

We as humans often take life for granted. We are made aware of this when we are faced with obstacles that make us reconsider our actions and reconstruct ourselves. Sometimes we are fortunate enough to overcome these obstacles with no permanent reminders of our empty and thoughtless actions. It's times like those that truly make you feel alive.

Just when I thought my life was on a good track academically and health wise, I woke up on a Wednesday morning with an unbearable pain in my throat. My tonsils had swollen so large that my airway was severely constricted. I was unable to eat or talk and quickly grew dehydrated. I tried my hardest to drink small increments, but it left me with a horrible pain as I attempted to swallow. After two doctors visits, I was sent to the ER. They stuck me with two IV's and gave me a CT scan only to discover abscesses on my tonsils that were to be surgically removed. I immediately grew depressed and just wanted to be home in my own bed. All that I really wanted was answers that no one was giving me.

Eventually around 2 AM, my doctor decided to transport me to Hershey Hospital to undergo surgery. Once I got there I was restless, I had no sleep and was unable to get any because they proceeded to send at least eight different doctors and specialists to come see me. They took a lot of blood from me and ran a few tests. I was moved to multiple different rooms and kept a close eye on. My doctors were unable to look at my CT scans from the other hospital, so all of the specialists were forced to get together and make a decision. A day or so passed and they concluded that I would get better if they kept me on steroids and that I would not need surgery. Unfortunately I still had to stay so that they could monitor me.

I had never felt so depressed and miserable before. I was lucky enough to have my family by my side for the most part, but when they left I got so emotional and felt so alone. I was in Hershey in some strange place that was overcrowded with people. At night, the depression only grew because I couldn't sleep. I was physically unable to speak, so my mind kicked into overdrive. I mentally picked apart everything and

fantasized about being in the comfort of my own bed, living life to the fullest. I recall falling asleep for brief periods of time and waking up to check the time and feeling my heart sink as I realized that very little time had passed. The nurses left my door open and all I could hear both nights was them yelling at an elderly man constantly for getting up out of his bed and not wearing his diapers. This contributed to my sadness and frustration as it slowly it drove me nuts, I just wanted to chain the old man down and slam my door shut!

Nothing relieved me more than when the morning hit, it felt like I had survived the purge. I think that hospitals only get a thousand times creepier at night. I was awoken to my breakfast of Jello, ice water, and broth. After picking at it for a little while, my nurse came in and told me I was safe to be discharged. I immediately texted my family and they came that evening to take me back home, the place I longed for. When they arrived, I felt much better just because of their presence. My body was extremely weak and felt heavy, but my lifted spirits got me home

where I took a nice nap in the comfort of my own bed, with no IV's or old men to have to worry about.

It's safe to say that I took being healthy for granted. I am extremely grateful that I went to the ER before things could have gotten way worse. If I would have waited a day longer, I could have died.

Ultimately in the end, I am blessed to be alive and mentally healthy again. When I was in the hospital, I was in a dark state of mind which made it challenging to accept what had happened. I was struck with multiple health issues relating my throat and tonsils that made me ill for over a week. I judged myself harshly and questioned my existence.

That's only a part of the battle though. The real battle is overcoming these feelings and being stronger than before.