

THE LAST FLIGHT

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MOTHERS TALK

- Catalyst for self reflection was a fight with mum...
- She suggested taking The Black Dog Online Bi-Polar test (1)
- First attempt beat the system.
- Second attempt honest answers...
- Result was bitter sweet....
- Confronting.



THE ANCHOR OF FEAR

- Justification Rules.
- Take off was a blast...
- Then the awesome ride.
- Followed by the ... Graveyard dive.
- Super inactive and then justification of 'fatigue'
- Safety of hibernation 'bits and pieces'
- Master of deception.



DESTINATION UNKNOWN

- Previous DAME cautioned against raising suspicion.
- Traditional male view of depression.
- *'You'll be alright mate just don't mention it'*.
- Black dog or white elephant.
- VFR Decision to jump into the void.



HONESTY

- At times in life we stumble across information that is confronting.
- We hide behind routine, ego and fear.
- We normalize and justify our life...

But how long can we hide?

Australian researchers found that from the average age of symptom onset (17.5 years), there was a delay of 12.5 years before a diagnosis of bipolar disorder was made. (2,3)



PIN BALL WIZARD

- Bounced around between professional flippers.
 - Have you thought about suicide?
 - Why is every one asking?... toast, toast, toast.
 - Never considered before but now on the radar.
 - What was going on in his world?
-
- *In each year one in five Australians will experience a mental illness. (4)*
 - *Mental illnesses are the third leading cause of disability burden in Australia.(5)*



PLAYSCHOOL PSYCHIATRY

- B4 Bear psychologist.
- Bounced around Psychologist, Psychiatrist ambiguity reigned
- Pilot sidelined for Parents
- Frustration agenda of dependence not independence @ \$400/ session
- Whose life is it anyway?
- *In young Australians aged 16-24 years, 3.2 % of males & 3.6 % of females “have had” bipolar disorder in their lifetime.... Lifetime condition.*



FRIEND IS A FOUR LETTER WORD

- Read CASA's guidelines....
- Surely that is only for new pilots?
- Double life exhaustion... last flight which captain do I want to fly with?
- Realisation!
- Could not take my friends down with me.
- Human Factors .. Ill be the weakest link.. Family friends.
- I will be the scape goat.



DAME'D IF YOU DO, DAME'D IF YOU DON'T

- DAME's love bar side chat ...Would be top guns cursed with Medicine
- No connection
- Time for a change ...
- The writing was on the wall ...
- Why give up when there was no risk?
- Could I give away my dream?



UNDER THE KNIFE

- Smashed a cup with force* ... microsurgery on the finger
- Cant fly so need a DAME
- Who to call ?
- ... **Please note no interstate estranged lover confrontation or NASA approved diapers were involved in this momentary lapse of reason.*



YESTERDAY

- Failure to cope, think and do the basic things we've done all our life.
- The exhaustion of thought, of just breathing and explaining.
- We are not longer the pilot, the person....
- The pilot identity evaporates.
- Confusion and chaos can reign



THE WINDMILLS OF MY MIND

- So what does depression feel like?
- Watching your life implode slowly right before your eyes, often completely out of your control.
- The detachment increases, friends grow more distant and the mountain of failure is seemingly too steep to climb.
- With time, the energy to go on becomes less and less and you just can't "get up again".



THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

- “Like a soldier standing under fire, any change comes as a relief”
- Certainty attained with a diagnosis
- Consulted CASA directly
- Took a deep breathe...
- Supported by amazing mentors



FOREVER AUTUMN

- Initial False start
- Hibernated in education.
- Running away from the Black Dog.
- TRUMP factor constant negative.
- War of the worlds.
- Partner left and I discovered mindfulness.
- Realisation; I am not bigger than this condition; I will have to train everyday for the rest of my life.



IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU

Get the facts:

- Black dog (mental health services)
- Talk to people
- Pilots' union
- Other pilots
- What are my options?
- What are the steps I need to take?



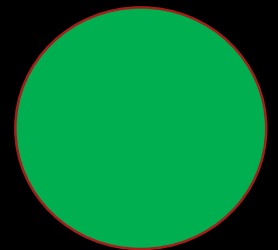
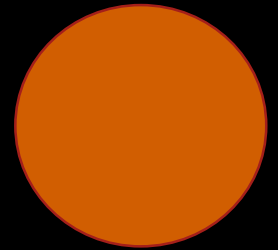
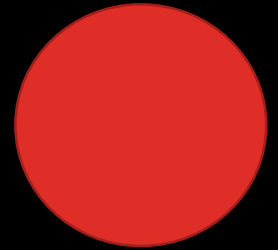
BRAVE NEW WORLD

- Taking the steps to be honest with oneself
- What else can I do?
- What are my warning signs?
- How do I predict the change?
- Know you are not alone.
- Achievement of self understanding & stability through routine and reflection



REFLECTIONS

- **S**top..
- **T**ime - what's your schedule?
- **A**ttentive - are you focused & in the moment?
- **B**ed - what are your sleep patterns
- **L**iquor - living it up lifestyle
- **E**motion - are you OK? .. **Are you STABLE?**
- ***Its better to send a PAN call than a MAYDAY.***



RIDERS OF THE STORM

- As DAME's we see a "Snap Shot" of patient's life
- Which wave are they riding?
- Is this the peak? The trough? Is it High Tide? Low Tide?
- We don't examine the organ
- We interrogate, we don't palpate
- We are happy to examine a knee, a heart but what about their mind
- Trust your 'gut feel'



A MATTER OF TRUST

Transition

Real relationship

Understanding individual and condition: Wave

Sentence

Time



FILMWORK STUDIOS

*Albert Einstein famously remarked
in a conversation with*



WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD PLEASE MR. POSTMAN

Thank you for listening
Feel free to chat to us afterwards

Caron and Joel



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