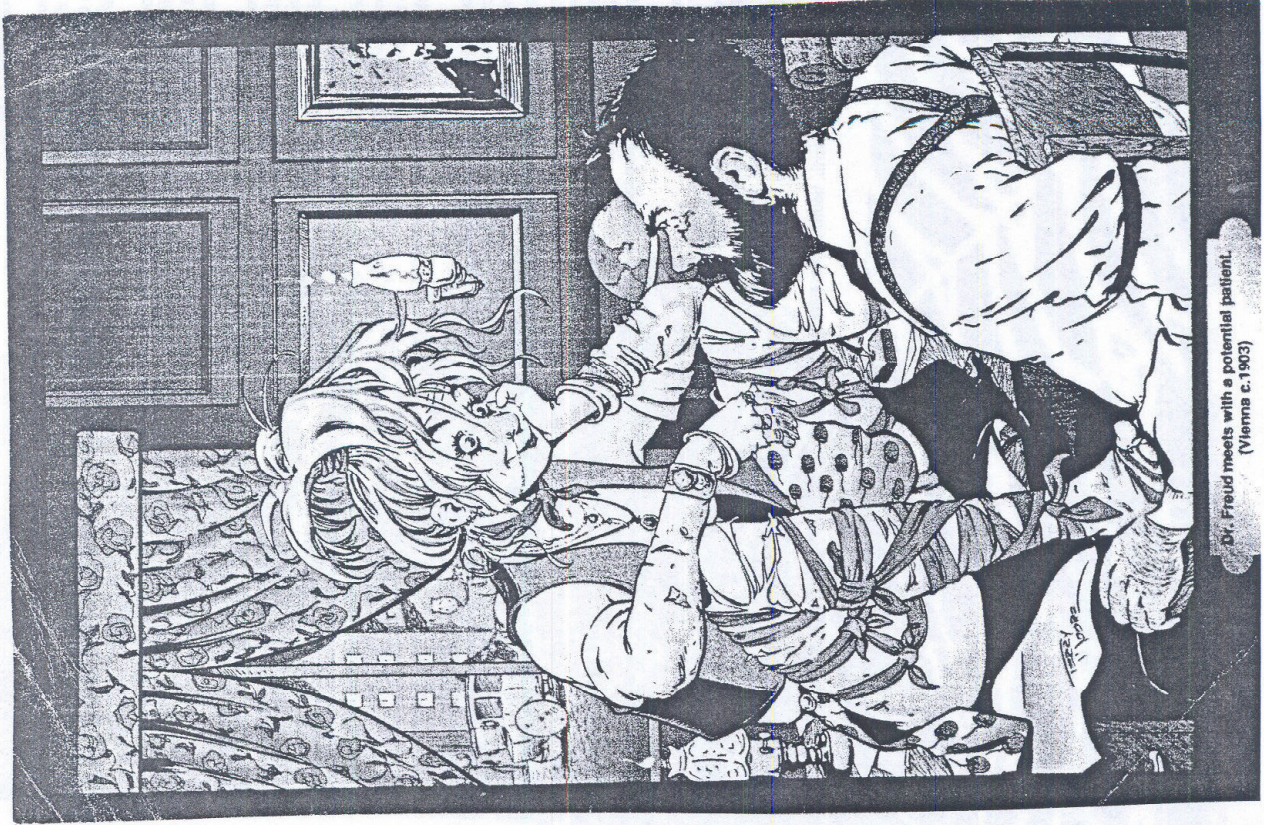
life may not always be happy and positive but let us not let the lows drag us below

deep deep down beyond the far away black holes

love, stars, sunshine and rainbows for u on this new day

hope that something special happens to you this day

-Moonbeam



Dr. Freud meets with a potential patient.  
(Vienna c.1903)



Revenge. by Annie Free p.6 @ The Morning After. by Anna Aniston. p.8 @ Peril in Paradise. by Moonbeam p.12 @ Disorderly Conduct  
 20 @ Rainbows. by Moonbeam. p.22 @ Milk. by Puppet. p.23 @ untitled. by Frater Min. p.25 @ Living Well Mental Health Practice by Annie Free p.13 @ Manic Monday. +  
 Theory p.35 We beg you? acceptance Practice by Serena Naudulisa p.27 @ Come  
 of this elegant thimble  
 Anarchia: "The excess of the passion for liberty produced, in many people, opinions and conducts which could not be removed by reason not restrained by government... The extensive influence which these opinions had upon the understandings, passions, and morals of many of the citizens of the United States, constituted a form of insanity, which I shall take the liberty of distinguishing by the name of anarchia". - Benjamin Rush, father of American psychiatry  
 Pride: where's my fuckin' snowflakes. by Moonbeam p.32 @ Span Theory p.35

# RESOURCES

- ☉ online community with collectives in some areas  
 www.theicarusproject.net
- ☉ crisis helpline Lifeline 131114
- ☉ EVERY HOSPITAL HAS A 'CRISIS TEAM' AS PART OF COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH. IF YOU'RE IN NEED OF IMMEDIATE HELP FOR YOURSELF OR ANOTHER THEY ARE AVAIL. 24HRS / 7DAYS, + WILL COME TO YOUR HOUSE FOR AN ASSESSMENT.
- ☉ Schizophrenia Fellowship (08) 98792600
  - phone line support & referral 9-5 weekdays.
  - advocacy info on other mental health services etc.
  - carer advocacy
  - employment support
  - support groups
- ☉ Gay & Lesbian \*C.A. queer & curious) Counselling Service - phone counselling  
 (02) 85949596 or - face to face  
 1800 184527 outside Syd. counselling



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Can you ever not breathe?  
With the weight of grief in your throat  
Real and swollen like a bruise  
Holding your breath against the weight  
Do you beg for release and have it not come  
Have you squinted into the dawn?  
After you stare down the night  
Cold in the arms of bed and sheet  
Not the lover  
Whose name you have pressed to your lips  
As the dew fades from morning light  
Have you sighed and yearned  
And then tossed and turned  
Knowing she will not return  
Then raised into the day  
Dragged your feet through City Street  
In the meaninglessness of it all  
Then home to empty room and empty hall  
Again to see another night pass  
Before your empty saddened eyes

I am undone  
The ties that used to bind  
Left trailing on the floor behind  
They follow like a shadow  
That has fallen, amputated  
I'm bleeding  
From a tear in my soul  
The gash the wound open  
Unhealed  
Inconsolable and ruined  
The strength it takes to go on  
Has left me  
I am stumbling  
Stifled sobs just under my skin  
Welling in my throat and heart  
Gasping to be freed



