

PE1651/EEEE

Sarah Feldhut submission of 15 January 2018

I was put on Prozac when I was 18 years old right after graduating high school. I had suffered from anxiety my whole life and was starting to become more and more depressed. I went on it and it seemed to help. That was 7 years ago so my recollection of specific feelings are vague at best. Things never seemed to get all the way better. When I was 20 years old I tried to kill myself. I was admitted to a psychiatric ward and kept there for 72 hours. My experience there was enough to make me never want to attempt again or at the very least make sure it worked the next time (but that is a topic for another time). A couple months after my 21st birthday I moved in with a friend and had access to alcohol. With a trusting mother and living away from home I could drink as much as I wanted as often as I wanted with little consequence. At one point I was drinking 14 – 15 shots of hard liquor a night. I couldn't stop myself. I needed more more more. I felt like how I felt drunk was how I was supposed to feel always. I actually felt something. I was inspired, I was passionate, I was more creative than I had been in years. I was also getting black out drunk, sleeping with people I didn't like, behaving erratically and dangerously. It is honestly a miracle I'm not dead. I have struggled with this "alcoholism" a label that I never really felt fit me, for years. This past November I hit a new low point. I was so unhappy that I wanted to try to kill myself again. Instead I quit taking my Prozac cold turkey (not the brightest way to get off of it but its what I did). I had severe migraines for a couple weeks and am still struggling with stomach related withdrawal symptoms. My head however is clearer than ever. I feel like I am seeing and hearing things for the first time. I have more control over my emotions, my relationships, my life. My need for self-sabotage is steadily disappearing as is my alcoholism. I no longer have to have 12 drinks, I can have one. I can have alcohol in the house and not feel the need to drink it. I refuse drinks that are offered to me because I just don't want them.

I think there are aspects to this drug that are not being looked into enough and are not being taught to our doctors. I wish I had discovered this years ago, it may have saved me years of grief and unhappiness and self-hatred. The fact that so many people have had experiences like this and no one thought that perhaps it could apply to me is concerning because there may be a young girl just like me going out of her mind, one that has a psychiatrist that tells her to stay on it, one that might not have the gall to take herself off it or the resources to do it safely. This is a problem and it needs to be addressed.