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A couple of years ago I promised myself that one day I'll be strong enough to be able to talk about my mental health openly. I've made this my goal. I think this is the day, so here's how I ended up diagnosed with ADHD at the age of 37 - a thread...

In 2017 I reached my rock-bottom. I got back home from Philippines, where I failed to deliver my conference talk due to being a mental train-wreck (for which I'm terribly sorry!). I started having suicidal idealizations and I realized it's time to get help.

It's not that I wanted to end myself, but I would see myself dying in all sorts of ways every-single-day. These are called intrusive thoughts and the ones I had were probably one of the worst ones you can experience.

I started therapy in May 2017 and it was surprisingly easy for me to...just start talking. It was a relief that I could just talk to somebody because I pretty much isolated myself from everybody.

Unfortunately, my therapist didn't want to be specific about my problems and everything was just...too generalized? I don't know how to describe this. I wanted to hear concrete facts eventually, like "you're dealing with X and you should do Y to improve".

Topics that did come up though included depressive moods and lots of anxiety. Also serious anger issues. I hit and kicked so many things that I'm pretty sure I cracked lots of bones w/o even knowing it.

Just before therapy, I also decided to go back to my fav sport: mountain biking. I had a long break from it because...reasons. Dunno. I thought "oh I'm a father now, time to become responsible".

In retrospect, I'm pretty sure lack of sport contributed to my mental collapse significantly. Once I got back to riding and also raised the bar like never before, I felt a truly therapeutic outcome (despite all the accidents lol).

Since then sport has become an integral part of my life and I promised myself to never-ever find any excuses that I should not do this or that because I'm too old or some other bullshit. I just need this to function even if it's dangerous.

My first therapy lasted for over *3 years*. I took a couple of breaks due to my bike accidents but I would always go back once I could, well, walk again. I've no idea how many hours of therapy sessions it was but it was a lot.

During that time I've become obsessed about mental health in general. I started consuming MH-related content daily. Everything from YT videos to audio books.

I did everything I could to figure out what the fuck is wrong me. I needed answers. My weekly chit-chat with my therapist just couldn't cut it and I'd become really frustrated with this.

Once the pandemic started, I put my therapy on hold. First of all I didn't feel like it was helping, and secondly I was sure online chats wouldn't be the same anyway due to potential connection issues and all this crap that comes with online calls.

(how about we solve that problem before finding another planet to colonize lol)

During this break from therapy I realized I need to find a new therapist. So I've found one but I couldn't find the courage to book an appointment. Months were passing and I was getting increasingly angry at myself and then...I got COVID. Fantastic.

COVID had a huge impact on me...in a very positive way! It gave me a big mental energy boost and I became extremely motivated to do something with myself. The first thing I did was booking an appointment with a new therapist.

This was in early November 2020 and once I started my second therapy, everything started to change very quickly.

It's very common to "simply" go through your life with your therapist. My new therapist did this in a very structured way and we went through my entire life, starting with the earliest of my memories until present days.

After 3-4 session, my therapist asked "have you ever been diagnosed with ADHD?". This surprised me, because I spent over 3 years educating myself about mental health trying to figure things out for myself, but I always skipped ADHD.

Just like many of you, I thought ADHD is about young boys who are hyper-active and badly misbehave and then they grow out it. I got curious and started digging into it.

After just a couple of hours of diving into YouTube content related to ADHD in adults, I was in state of a shock, to put it mildly. It was still complete chaos in my head but I could already see lots of things that make *perfect sense*. Something that didn't happen to me before.

Then I started listening to audio books about ADHD. "Driven to Distraction", then "Delivered from Distraction" and finally "ADHD 2.0". This was a major breakthrough. It felt like listening to the story of my own life.

I learned about attention dysregulation, emotional dysregulation, impulsivity, problems with focus, extreme procrastination, low self-esteem, anger issues and other fun things. It was all me. It all started to make sense.

In addition to my therapy, I also did a full psychiatric diagnosis and the conclusion was clear: ADHD combined type. This means I have problems with both attention and hyperactivity.

For me, this is only the beginning of the healing process. I'll do my best to keep talking about it and hopefully I'll be able to help other people too. If you got that far, thank you for your...attention (see what I did there?).

Remember you're not alone! Peace ❤■