

NEVER ALONE

Happy? Ok? ~~Sad~~? How about all the above?
When will my time come?



JARED'S JOURNAL

My life...is it worth living?

By Sherry Krueger & Kristi Barth

Book design by Kim Goldberg

Remember to text
Isaiah later



teensfindinghope.org

Maybe you know a Jared, or maybe you can relate to him yourself. This is his journal, and this is a glimpse into his life. As you read about his struggles and triumphs you will come to understand what it's like for a teen to live with depression. You will see how it feels when someone believes they are different than everyone else and they are totally alone. You will see how it feels to be filled with a hopelessness and numbness that sends you to a black hole from which you feel you can't escape. You will also see how frustrating it is to battle negative feelings every day. But there is hope for Jared and everyone like him. And as Jared begins to find some strategies and coping skills to use for healing, you may even find some for yourself.



Sherry Krueger
Vice President



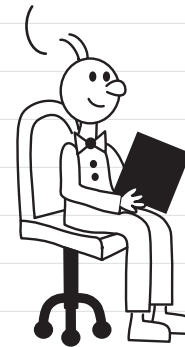
Kristi Barth
President

Teens Finding Hope, Inc.
teensfindinghope.org

Monday

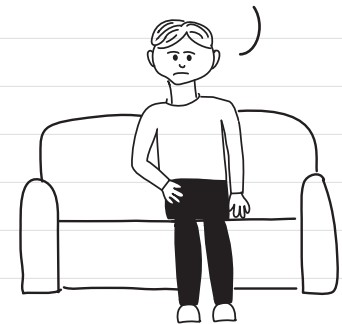
Just wanted the pain to stop. Didn't really mean to go that far. Thought the pills would help put me in a deep sleep—a real sleep. Wanted to feel normal for once... escape the pain. I don't have a problem! People are making a big deal out of nothin. It was an accident! ^@#\$. Am I the only ^@#\$\$ing person who's ever made a mistake? I'm fine! It's not going to happen again!

Here Jared, take this journal.
It will help you get in touch
with your feelings.



↑
Therapist Max

Can I hit you over the
head with it? That'd
make me feel better!!



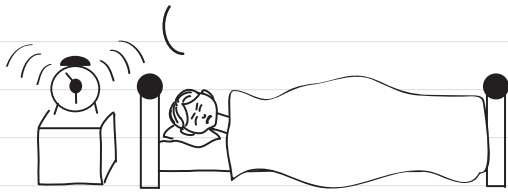
→
Normal Kid

Parents don't believe me. Have to write in this journal every day as part of my counseling. Don't have a choice anymore since that night and the pills and the hospital. &^@#! My life sucks.

Tuesday

^@#%! It's Tuesday morning and I don't feel like puttin up with this ^@#%! Never wanted to take these stupid pills anyways. I knew this Prozac wasn't going to do nothin. It's supposed to make me happier. Well guess what? You know how I feel? Tired! Same old thing.

WHAT THE??

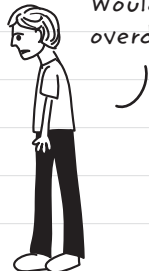


Mom can keep the pills locked up for all I care. I can't believe she doesn't trust me. I'm 17! ^@#%! It's not like I didn't learn my lesson the other night. Is she keeping the chewable vitamins locked up, too? Careful, I might decide to take the whole bottle of those!

Here's your vitamins, Jared.

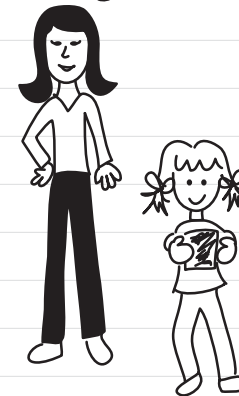


Whoa, thanks mom. Wouldn't want to overdose on Flintstones.



Mom says I need to give the meds time to build up in my system before I start feelin better. What do I have to do before she gets it? I'll never be happy like them. It doesn't matter how many drugs I take.

Give the meds time to work. Before you know it, you'll feel as good as Candace.



In that case, I hope it takes a million years!



PATHS

I am what I am. My 17 years can come and go, but through every moment I need a push to keep going on the path I was destined for. I see no path, I see no future. What will destiny bring as I keep taking baby steps towards the light or is it the dark? I can't tell.

I am what I am. I live with hurt, I go with fear. Though my eyes are closed I can see brightness through one, and darkness in the other.

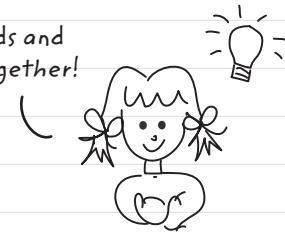
What path do I want?

Who is there to push me, lead me, follow me so I am not so alone and scared?

Wednesday

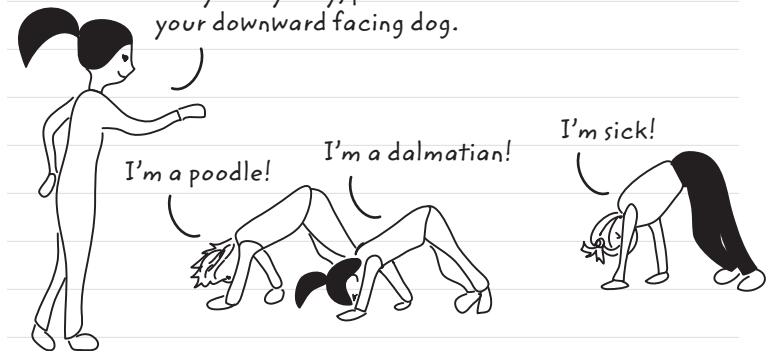
Max, my therapist, thinks he's such an expert on teenage depression. That dumb-@## therapist actually thinks yoga will help me. Yoga? Are you kidding me? My mom and sister want to do it with me.

I'll call all of my friends and we can do the class together!



Great! I get to exercise with a bunch of eight year olds. Dad and Kole are gonna to have a field day with this one. ^@#\$. As if my life isn't bad enough! I swear, Max, if word gets out about this to anyone, next time it won't be an accident!

Okay everybody, practice your downward facing dog.

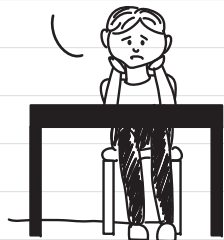


Thursday

School sucks! Trust me. You could ask everyone at school and they'd all agree with me, except for maybe Amanda Yeats. Teacher's pet! You know the kind...sits up front, answers all the questions. I think the only reason the teachers notice me is because of the bad grades I get.

Ms. East, the beast, gave me a "C" on my vocab test. Give me a break; I scored a 79.5 and she couldn't round it up to a "B?" It was the best grade I've gotten all year and she couldn't do me that one little favor? Beast! Then, I had to go home and hear my mom go into her usual lecture. "If you studied harder, you'd get good grades like your brother, Kole." Well, I have news for her. I'm not Kole. Why can't people accept me for who I am?

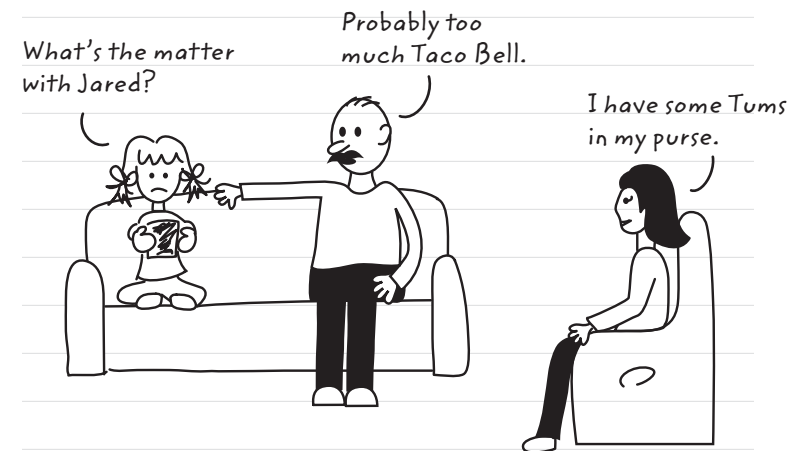
Last time I checked a 'C' was passing, mom.



You should text Kole and have him tell you how he studies for tests.

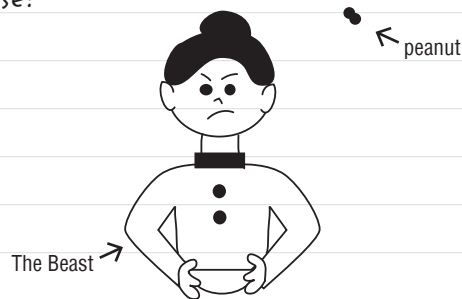


Sometimes I feel like I just don't fit in with my family. My brother and sister are "perfect." They get good grades and hang out with their "perfect" friends and they're not screwed up like me. I hate it because they're happy and all I feel is angry, and they look at me like I'm crazy. My dad keeps telling me I have to "snap out of it." Yeah, like I have control over how I feel!

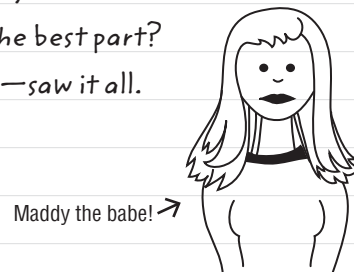


Friday

Finally a good day! I was chillin' in the cafeteria with my buds, Mark and Isaiah. We saw Ms. East. She was standing in line waiting for the salad bar. So Mark got this wild idea. He blew up a Ziploc bag and put in a peanut. Then he hit the bag really hard with his fist. The peanut launched across the cafeteria like a bottle rocket and hit the Beast in the back of the neck. Bulls eye! She turned around and thought it was Billy. He got it good. ^@#\$\$! That was close!

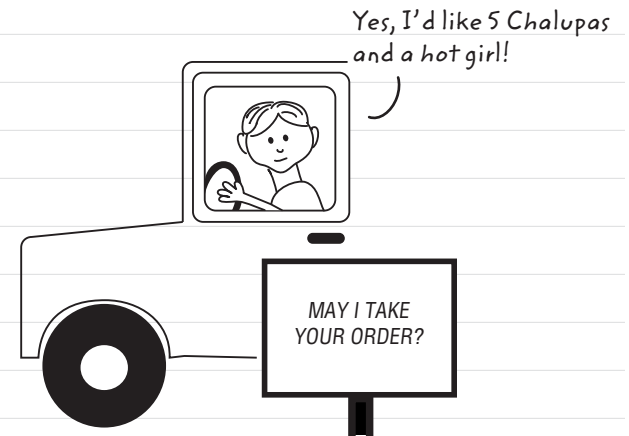


Then Mark and I played a little one on one. I was on fire, man! Every shot I threw went in. It didn't matter how I shot it: backwards, under my leg, jump shot... they all went in. Mark tried to stuff me, but it didn't work. I'm still in your league, bud! The best part? Maddy—hottest girl in school—saw it all. Things are lookin up!



Saturday

I take the driver's test today. Can't wait. Kole said it was a piece of cake. Told Mark I'd pick him up in my dad's truck later for a taco run. Sweet! Free at last!

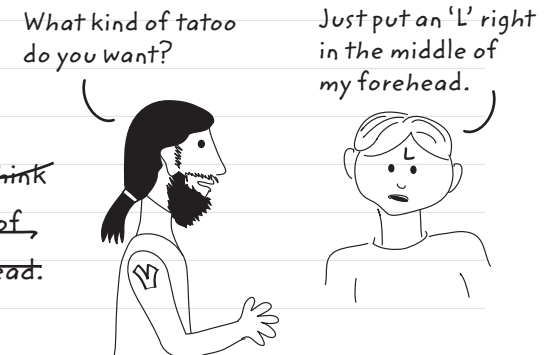


Sunday

~~^@#\$\$! ^@#\$\$! ^@#\$\$! Don't feel like writing. Easy test, yeah how come I can't pass it?~~

Monday

~~I'm such a loser. I think I'll go get a tattoo of, an "L" on my forehead.~~
YEAH RIGHT!



