

CHRONIC PAIN · DEPRESSION · ISOLATION · THERAPY · UNCATEGORIZED

## *Pain, Isolation, and Therapy*

December 29, 2016 [saneinchronicpain](#)

I'm sitting here with a list of things I want to write about and nothing is quite jumping off the page at me. But there is so much on my mind today. So I'm going to write and see where it takes us. I guess we'll focus on chronic illness and isolation. It is common sense that someone in pain withdraws from everything around them. With my headaches, I prefer to spend most of my time in my bed, with the light off because that is the most comfortable for me. It leads to the least amount of pain, which is pretty much the goal of my life: stay out of pain.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century I am not completely alone in my room. I have Netflix, Amazon, Youtube, access to the World Wide Web, and a phone that can connect me to social media and anyone that will take my call or answer my text. But when I'm in pain, the last thing I want to see is the happy Instagram posts of my friends celebrating the birthday of a high school friend without me, because no matter how bad I wanted to go, I was in too much pain and couldn't go out. I don't want to go through Netflix and see that I have watched almost everything that's recommended on the home page and a lot of things that aren't. I don't want anything. I want my comfy duvet, a dark room, and my thoughts.

Unfortunately, that last one is difficult, especially for me. I like to think. I always have. I overthink everything. I can be listening to one person's TED Talk and simultaneously completely immersed in a self-discussion on the implications of Locke's theory of Tabula Rasa. I think, and think, and think. But I am alone. I am isolated away from everyone and everything I love. And I continue to choose that. I go further and further down the rabbit hole until interpersonal communication is such a far-fetched idea that isolation starts to have a greater affect on me. It starts to lead to depression and anxiety and eventually you go so deep into the both of those that you become completely numb. It costs so much for your body to be in constant pain, that you have nothing left to spend on emotion. And I wish that I had some "how to turn your life around" twist to this post, but the truth is I am currently so deep into this that I'm not sure how to get out.

I suppose my advice for this is that therapy is your friend. Your therapist is so invaluable to your journey through chronic illness and there is zero shame in that. Having someone impartial that can sit and help you find answers is so important. My therapist has been one of the most influential and important people in my life. She is like family to me. Then she closed her practice, and I've been spinning out ever since. So now comes the hunt for a new one. But honestly, how do I find the next one when I already had one-in-a-million? I have to try though. I need to search high and low for someone I click with that can help me through what I call "my funk."

How do you find a therapist? Fortunately there are many good resources online. One in particular I like is: <https://therapists.psychologytoday.com>. It lets you search by zip code, who takes your insurance, your particular issues, pretty much anything. This resource is completely invaluable.

Here is my list of what I look for in a therapist:

1. Someone who is impartial

It's your life, and the answers are already inside of you. I promise. Find someone that will help you find them within, not someone who decides for you.

## 2. Someone who you trust

You have to be honest to be able to help yourself. If you don't trust your therapist, you will lie, and that only hurts you.

## 3. Know who you like

Are you more comfortable with a woman therapist? A man therapist? Someone who is older? Younger? Is it important that they are religious? Or not? Do they need to be okay with LGBTQ+ community? Know what you prefer and go get it.

## 4. Don't get discouraged

Finding that perfect therapist isn't easy. And it very seldom happens in the first try or even the fourth. Keep trying and you will find your perfect fit eventually.

What do you look for in a therapist? Leave a comment below!

Good luck out there!

-MF