Tuesday

Didn't want to take the pills, but my life sucks! Can't pass the driver's test. Can't pass any test. Don't have any real friends. ^@#\$\$ing driver's test! Course I'd get all the stupid questions. "By which date do you need to take off your snow tires?" How the hell would I know - we don't even have snow tires!

^@#\$\$ing dad's on my case. "Kole didn't have any problems passing. You probably stayed up all night watching TV when you should have been studying." Blah, blah, blah!

Even Mark's against me. Tells me at lunch, "I'm gonna hang with the team." ^@#\$ him! Like I'm not good enough for him anymore. Didn't make the cut, so he thinks I'm not at his level? Makes me feel like a piece of ^@#\$\$! Maybe I am.

Do you have %#^\$!
for brains?



If I do, I got it
from you!!

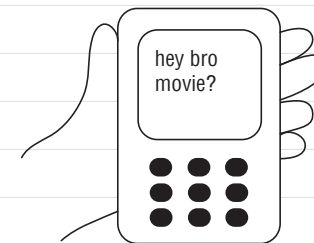


Came home and my mom's like, "Did you forget to take your medicine today?" Can't a person have a ^@#\$\$ing bad day?

^@#\$\$! I hate being me! I'm tired of all the ^@#\$\$ing crap! What's the point? Why am I so ^@#\$\$ing stupid? Why do I fail at everything?

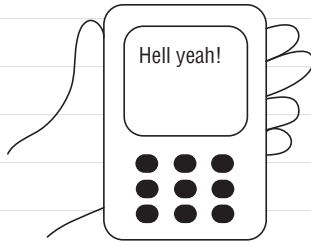
Wednesday

Freaky! Last night I was standing with the key to the medicine cabinet. Thinkin about how worthless my life was. Thinkin about how no one really cared. My can of dew was ready. All I needed was pills. Just as I turned the key, I got a text message from Isaiah.

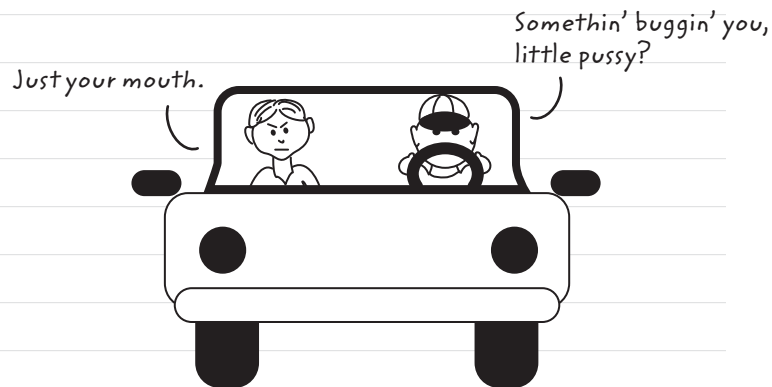


The hair on my neck stood up. An omen!

Freaky, right? I texted:



Why fight fate? Another night pretendin everything's cool when it's not. Almost broke down and told Isaiah about my problems. Probably wouldn't understand anyway. ^@#\$\$! Even I don't understand. Why would the world stop me from dyin when I have nothin to look forward to?



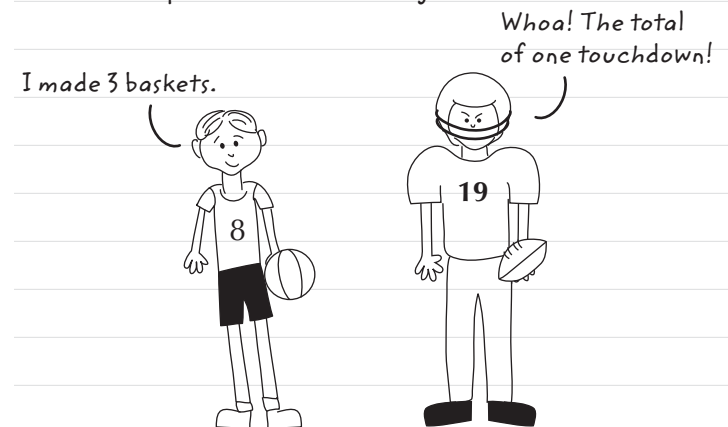
Thursday

Sick of the ^@#\$\$ing pain! Took a paper clip and dug as hard as I could into my arm. MD Maddy Dixon. Only thing keeping me going right now. Funny thing – I felt better after. I actually felt better.

Friday

Was in the locker room when the basketball team walked in. They barely noticed me. Mark actin all cool hangin with the jocks. Rejects! Glad I didn't get chosen. Mark with his wimpy grin lookin like he died and went to heaven. Don't know what he's so happy about. Has to keep up his grades. Good luck with that!

I have better things to do on a Friday night. Gonna blow this town and catch Kole's game. Bet he throws 4 touchdown passes. Now that's a jock.



Sunday

Of course my jack@## brother had to show off. VIP. There was my father. Smile on his face. "That's my son." Lookin at me like I'm worthless. So tired of hearin his ^@#\$. "You're lazy. If you applied yourself, you'd have made the team." Former football jock afraid of having a son without talent. Sorry I'm such a disappointment, dad.



Monday

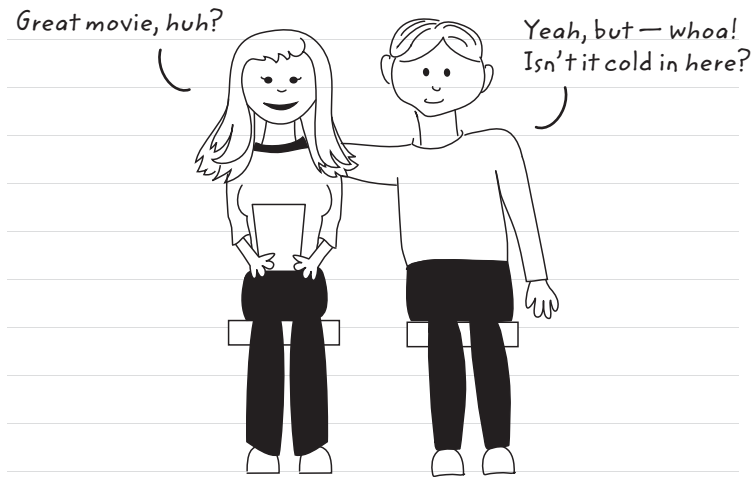
Maddy smiled at me. Forget about the weekend. What weekend? God she's hot. She smells good, too. Teacher had her pass back our tests. When she passed back mine, she looked at me and smiled. I wanted to say somethin, but I couldn't think. All I could hear in my mind was Kole's voice saying, "Say something, retard." So I said, "Thanks." Thanks? Damn! I am a retard. I should've said somethin better than that. What's wrong with me?



Tuesday

Don't know what Maddy sees in that loser boyfriend of hers. Only got elected student body president cuz he's a nerd. Treats her like ^@#\$ - "Go do this - get me that." He's a bigger loser than I am.

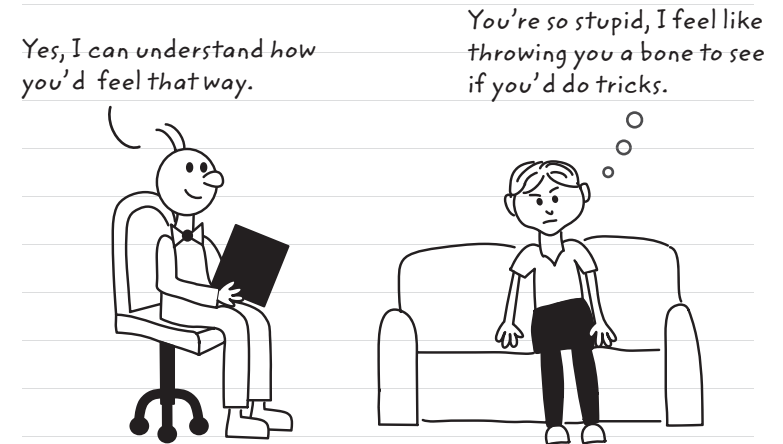
If she was my girlfriend, she'd have the best time of her life; we'd go out to movies, nice restaurants, anything she wanted. I'd put my arm around her shoulder if she was cold. I'd treat her like a woman should be treated!



Life is unfair. Jerks like Kole get the hot girls. I'll never get the hot girl. I can't stand it.

Wednesday

How does that idiot Max stay in business? Just sits in his chair. "How does that make you feel?" "Tell me more about that." He's so stupid, he doesn't realize I haven't talked about anything that matters. Doesn't give advice. Just sits and agrees. Can't believe people pay him big bucks to help them out. How is that helping? A dog could do that!



Thursday

I shouldn't have missed that last question. I'm such a dumb-@##! English tutor! Yeah, right, mom. Way to help out your son. Make him look like even more of a fool. I'm just going to stay in my room and listen to Shinedown.

Okay, let's go over yesterday's lesson.



I don't need this.
THIS IS SO POINTLESS!



Friday

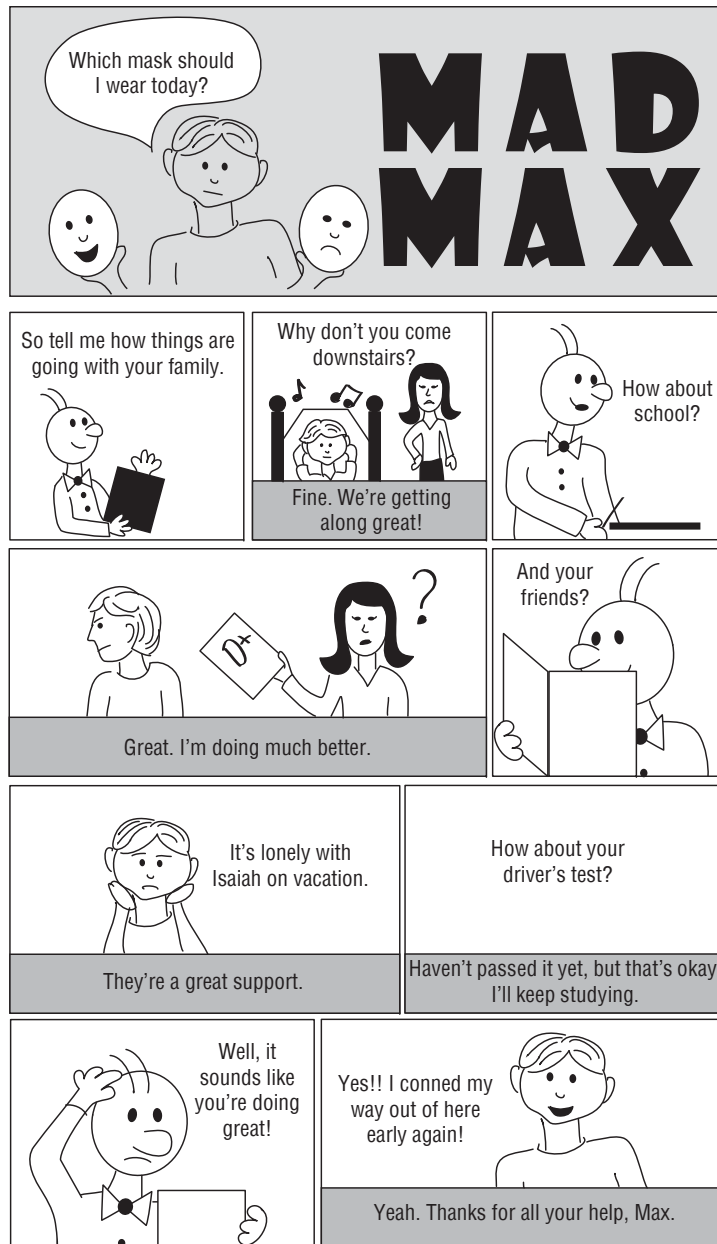
I'm sick and tired of it! I study and try to do my best. Nothin @^#*ing matters anymore. All I get is nothin but pain. What dumb@## fails the driver's test more than once? This is BS. I can't do this anymore. I'm all alone.

MASKS

I put it on every day
The mask with a smile.
It says to the world
All is well, I'm good

On the inside I'm cryin
Sometimes I'm a raging lunatic
Wantin to hurt myself
Other times I hurt so bad and want to be invisible
They think they see me
They think they know me
No one can feel my pain
They wouldn't like the real me that's inside

But now the pain is so bad
Even my masks are crackin
What am I going to do?
When it's gone, I have nowhere left to hide.



IF ONLY

If only I had wings
 I wouldn't have this feelin.
 Two things: Fall asleep tonight or die
 Is all I have left to choose.
 All I want is to stop feelin so blue.

So I cut my wrists and close my eyes,
 Hoping my body would decide.
 Then black my eyes as dark as night,
 Losing everything in sight,
 Takin away the emotional pain.
 Sometimes I wonder if I'm going insane.

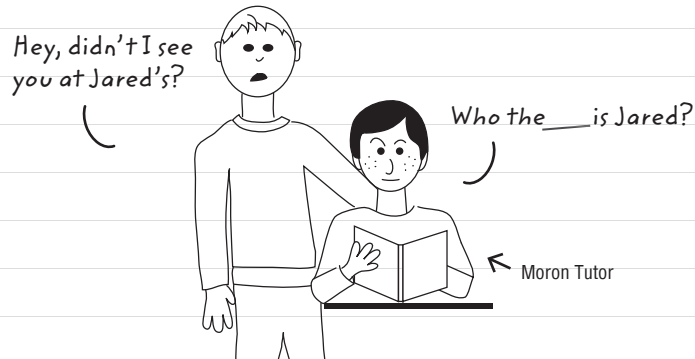
Dreamin of wings and they were mine,
 Watching myself fly into the dark clear sky
 Far, far away
 Never comin back, not even someday.
 If only this dream was real,
 My heart would heal.
 If only I had wings,
 I could fly away from everything.

Monday

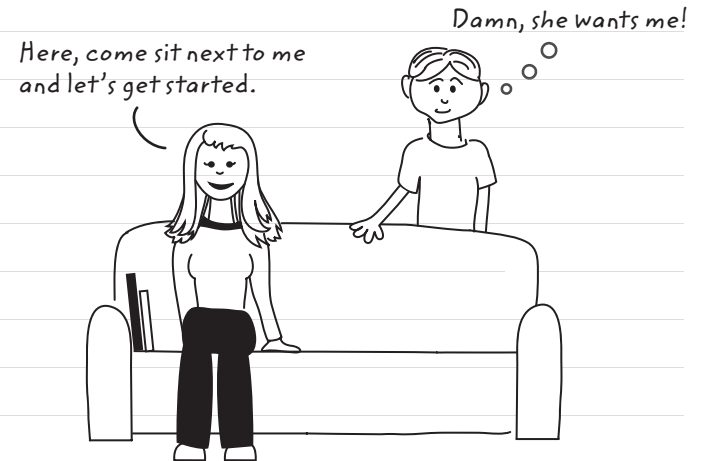
I just want everyone off my back. Is that too much to ask?

Tuesday

Tutor comes today. Great. Wonder what loser is going to show up? Hope it's not some retard from school. If it is, he'd better be able to keep his mouth shut.

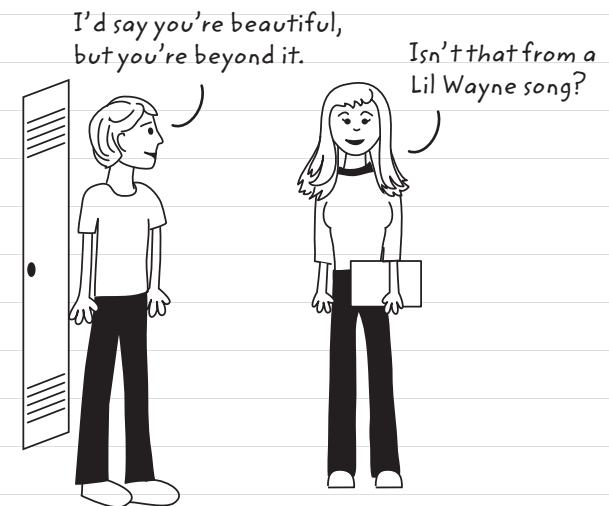


That's so boss! Can't believe my luck. My tutor is Maddy, the babe. Showed up in her mean, sexy blue Subaru WRX lookin hot. Mostly talked and got to know each other. She's perfect-likes hot wings. Patriot fan. And she drives a fast car- what else could I ask for? Eyes sparkle when she smiles. Thought I was gonna pass out from the heat. Had to change my shirt twice. God it was great. This tutoring thing is chill.



Wednesday

Life's finally goin right. Hottest girl in school is talkin to me. She's comin over to my house every week. P.E. teacher told me he needs someone to help him ref on weekends. Sweet!

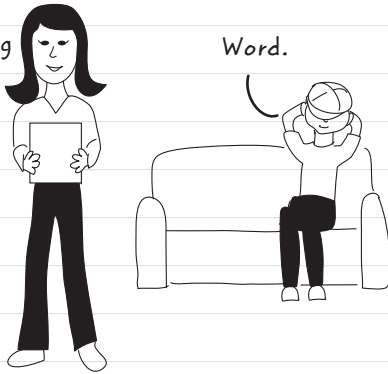


Friday

I'll never forget how soft her lips are. When she kissed my cheek, she pressed up against my chest. Thought my heart would stop. If gettin an A on a vocab test gets this reaction, what will happen if I get an A on the final?

Wow, looks like getting a tutor was the best thing we could have done for you.

Word.

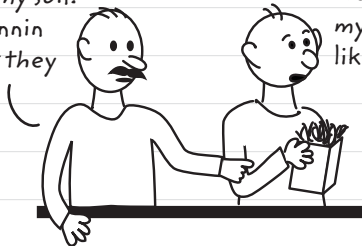


Saturday

Love this reffin job! Don't know what I was nervous about. Piece of cake. Loved how I had the power to call penalties. Almost forgot I was reffin and found myself plannin to tackle the kid. Funny. Dad gave me a pat on the back and said, "Good calls, son." He actually looked proud of me.

See that Ref? He's my son. He'd normally be runnin the touchdowns but they needed him to ref.

Wow. Makes my son look like a wimp.

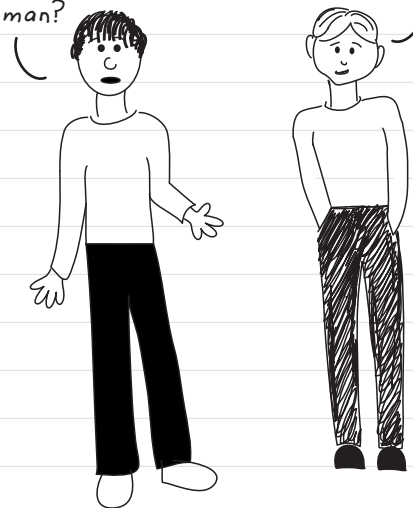


Monday

Who's the man? You should have seen the look on Isaiah's face when Maddy walked over to me and asked what time I wanted her to stop by my house. Thought Isaiah's eyes would pop out. He asked what's up and I just shrugged and said, "Looks like I have myself a date tomorrow." Let him think what he wants.

What are you going to do at your house, man?

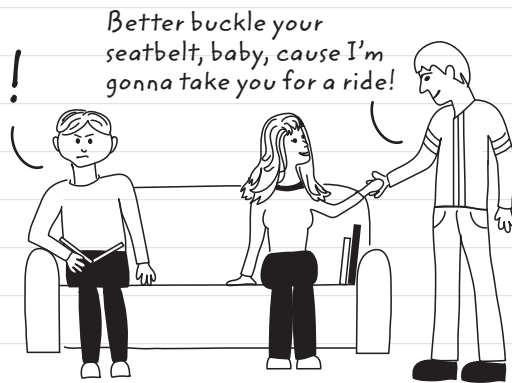
A gentleman never tells.



Reminder: Buy flowers tomorrow.

Tuesday

Stupid Kole! @#^%sucker! Can't believe that traitor is my brother! Couldn't let me enjoy my session with Maddy. No. Had to muscle in and suck up all her time and attention. Flirtin with her. Sick, man. I could put a fist through his @#\$\$ing face!

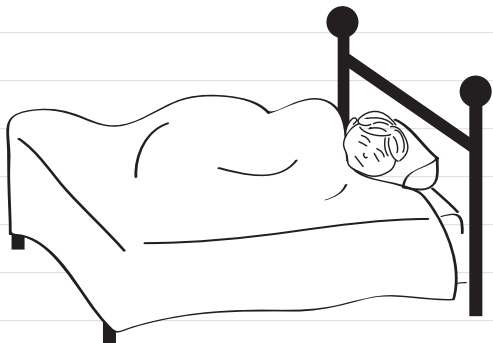
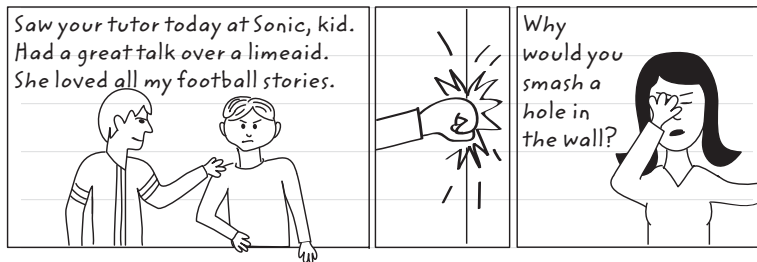


Maddy...

Thinking of you with my eyes closed tight,
 Wishin you were here right by my side.
 Loneliness is what I fear
 That's what I am, cause you're not here.
 Tears fallin down my face
 Sadness is crawlin into place.
 Hoping you'd love me the way I do
 And miss me like I miss you.
 Wishing you were here right by my side.
 This is why I can't sleep tonight.

LIFE'S UPS AND DOWNS





I wish I had someone that understood.

PAIN

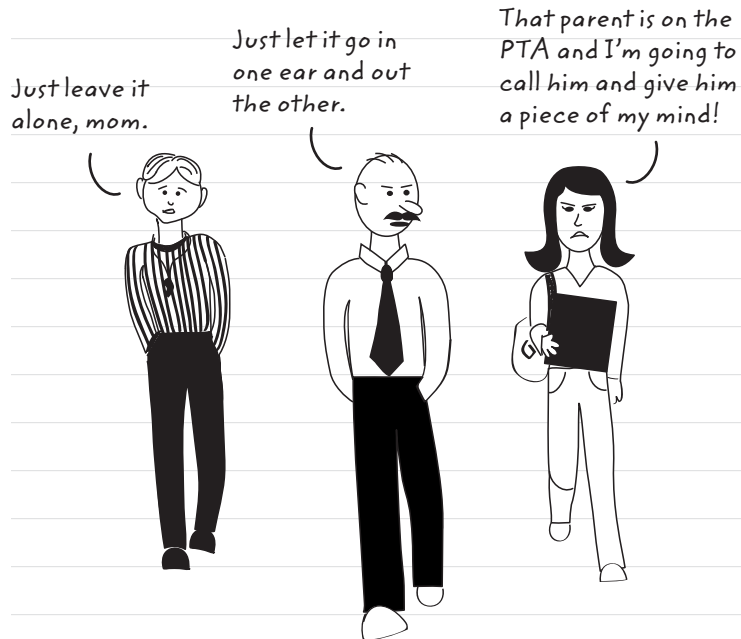
Pain is for me
Only me
Others smile
Laugh-enjoy

I feel so alone
Alone in a world
I can't escape

Watchin others
And thinkin
Why can't it be me?
When will my time come?
When will I smile and mean it?

Friday

Why are people so @#\$%ed up? That @#\$%ing parent was on my case all night, yellin at me for makin a bad call. Took all my strength not to flip him off. Wish they had instant replay at this level so I could throw it back in his face. The wide out was holding. Happened right in front of me. End of story.



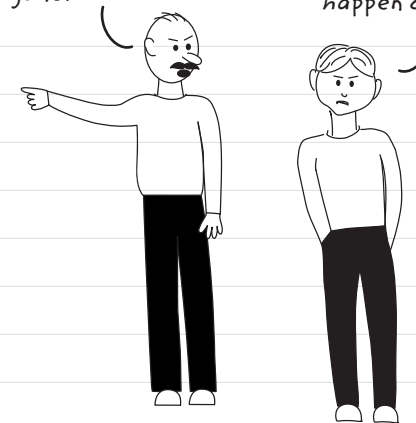
Saturday

Got a text. Sneakin out to hang with my ref buds. Should be tight.

Stupid sister! I hate her! Why was she up at 3 in the morning? Ruined everything. Mom and dad don't believe anything I say. Can't believe they don't trust me — their own @#\$%ing son! Think I sneak out and get drunk all the time. @#\$%! Told them it was the 1st time. Like I knew what was gonna happen when Sean called. First time I got invited to hang out with the other refs.

You could have been in an accident and been lying in a ditch somewhere and we wouldn't have even known you were gone!

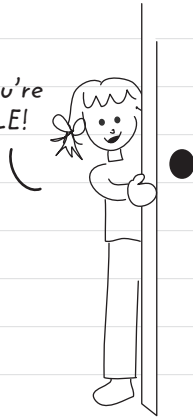
Like that would really happen dad, geeze!



Finally got my mind off things....was laughin, feelin good, part of a group. But Candace had to ruin it! That stupid @##! Now I'm stuck in my room with my sister comin in makin fun of me and my parents walkin in and b@#\$%ing at me!! It's so @#\$%ing annoying! My life starts to be sweet, then everything turns around and blows up in my face!

I know you were out drinking last night, you're in SO MUCH TROUBLE!

Shut up, Candace!



What a @#\$% up I am! Can't believe I left the weed in my jeans. Dumb @##! How stupid can I be? Course my mom would find it in the laundry - just my luck!

JARED, YOU GET DOWN HERE THIS INSTANT!



Ewww, why does it smell like skunk in here?



@#\$% them! Think they can tell me what to do? I'm almost 18! A little grass isn't goin to kill anyone. Everyone does it. Makes them feel better. It's Bull#*^@! I'll do what I want. Have to follow rules my @##! They don't even know me. They don't care about the #*^@ I'm going thru. Only care about themselves! Wait til I try E!!!

My parents are being stupid, can I crash at your place?



SEEKING HELP

Jared's not taking his pills and I found drugs in his pocket.



That's typical Joan. Kids often try to self-medicate with drugs to help numb the pain.



But drugs are not medicine and they are not going to take his problems away. They are just making things worse.

He's sneaking around, lying and not coming home at night.

Well, there's not much you can do.



Sometimes you have to let kids make mistakes.

He said to just let Jared make mistakes.



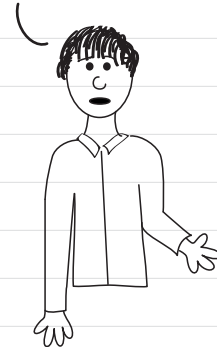
Deadly mistakes? We're not going to do that, we love him too much.



If I go home my parents are gonna to be so mad. I don't want to crash on this couch forever. Don't know what to do. Why is life so @#\$% ing complicated? Why do I keep makin things worse?

You better phone your mom and let her know you're okay.

Ya, I'll let her know I'm alive so she can kill me tomorrow.



Thank god you're safe at Isaiah's! Thanks for calling us. Jared, can I tell you something? There is nothing you can do that will make us stop loving you. When you get home we'll talk about it and try to solve this together.

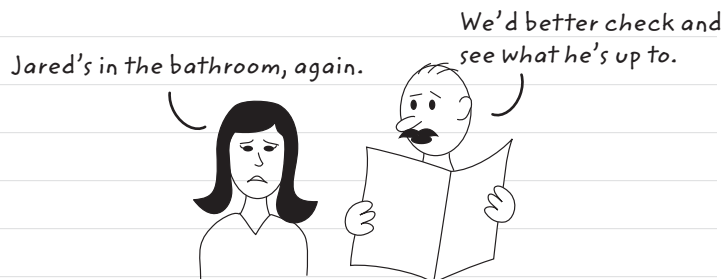


Monday

Why is it when one thing goes wrong, everything goes wrong? Isaiah saw my arm today. Went to hand him something and my sleeve got caught on his watch. He grabbed my arm and asked me why I was cuttin. Told him it was from the neighbor's cat. Didn't believe me. Told me I needed help, needed to talk to somebody. Said he was scared for me. Actually looked scared when I turned and walked away. Almost made me cry.

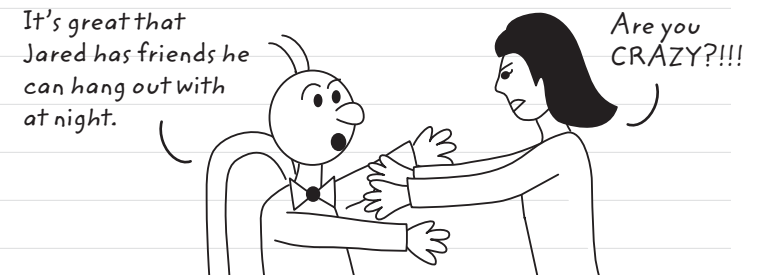


Damn @\$%^&*er! Isaiah went out and told my mom about my arm. @\$%! And to think I almost cried because of him. Traitor! Said he's tryin to help me, but he's makin my life worse. My family's got me under a @\$%ing microscope. Can't do anything!



Tuesday

Goodbye, Max! LOL. When Isaiah spilled the beans to mom about my cuttin, she decided she should visit Max to find out what he was doing to help me. Knew Max was a goner the minute he let mom in on the session. I laughed when he told her that cutting is common among teenagers. Then he interrupted her story about my drinking by saying it was good I had friends to support me. Thought mom would be all up in his grill! She gets that he doesn't know @\$%!!



Maddy, my tutor, comes tomorrow. Can't wait. God, what it must be like to be Maddy. She has it all...good grades, nice car, great life. Everyone loves her. How nice to have such a great life.

Wednesday

Got a D on another test. Everybody thinks I'm retarded. God, I wish I didn't have to see Maddy today. She's tryin to help me, but I don't deserve it. She's never gonna be able to turn this stupid kid around.

Hi Jared.

I hope you don't mind that I found your journal. I didn't mean to spy. Please forgive me. I just want you to know that I don't think you're retarded. Nothing is like it seems. Everyone has problems. Some people are just better at hiding theirs. If you knew me, you'd know that my life isn't so great. We have a lot more in common than you think we do. If you ever want to talk sometime, I'll be here. That is, if you still want to talk to me after this.

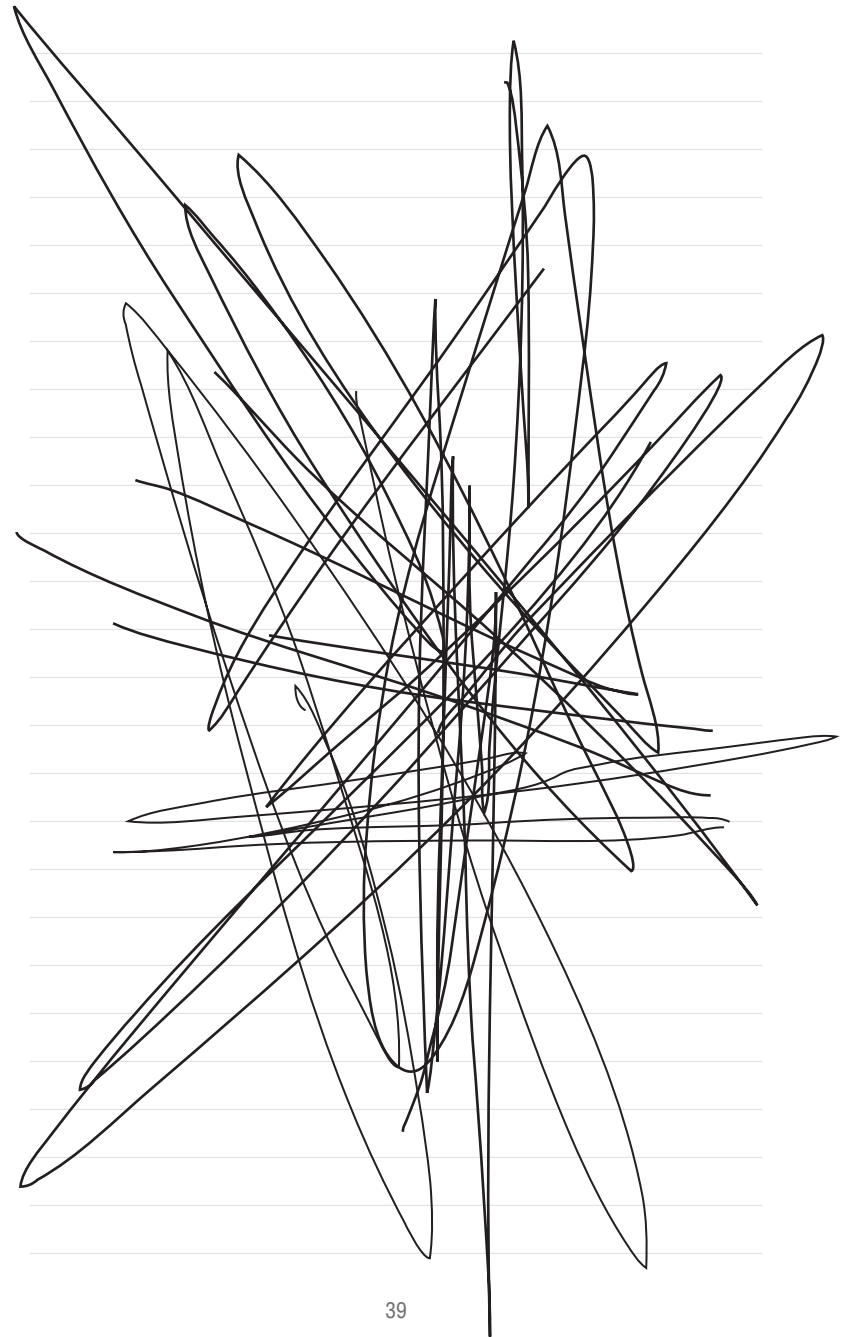
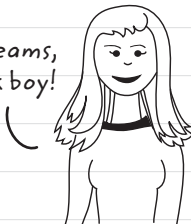
Maddy

Oh my god! I can't believe Maddy found my journal! @#\$\$%! How will I ever face her again? This is gay! Can't believe she knows everything! What a @#\$\$% up I am! She must think I'm a freak!

Wanna hang out later?



In your dreams, freak boy!



Monday

Found a note in my locker today. Don't know what to do.

Jared.

I am sorry I read your journal. I know how you must feel. I don't think anything bad about you. We have a lot more in common than you know.

Please, please, please forgive me!!

Maddy

~~Dear Maddy,~~

~~I forgive you as long as it doesn't happen again.~~

Jared

Maddy,

I forgive you. Don't know if I feel like talking, but I'd like to hear your story sometime.

Jared

P.S. Don't tell anyone about what you read.

PSYCHIC STEW?



Do I have to see a new counselor? I don't want to have to @&^%! spill my guts again!

DR. STEWART

We're so concerned with his drinking and drug use.

It's not as bad as my parents think.

You know Jared, it's good to have your parents as a support system.

My job is to listen and help you have a clearer perspective on your options.

A better option than drugging yourself is to use the feeling-thought-behavior triangle. This will give you three ways to deal with stress.

It can help you feel differently about a problem. It can help you think differently about a situation. And it can help you change your behavior.

So, if your behavior is lying in bed and your thoughts are thinking about the D you got, you will feel depressed.




I don't get it.

If you change your behavior, then your thoughts and feelings will change, too.




So, if you change your behavior by getting out of bed and shooting hoops with a friend, your thoughts will change to thinking about your next shot. Then you'll start to feel better because you're not thinking about depressing things.



So when Jared's thinking negatively and wants to start taking drugs to stop his bad feelings, he could make a healthier choice by calling Isaiah to hang out. Then Jared would start thinking about whatever it was they were doing and he would begin to feel better.

Is that how it works?

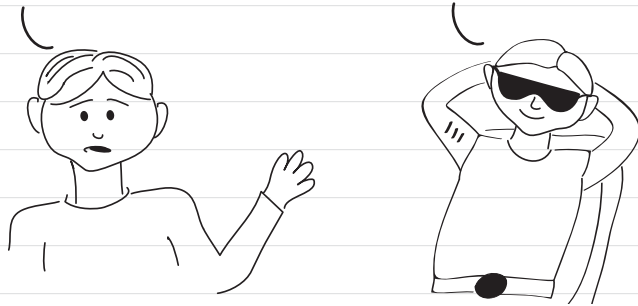


Tuesday

Met with Stew today. Mom and Dad say this counselor knows what he's doin and can help me. Wow, he sure didn't go to the same therapist school Max did. It was like he was inside my head. Knew what I was thinkin. Couldn't put one over on him. Cool guy, too. Tattoos. Motorcycle. Struggled as a teen. Laughed when I told him about the Yoga. Said it helps some people, but he won't make me do it. I kinda liked this guy.

Max told me yoga would make me feel good.

I thought yoga was something you ate.



PSYCHIC STEW?



So tell me about your family.



Jared, are you okay in there?

They're great, things are fine.

So, you're not hiding in your room?



How's school going?



Jared, you got a 'D' again.



Fine.

Hmmm. That's unusual. Usually when kids are depressed, their grades go down.

What about your friends?

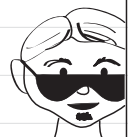


Why don't you talk to me Jared?



Ya, they're great.

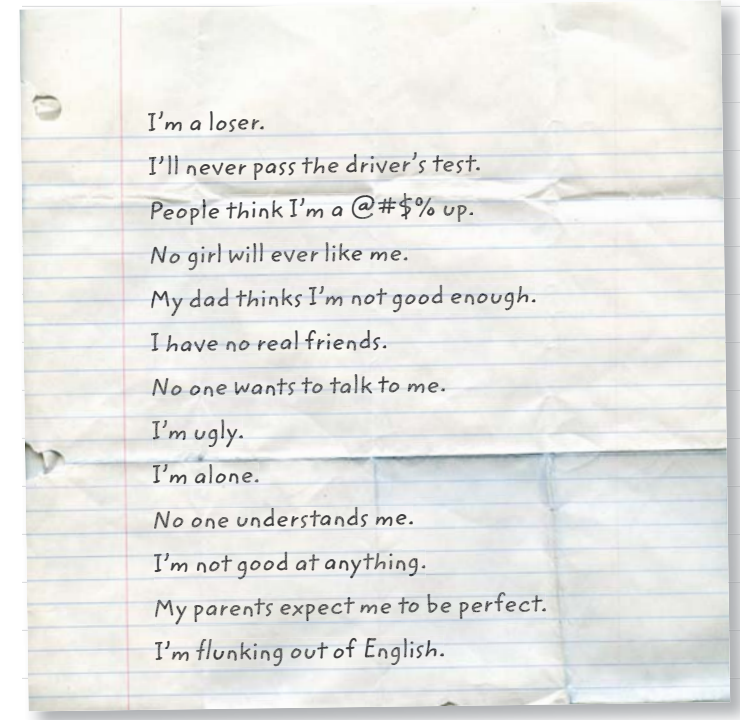
You don't pull up your hood and isolate yourself?





Stew is puttin me to work. Says I have to want this and only I can change my life. Do you think that's true? I can make my life better?

I do want to get better. I hate feeling like @\$%. He wants me to write down all of my negative thoughts. I'm gonna need a bigger book for all of them.



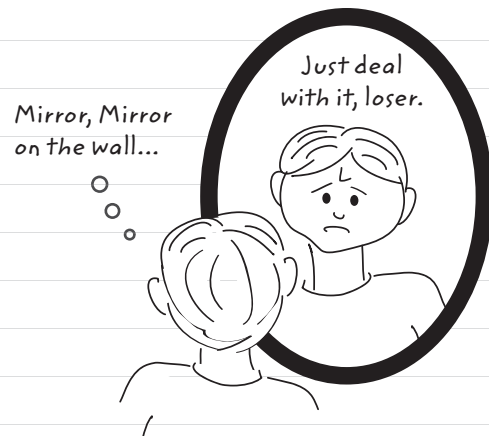
Should I take out a billboard, so everyone can see how pathetic I am?

Oh wait...they already know!



Wednesday

Don't know why I even try. Nothin I do is right. I hate people. They treat me like I'm @#\$%ing stupid. I see how they look at me. My family. My teachers. I'm @#\$%ing sick of it. I just want to be left alone. Even Maddy. I know she's hurt I won't talk with her. But look at me. I'm pathetic. I'm even sick of myself.



Thursday

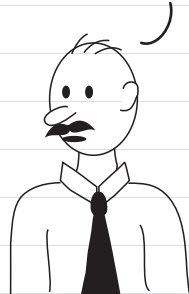
I see my destiny
 My life is dark
 My soul is black
 My eyes are full of tears
 I see that my life will bring
 No one love no one life
 I see me chained up for eternity
 I cry so hard
 I feel so @#^y
 No one cares
 No one sees
 For my life goes down in history
 For one who has no future
 I see my family they look so glad
 They look so happy together without me
 I see no path
 I see no future
 God has created for me
 My life is worthless
 I bring no one love
 I cry so hard for everyone
 My destiny was one God created
 I went through it
 And found and saw that I feel no love
 I feel no path
 Only my cold face on the ground

Friday

Wow! Thanks dad! These are Air Jordan 1 retros.



Just a little something to help you keep up with those football players, son.



Saturday

Yeah, like shoes could help me. I'm such a !@#\$ing idiot!

What a stupid call! &@#\$. Now everyone's mad at me.

I shouldn't be a ref. Let everybody down. I'm costing my family so much money. Shoes. Meds. Therapy. I know that's why they're fightin all the time. Can't do anything right. They'd be better off without me.

Why am I still here? I'm costing my family! I'm a burden!



Jared.

Know you don't 'xactly want to talk as you keep ditchin' me. I thought I'd write you a note and figured it would be easier on both of us. I know you feel like your life is bad. I'm sorry.

My life looks great on the outside, but it's not. I'M TRAPPED!!! My mom left us when I was little. I only see her a couple of times a year. I think she wanted to get away from my dad's drinking and creepy friends he brings home. Sometimes after they've drank a lot, some of them want to have fun with me. It's gotten bad a few times and I've ended up pretty banged up. Had to tell a doctor once that I fell down the stairs. Now do you see why I have to stay here? For my sisters! I pick them up from school and take them to practices. That's why I really can't get involved at school. No sports- only student council cuz it's at school.

I read you tried cutting. Me too! Just feels like it takes the pressure away sometimes and I have one thing I can control. My dad doesn't really pay attention.

Being how it's only my dad and us 3 girls. I got a job to get girl stuff. He doesn't understand having the right clothes or makeup. He drinks up most of our extra money. My tutoring job can only be right after school cuz I still have to pick up my sisters, so if I'm looking at my watch, it's just cuz I'm the only one they have. It's not you :)

Dad's on me about my grades too. I have to be a role model for my sisters and he says "No kid of mine's gonna flunk out of a free public education."

I know I don't have the same pressures as you, but I just wanted you to know I understand some. I go to the Community Center down the block. The youth guy is really chill. It's safe and I have lots of friends there. I don't know what I'd do without them. Let me know if you ever want to come.

I'm here to talk if you want it. I hope we can start the tutoring again cuz I like it and the cash always helps.

Your friend,
Maddy

Monday

Got a letter from Maddy today. Wow. Epic. Can't believe she's gone through so much. Thought she had it made.

@#\$%! Want to pound those guys for hurtin her! How can her father treat her like that? And her mother? No ^@#\$\$ing wonder she wants to spend time at my house.

I've gotta nice family. Only one screwed up here is me.

^@#\$\$! Somethin else to make me feel guilty. Can't believe I ended up hurtin her, too. Didn't mean to take away her chance to make some cash. ^@#\$\$!



Just put me outta my ^@#\$\$ing misery!

Dear Maddy,

Sorry I've been ditchin you. Didn't want you feelin sorry for me. Didn't know you knew how it felt.

Sorry what I said about your perfect life. Didn't know about your mom and dad. That's ^@#\$\$ed up! We can start the tutoring again, if you want. I liked it, too. Don't know much about this faith thing. Will have to think about it.

Jared

Tuesday

Slept in today and missed school. Don't know what happened. Had my alarm set and everything. Next thing you know, I woke up and it was 2:00. Why am I so ^@#\$\$ing tired? Too much to drink last night? Didn't give Maddy her letter. Probably thinks I'm still ditchin her. Great!

Pour out my heart and soul and he doesn't have the decency to answer back.



Family's doggin me about skippin school.

Not like I did it on purpose. Don't they know me at all?

Am I the worst kid in the world? Maddy think so, too?

@#\$%! When will someone be on my side?

Wednesday

Saw Maddy at lunch today. Must have got my letter. Said she'd see me Thursday afternoon. She looked different.

Sad? Embarrassed? Made me want to give her a hug. Like that'd do any good.

It'll be alright.

Yeah, like you know what you're talking about.



Now I have to go see Stew, the mind-reader and super-healer. He's a cool guy, but yeah. Like he can help.

PSYCHIC STEW?



You been feeling down?



Yep.



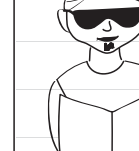
It's okay to feel down, Jared. A person's not happy all the time.



Yep.



I see you have lots of negative thoughts here.



Yep.

You know, Jared, many of our negative thoughts are not accurate. They're distorted thinking.

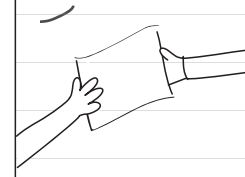
Not mine.

Let me show you. Do this experiment.



Okay.

Fill out this chart.



For every negative thought, describe why you think that way.



Then write an accurate and realistic thought in it's place.

Right.



Change Your Thinking

Thoughts	Situation	Accuracy
I'll never pass the driver's test.	I flunked it twice.	Will probably get it sometime.
Dad thinks I'm not good enough.	Always mad and yelling at me.	He did say he loved me.
Not good at anything.	Flunked driver's test. Flunking English	Got a B in math.
I have no real friends.	No one talks to me. I never hear from anyone.	Isaiah called the other day.
I'm a Loser.	I didn't make the basketball team. I don't have a girlfriend.	Lots of guys didn't make the team. I will probably get a girlfriend someday.

Okay, I get it, Stew. But I still don't feel any better. I want things to happen now, not in the future. Other kids have things goin for them now. Why can't I?

Thursday

Maddy came today. Man, I've missed her. Talked. Shared stories. Her life's worse than mine. Asked her how she does it. How she stays happy.



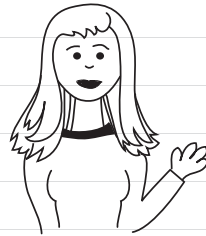
Said she had a lot of things that helped her: faith, talking to her friends, and doing things with her sisters.

Told her I don't know if I believe in that religious @^!# I mean, how does she know something's real if she doesn't see it? What about scientists that study facts? They don't believe it.

Scientists believe everything in this world was created from an explosion.



Doesn't it take faith to believe in that? There was a big explosion on 9-11. Did that create anything other than a big hole?



She has a point there. Don't know what I think. Hard to believe that a higher being could love me when so much bad is happenin. Still...Maddy does seem to have somethin I don't have...but wish I did. Seems like she has more people that care about her. Course she would. She's not a loser like me.

What the @#\$% is missing from my life?

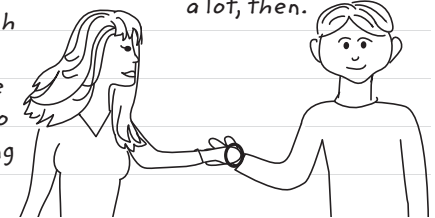


Friday

Saw Maddy at lunch today. Gave me a bracelet. Red. Has the word "Never Alone" hidden on it. Told me it was a way for me to let people know how I was feelin without all the questions.

I told your family and Isaiah that when you wear this, it's a sign for us that you're feeling down and need us to support you...without prying or preaching.

Be wearin this a lot, then.



Maddy said she'd thought about that. Made a scale for me to measure my moods: Told me to wear the bracelet when I'm in the red zone- starting to feel like I can't do it on my own anymore. Said she and Isaiah would try to help me get through the rough times and even have a purple bracelet to let me know that they're thinkin about me. Like anything will help. Told her I'd give it a try.

MOOD RATING SCALE

Circle how you feel today.

Happy	Okay	Sad	Want to hurt myself	Thinking suicide
1	3	5	7	10

Get help now!

Saturday

Can't sleep. Jittery. Feel like I need to be doin somethin.
 Can't keep my mind off things. Thoughts keep goin
 through my head over and over. Keep hearin what people
 say about me. Keep thinkin of all the dumb things I've
 done. Hate the night, can't sleep....lasts forever. Texted
 Isaiah, but he's not answering. Maybe I'll text Stew and tell
 him I need some @#\$\$%ing sleeping pills!

Sleep avoids me and hides where I can't find it.

I search for it but only find

The angry voices in my mind

And images I want to forget.

Dark memories I wish weren't a part of me.

Reminding me of how far away I am from my dreams.

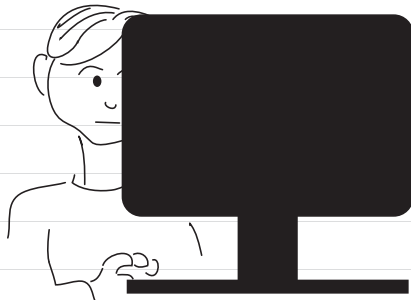
From who I want to be.

No matter how hard I try I can't escape my life

Not even for a

Few hours.

I'm so tired of bein me.

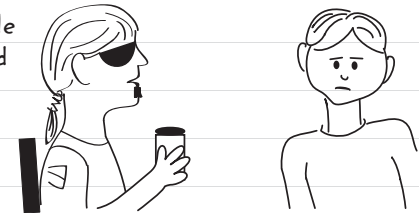


Hello, all you other
 sleepless losers.
 Guess I'll be joining
 you again tonight.

Sunday

Wow! Stew answered me. Most counselors don't text -
 only see you during hours. Figured he'd blow me off like
 everyone else and tell me to stop worryin - everything
 was fine. He heard me and told me he was gonna change
 my meds. Said maybe it was the Prozac makin it hard for
 me to sleep. Will try Lithium. Have to go in for a few tests
 today before they change it. Hope he's right. Hope this
 works. I'm so tired of havin to think all the time and never
 being able to shut it off.

Just give us a little
 blood and pee and
 we'll be all set,
 Jared.



Asked me about the bracelet I was wearin. Told him about
 Maddy and the rating scale. Said he thought it was a great
 idea. Said how much Maddy must care about me to go
 to that much trouble. Wow! Think he's right? She cares?
 That'd be so cool if I had a chance.

Why, Jared, I've been waitin
 for you to realize how much
 you love me. Come and kiss
 me, you stud!

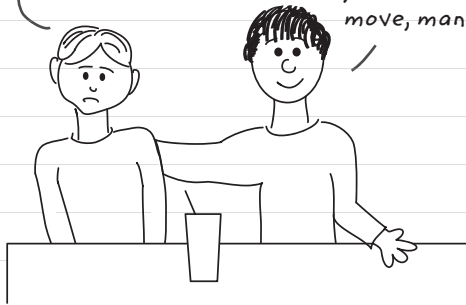


Tuesday

Maddy didn't talk with me today. Saw her at lunch and science. She smiled and said "Hi", but nothin else. Talked with everyone but me. I knew she didn't care about me.

What? Do I have an invisible force field around me, pushing everyone away?

Naw. She's waiting for you to make the first move, man.



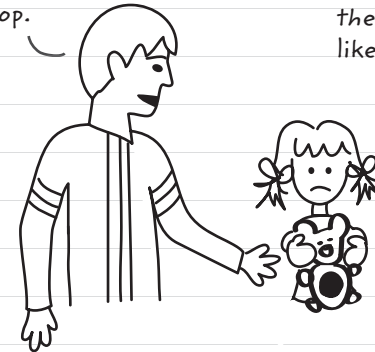
Waitin for me to make the first move? Right! Went up and talked to her about the movie we watched in science. She said she wished she was like the main character....pretty, smart, cool. I told her she was like that. She's the smartest, prettiest girl I know. Silence. Yep. She didn't say anything. Just awkward silence. She doesn't care.

^@#%! Kole comes home on break and is all up in my junk. Askin a million questions, watchin my every move. Annoying little @#\$\$%! Says he's tryin to help. I just want to be left alone!

He's just going through his own stuff right now. We have to keep trying to show him we care, even though he's being a poop.

What's up with Jared? He's always mad and won't hang out with us. Does he hate us?

I know! Let's get the purple bracelets like his friends!



PSYCHIC STEW?



I see you're wearing your bracelet today.

Yep.



What things came up this week that triggered your feelings?

I don't know. Lots of stuff.



Okay. So you're wearing your bracelet because you're feeling overwhelmed. That's a start. You don't want to end up in the hospital again.

Yeah. I don't want to drink another disgusting, muddy, charcoal drink!



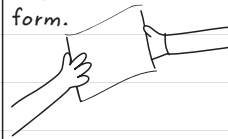
Great. Now let's develop a plan so when you're feeling like this again, you'll know what to do.



I'm not sure I know what you mean.



Well, for starters, let's have you fill out this Plan of Action form.



PLAN OF ACTION

Who will I call for help?

Isaiah, Maddy, Stew...maybe mom, dad and Kole?

Where can I get help?

Stew

Will I try to solve the problem on my own?

Yes, if I can

Are my expectations realistic?

I'll try to be realistic

Do I want to get better?

Yes

Another thing you can do is look in your journal for clues.



As to why you are feeling this way.

Well, I'm not sleeping.



That's a clue.

I'm feeling lonely. Keep thinking about what they are thinking about me.



Good insight, Jared. Sharing those feelings are important.



I hate talking about myself.



Most everyone does. But not sharing your feelings can make you more anxious.

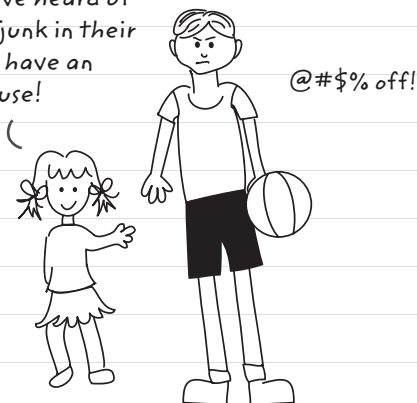


Stew says that sometimes not sharin my feelings can make me more anxious. I know it builds up, but I don't know if I can tell someone all my @#^&. How do you tell someone you have no friends? You're a loser?

Tuesday

I'm blowin up like a @#\$\$%ing balloon! It's only been two weeks and I can't fit into my jeans. @#\$\$%! Mom's on my case for not wantin to eat dinner. Can't she see that I'm turnin into a @#\$\$%ing fat@**? Plus I'm shakin all the time. What's up?

Geez, Jared. I've heard of people having junk in their trunk, but you have an entire warehouse!

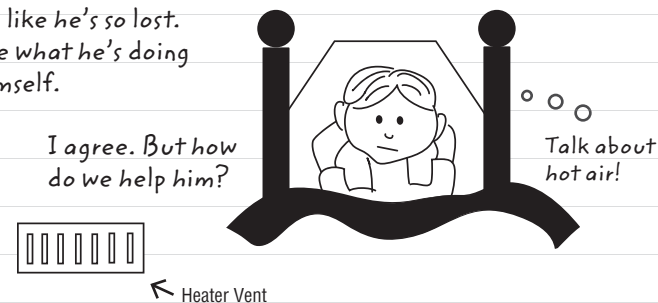


Why is everyone always talkin about me? Can't they just leave me alone? Don't my parents know I can hear them thru the heater vent? Sayin I'm angry all the time. Takin it out on my little sister. Not wanting to be with "the family." Don't they know what I'm goin through?

I feel like he's so lost.
I hate what he's doing
to himself.

I agree. But how
do we help him?

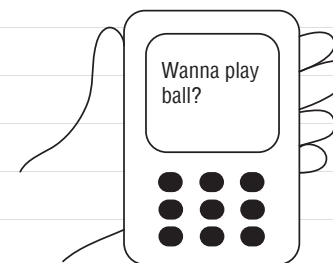
Talk about
hot air!



@#\$\$%! Don't they know how guilty I feel? I don't mean to hurt them. I can't help it. Even after everything, it still sounds like they care. How can they care about a screw-up like me?

Wednesday

Wow. Here I had all these thoughts and feelings fillin my head. Couldn't even think. I was so stressed. Thought no one cared. Then everything changed. Everyone started carin and comin up to me. Isaiah texted me. Dad took me out to lunch. Maddy even gave me a poem. Wow.



Jared -

When I look in your eyes you try
to hide the pain.
But sometimes you slip through
And I don't know how to help you.

You put on a good face for others
to see.
But only I can see what's beneath
of thee.
You cry out in pain in your sleep.
All secrets revealed that you would
never leak.

We try to help you through the pain.
But there's something inside you that
can't be rearranged.
All I can do is pray
that you find comfort along the way.

I like you friend. I like you
very much.
And when you're ready. I'm here
to trust.

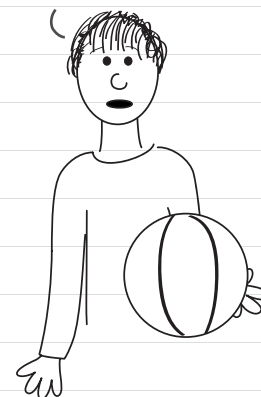
Friday

Isaiah came over to work on our video for science.

Turned out so good, we put it on YouTube. Already got
8 hits. Legit! Then we were just chillin and talkin about
doin somethin together. Wanted to know if we could put
together a rec team for basketball. Don't know. Don't
think anyone will want to be on my team, especially since
I'm turnin into such a disgusting slob. Stew said to play into
my fears. He would challenge me to call people and test
them. Right. I'll call and prove him wrong. Show him what
a loser I really am.

Why don't you call Tom?
He's a good player.

Yeah, that's good. He'll
definitely turn me down.



"Hey Tom,
Isaiah and I are
puttin together
a rec team.
Wanna join us?"

@** yeah! Can you believe it? I actually found ten guys
to play on our team. Stew must know his @#\$\$%!

Saturday

MOOD RATING SCALE

Circle how you feel today.

Happy	Okay	Sad	Want to hurt myself	Thinking suicide
1	3	5	7	10

Get help now!

Feelin good today. Practiced some b-ball. Slept in. Ate some Subway. Even mom and dad's family meeting couldn't bring me down. Told me I was doin better. Noticed how hard I've been tryin. Sick!

Monday

Aced my English quiz. Ms. East even smiled at me. Found Maddy right away to let her know. Gave me her biggest hug. Sat with me all during lunch, even when her boyfriend tried to drag her away. Told the loser to get lost, and we shared fries. Hope she didn't notice the ketchup I got on my shirt. @#\$% shakiness is drivin me crazy! Gotta talk to Stew about it.



Tuesday

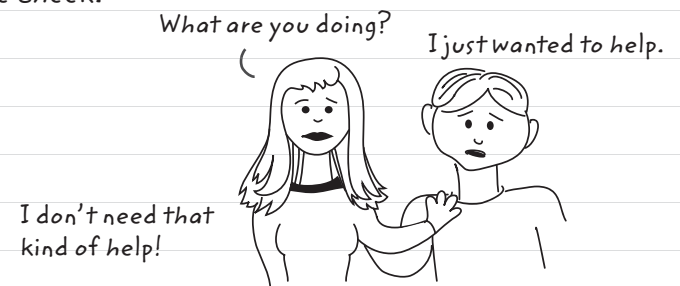
MOOD RATING SCALE

Circle how you feel today.

Happy	Okay	Sad	Want to hurt myself	Thinking suicide
1	3	5	7	10

Get help now!

Things are great! Dank! Maddy finally broke up with her loser boyfriend. She was really down today. Cryin. Put my arm around her. Told her she could cry as much as she wanted. I was here for her. She laughed and apologized for gettin my t-shirt wet. Felt so sorry for her with those big Victoria Secret eyes. Leaned down and gave her a kiss on the cheek.


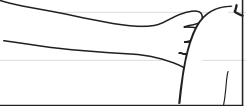







Awkward! Again. Thought girls liked guys to show their feelings. Thought it'd make her feel better. I shouldn't have kissed her. Hope I didn't screw it up.

PSYCHIC STEW?



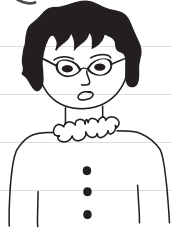
<p>I noticed in your journal your mood scale has been 3 or less. Things been better?</p> 	<p>Yep. Shakiness still bothering me, though, and I'm still not losing weight.</p> 	<p>Well, it seems the meds are working for you. However, the side effects are a pain.</p> <p>Let's try something that might work better.</p>
<p>Looks like you were upset about kissing Maddy.</p> 	<p>Yeah, I shouldn't have done that.</p> 	<p>Try this. Instead of saying, "I shouldn't have" say, "It would have been better if..."</p> 
<p>Okay. I shouldn't... oops! Okay. It would have been better if I had just let Maddy cry on my shoulder.</p> 	<p>Can you hear the difference? "I shouldn't have" implies that your decision was negative.</p> 	<p>"It would have been better" implies that there was a better choice, but it wasn't all negative.</p>

<p>But it was negative.</p> 	<p>No. You were trying to give her comfort, and you did. Nothing wrong with that.</p> 	<p>I like how you faced your fears when setting up your basketball team.</p> 
<p>Yeah, that was legit!</p> 	<p>How's basketball going?</p> 	<p>Great...until last night. I should have practiced. I missed an easy shot and let everyone down.</p> 
<p>Back up. Let's try that again. It would have been better...</p> 	<p>Okay. It would have been better if I'd practiced.</p> 	<p>Yeah. Because it's Rec ball played for FUN! You can practice next time.</p> 

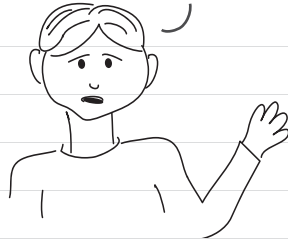
Thursday

Family meeting again. Mom and dad are on this kick to do good things for others. Has something to do with being kind and they think I will feel better doing something for someone else. Said old Mrs. Callahan needs to have her yard fixed up. Can do it with them or a friend. Right. Called Isaiah right away. Said he'd help me on Saturday. Great! Four hours wasted!

Can you help me pick up the pebbles from my driveway?



Sure, got any tweezers?



Friday

Can't @#\$%ing sleep! Stupid old lady. Can't she get a handyman to help her? Why'd mom and dad go and say I'd help anyway?

Saturday

Didn't want to get out of bed to go. Isaiah came and dragged me out of bed. Met Mrs. Callahan. Told us to call her Ruth. Says it's from the Bible. She gave us our chore list. Not bad. We actually had some fun. Makes the best chocolate chip cookies around. Let us eat as many as we wanted. ~~I shouldn't have~~ It would have been better if I hadn't eaten so many since I'm tryin to lose weight.

(Note to self: Text Stew that I used his strategy.)

Ruth told us this cool story as she was watering her plants. Said it was a parable from India. Gave us a copy to take home.

Ruth makes great cookies! What do you think of the story she told?



Liked it, but do you think kids at school would believe it? They hate everyone that's not popular.



Cracked Pot

Author Unknown

A water bearer in India had 2 large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water.

At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his house.

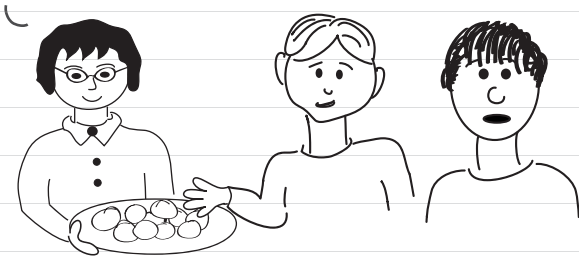
Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfections, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do. After 2 years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you. I have been able to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you've watered them. For 2 years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."

Moral: Each of us has our own unique flaws but it's these flaws that make our lives together so interesting. We're all cracked pots.

We're all cracked pots,
but we each have
something good to offer.

Are you sure we're all
cracked? Some kids at
school seem perfect.



Everyone has issues. You just have
to take people for who they are
and look for the good in them.

Don't know if they'll
see the good in us
lowlifes who never
make the cut.

Sunday

Man, had a sweet game today. Felt good being out there
with friends. My follow thru was wicked. Mom and dad
even came this time. Said I was on fire. Pants are even
fittin better.

MOOD RATING SCALE

Circle how you feel today.

Happy	Okay	Sad	Want to hurt myself	Thinking suicide
1	3	5	7	10

Get help now!

Ran into Maddy after the game. Was with some guy
named Jake. Said it was the same youth pastor she told me
about. Cool dude. Beat me in a game of pool with a lucky
shot at the end. Told me he and a group were going paint
balling in a few weeks and asked me to come. Maybe.

Monday

Gotta start studyin for the driver's test again. @#\$\$%ing
test! Hate takin it on those stupid computers. Freaks me
out seeing each one I get wrong. Textin Stew so I can
get some sleeping meds. I'll try the CD he gave me, too.
Said positive music might help me relax. This better be
positive...

What the @#\$\$%
are you listenin to?

Hey, man, my therapist gave me
this music to calm my nerves.



It workin'?



Considering I want to rip your
face off right now? I'd say no.

Wednesday

Finally did it! Not a loser any more. Got my license. So excited, called Stew to see if I could move our session. Want to go celebrate with Maddy. Gonna pick her up in the van and go to Taco Bell. Stew said great. Maddy said yes. Guess the pills and music did their magic.

Thanks for inviting me, Jared. I love celebrating good news with my friends.



Friends?! Thought I was finally getting somewhere.



Can't believe Maddy still just wants to be friends. Doesn't she see what a great boyfriend I'd be? How nice I'd treat her? Taco Bell girl noticed. She smiled at me. Why can't Maddy notice? Don't know if I can be just friends.

Stew said when I'm in the middle of something and have to make a choice, I can use pros and cons to help me see things clearly. Then I can make a good decision. Okay here goes:

Pros and Cons

Pros	Cons
Pros for being friends with Maddy.	Cons for only being friends.
I can see and talk with her.	I can see her, but not touch her.
She can still be my tutor.	I really like her.
I feel better after I've talked with her.	It will suck when she's with someone else.
She makes me laugh.	I may not find another hot girl who will talk with me.
I could be friends with her and date another hot girl at the same time.	

Thursday

@#%! Game was goin well then sprained my @#%ing ankle! Right after my lay-up. Didn't even get a @#%ing foul called. It was obvious the guy elbowed me. Have to miss the game on Sunday now. Last game, too. Just when things were goin well. How come I keep havin all this \$%^& happen to me?

MOOD RATING SCALE

Circle how you feel today.

Happy	Okay	Sad	Want to hurt myself	Thinking suicide
1	3	5	7	10

Get help now!

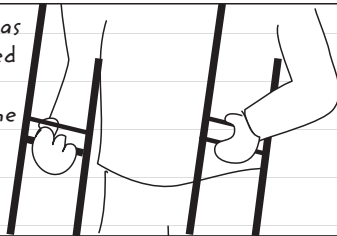
PSYCHIC STEW?



I see you're wearing your bracelet again. What's up? Is it the crutches?



My life sucks as usual. Sprained my ankle, so had to miss the big game.



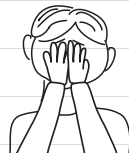
Anything else come up this week that you're dealing with?



I don't know.

What about Maddy?

She just wants to be friends.



Did your Pro and Con chart help you come to a decision about that?



Yeah. It's better to be friends than lose her.



But I hate how my life is if such a @#\$\$%! Why can't I catch a break and get the girl?

You know, Jared, all of us have tough choices and ups and downs in our lives. It's never going to be smooth sailing every day.

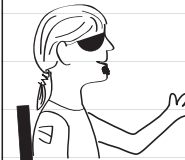


Let me tell you, a person's life isn't always as it seems.

Easy for you to say. You're perfect. Your life's chill.



This past week my teenage son decided to go on a drinking binge.



The one pictured on your facebook?


Yes, I got a call at 2 in the morning to go pick him up.

Totaled the car and got a DUI. We've talked over and over about drinking and driving. He just doesn't understand.



Had a big blow-out when he got home. I was glad he was safe, but angry about the choices he made.


He could have hurt himself or someone else.




What's worse is that I know I screwed up the same way when I was his age.

Now it seems I've passed my issues onto my son.

I didn't know. It's cool you shared that.



Jared, we all have struggles and regrets we have to deal with.



Can't believe Stew's guilty feelings. If his life's not perfect, being a counselor, then no one's is. Said when he was my age and goin through the same things, he wrote out a list of things he should and shouldn't do. Thought it might help me. Helped me come up with some of my own. Asked him if faith ever helped anybody. Told me yeah it helps a lot of people.

Do's	Dont's
Seek help if I want to hurt myself	Tell myself I'm worthless
Forgive myself when I mess up	Procrastinate
Reduce unnecessary stress	Stay up all night
Call a few friends to hang out	Use alcohol and drugs to numb the pain
Hang out with good kids	Hang out with bad kids
Exercise	Let anger control me
Eat healthy	Forget my meds
Sleep	Let someone talk me into something I'll regret
Take my meds	Listen to sad music when I'm down
Practice strategies from Stew	
Share my feelings, so they don't bottle up	
Make a difference, no matter how small	
Get out of bed and house	
Realize that others may see problem before I do	

Wednesday

Maddy and Isaiah came over today. Made me this awesome CD that has positive music. So much better than Stew's CD. Group at school wrote the songs and music. Good stuff. Told me I might relax now instead of thinkin negative thoughts all night. Think they really care about me. Maddy's even comin back tomorrow to help me bake cookies for my sister Candace's birthday.

Sweet!



Thursday

Hung with Maddy today. Laughed. Joked around. Asked me if I wanted a cookie to eat. I said sure. She had me close my eyes and then gave me a spoonful of baking soda. Yuk! Asked if I'd rather have butter. Gross! Chocolate chips? Told her yeah, that was better.

You know these cookie ingredients are like our lives. There's some bitter days like baking soda and some sweet days like chocolate chips.

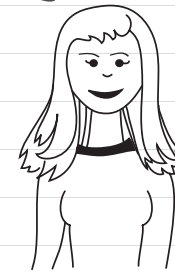


Yeah, bitter like having to take meds. Sweet like hangin with you.

I'll go with all the sweet days please.

Gave me a taste of the cookies when they were done. Turned out great. She laughed and said our lives will be sweet one day, too. The sweet and the bitter all mixed together to turn out somethin special. Maybe senior year is it. We just can't see it yet. I don't know. Sounds hokey to me. Still gotta love her.

Doin something with Isaiah tonight?



Gonna talk with that cute girl that likes you?

Yeah, goin to Taco Bell.



Think she likes me? Maybe.

Epilogue

Jared graduated from High School and is currently working at Joe's Hardware. He's trying to decide what path to take...Military? Career? School? He still has his ups and downs, but is getting better at using his strategies. He continues to see Stew on a regular basis and seems to have found a good combination of medications. Life finally has more good days than bad for Jared. Maddy, Isaiah, and his family are still supporting him, and they are all looking forward to what the future will bring.

Questions that may help you on your journey.

What was the trigger that caused Jared to begin this journal?

What specific incidents or people appear to make Jared's depression worse?

What specific incidents or people appear to help Jared deal positively with his depression?

Based on your answers, even though Jared has positive support, why do you think Jared has trouble getting better?

Questions that may help you on your journey. (continued)

Why do you think Stew is more effective in helping Jared than Max was?

If you were advising Jared at the end of the Journal, which things do you believe he should be focusing on to continue to improve?

We have included an example of strategies Stew recommended for Jared. If you were in Jared's shoes, which one(s) do you think would be most helpful for you?

Are you in trouble? If so, please get help from friends, family, counselor or call a help line.

Strategies

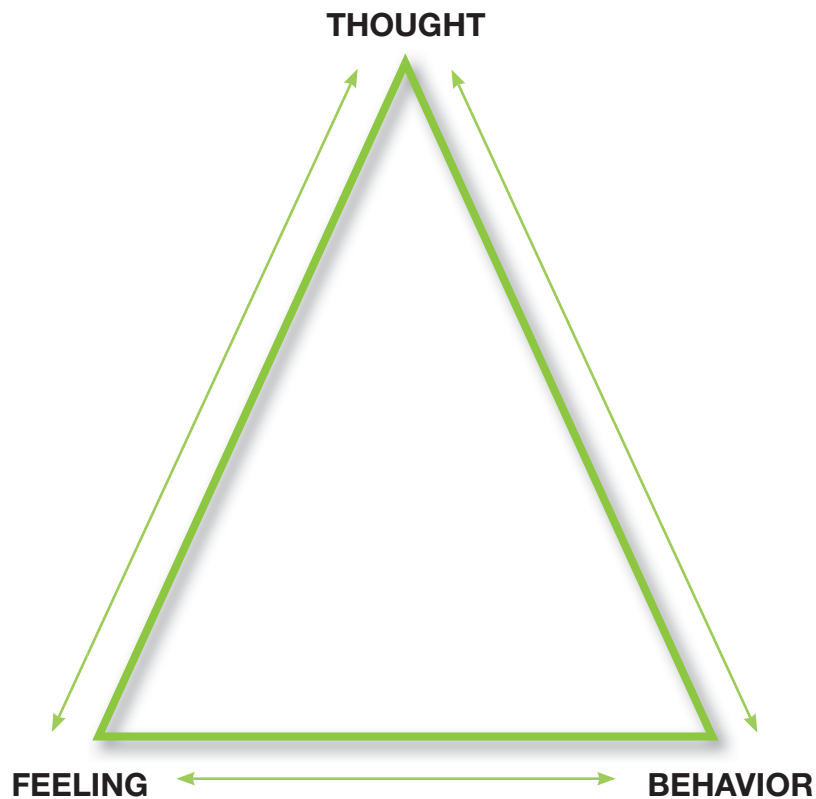
Strategies

1. Thought-Feeling-Behavior Triangle
2. Change Your Thinking
3. Mood Rating Scale
4. Plan of Action
5. Pros and Cons
6. Do's and Don'ts
7. Journaling
8. Exercise

These strategy ideas are a compilation of multiple therapy sessions and from The Feeling Good Handbook by David D. Burns, M.D.

Thought-Feeling-Behavior Triangle

Each of these 3 things interact and influence each other. An individual starts with a thought that creates feelings. Thoughts and feelings can affect a behavior. Reflect on situations where these 3 things would apply to decisions made in your life and write the ideas down in this triangle.



Change Your Thinking

Start by writing down a negative thought you are having. Describe the situation in which the thought occurred. Now take time to see if these thoughts are really accurate. What would someone outside the situation say?

Thought	Situation	Accuracy

MOOD RATING SCALE

Circle how you feel today.

Happy	Okay	Sad	Want to hurt myself	Thinking suicide
1	3	5	7	10

Get help now!

MOOD RATING SCALE

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MOOD RATING SCALE

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Get help now!

Plan of Action

...for when I'm feeling extremely down or stressed.



EAT HEALTHY...EXERCISE...
SLEEP...RELAX

Plan of Action

...for when I’m feeling extremely down or stressed.

- 1. Did I fill out my mood rating scale?
- 2. Who will I call for help?
- 3. Where will I get help?
- 4. Will I try to solve the problem on my own?
- 5. Are my expectations realistic?
- 6. Do I want to get better?

Another option could be to fill out the *Wellness Recovery Action Plan* (WRAP) by Dr. Mary Ellen Copeland.

Pros / Cons

When you have to make a choice or a difficult decision you can set up a pros and cons list to help organize your thoughts. This can allow you to take the time to evaluate your options. Write down the positive reasons—pros, and then the negative ideas—cons.

Pros	Cons

Do's and Don'ts

Take the time to sit down and think about the things you should do and things you shouldn't do to keep yourself healthy. If you are unsure, get some help to create your list.

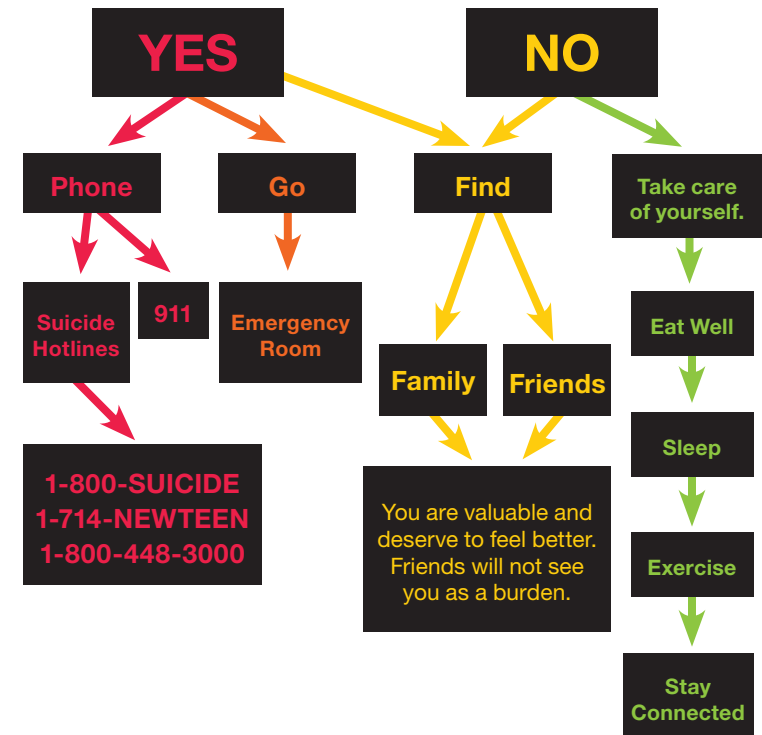
Do's	Don'ts

What to do if you or a friend needs help

Many people have felt like you do. You do not have to be alone. Getting help is important.

Ask yourself or your friend:

Do you want to hurt yourself?



10 WARNING SIGNS That Suggest You or a Friend May Need Help



1. Feeling hopeless, sad, depressed or worthless
2. Tired all the time
3. Stopped taking care of yourself, eating, appearance and self hurting
4. Angry all the time, overreacting to situations
5. Big changes in eating or sleeping patterns (too much or too little)
6. Can't concentrate, struggle making decisions
7. Anxious, becoming very impulsive, always moving, excessive fidgeting
8. Withdraw physically and emotionally (from friends and activities)
9. Chronic pain or physical symptoms with no known cause and medicine does not seem to help
10. Thinking or talking about death or suicide, giving away possessions

**GETTING HELP ISN'T A SIGN OF WEAKNESS,
BUT ONE OF STRENGTH AND COURAGE!**

List of things that can offer help

This is not an exhaustive list, but hopefully there is something on here that can be of value to you.

- Listen to music
- Accomplish a task
- Talk to a friend
- Get some natural light
- Exercise
- Laugh
- Do something for someone else
- Take a warm bath or shower
- Journal
- Eat healthy
- Get good sleep
- Go to a support group
- Call a hot line
- Eat a piece of fruit
- Get a massage
- Clean your room
- Clean yourself up
- Look through list of positive words
- Play with a pet
- Make a list of what you are good at
- Take a walk
- Do some breathing exercises
- Pray or meditate
- Get out of the house
- Share my feelings
- Hang out with friends
- Forgive myself when I mess up
- Reduce stress level
- Seek help if I need to
- Make a crisis plan
- Take time off
- Keep busy
- Look for something positive about today
- Write a letter
- Call someone
- Double check your meds
- Skip
- Hug someone you know
- Look through family pictures
- Attend a faith service
- Read a book
- Make a gift for someone
- Play a game
- Light a candle
- Play an instrument
- Pick some flowers
- Sit in the sun
- Swing
- Hot tub
- Bake something

HOTLINE NUMBERS & WEBSITES

1-800-SUICIDE (English and Spanish)

1-714-NEWTEEN (English and Spanish)

1-800-448-3000 (BOYS TOWN 24/7)

1-800-448-1833 (TDD Line)

nami.org

boystown.org/national-hotline

teenline.org

twloha.org

hopeline.com

imalive.org

bringchange2mind.org

befrienders.org

nimh.nih.gov

Never Alone

*If you are feeling depressed or out of control,
please call, visit a website or seek help from
friends, family and/or a counselor.*

There is hope and you can feel better.

Your life has value and you are worth it.

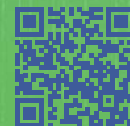
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