Twitter Thread by Tamar Whyte



Tamar Whyte
@tamar_whyte

Yikes. I've had a bit of a shitty night. Woke up from a dream where I was sobbing - proper distressed, inconsolable body sobs - about work. I was living in a tiny cramped flat with my deceased family members, with no room. People from work were coming in and out & I felt >

> ashamed and I was trying to say that I used to live on my own in a bigger flat and not share a bedroom with my siblings & live with my Mum but I couldn't. There was a new manager who came to see me and somehow bizarrely ended up in my bedroom waiting for me and it felt >

> intrusive & shaming because she saw my poor living conditions and I knew she would have been told by management that I was unstable/troublemaker/no good/rubbish. So then I cried and cried and cried and cried (to show how stable I was ■) and then I woke up ■■■ >

> also random ppl I work with, coming in and out of my home, making snide remarks about no wanting to be there. All the time I felt embarrassed because it was small, cramped, dark, full of people. Ugh. Woke up mid cry and felt awful. That wasn't quite it though... before that >

> I'd woken up just before 7am, wide awake, with vivid thoughts. The thought was of my (now deceased) brother. I remembered a time around my Mums funeral when I went to pick him up and he was slurring, all over the place, couldn't stand up. So I took him to the Doctor. >

> I said to the Dr that he was really ill and I was really worried about him, his mental health was really bad. The Dr looked at me like I was mad and more or less asked why on Earth I had brought a paralytic drunk person in for a Drs appointment. It was only then that I smelt >

> the alcohol on him, and I felt really ashamed and stupid that I hadn't realised that he was 'just' drunk. It's actually a true story, but I knew I must have been getting mixed up as it couldn't have happened while I was on my way to my Mum's funeral. So I tried to remember >

> the funeral. I tried to remember my brother being there. What shocked me is that I couldn't remember. I couldn't remember whether she was cremated or not. Whether the talk was at the crematorium or in a hall. It shocked me that I couldn't remember my Mum's funeral. >

> all I could remember was getting my car washed on the way to the crematorium and there being a stand off at the car wash because someone pushed in. I wasn't to be pushed around, esp that day, so I got my poor 12y old brother to stand in the way of the car wash while I backed >

> my little car in like a crazy woman. I felt really embarrassed at the memory, realising how mad/crazy I must have looked and my poor brother having had his Mum die doing car wash showdown on the day of her funeral. Grief does crazy things to already crazy people >

> Then I remember feeling ashamed because I was almost late for the crematorium bit of Mum's funeral because of carwashgate. But hey, I got there in the nick of time and at least the car was clean & shiny. At this point in the memory, I was trying to remember where my brother >

> was. Where was he? I couldn't see him at the funeral, at the crematorium. I couldn't remember the crematorium talk either. It was really scary, because I couldn't understand why I had no memory of the actual talk bit. I realised I must have been pretty traumatised to have >

> blocked out the memory. It didn't make sense that there was only a crematorium bit. My religion always had a memorial/funeral talk that was in the hall. Where was that memory? Then I realised that the car wash bit was in between the funeral talk in one town and that I had to >

> drive to the crematorium in another town afterwards. It was weird,I couldn't remember the talk or my brother being there either. Where was he? As I type this I've just remembered my Mum's coffin in the crematorium and a bunch of flowers on it. There were no flowers on the >

> coffin because my Grandma hadn't wanted any. The religion 8 was in had some weird stuff about death that I now realise really hampered the grieving process and kind of detached you from it. You believed you would see them again. Why be extensively sad about it? Hence the >

> no flowers, my Grandma feeling it was a waste of money, but something deeper than that - why bother? The person wasn't there to see them. They were dead and couldn't see, or hear, or feel. Flowers were worldly. I kind of agreed. What was the point? Plus, I didn't really >

> understand the whole death/funeral thing. I was 21, hadn't been to many - just my Grandad's, which was even stranger - no funeral at all. He said he wanted to just be cremated, no family, no funeral, nothing. We had a kind of family get together instead, brought food and it >

> was quite nice. More like any other family get together. He onl6 sa5 on his chair coughing and watching the TV, so it was like nothing had changed. My aunt seemed the only person who was sad and said that she would have preferred a funeral, a cousin said it was a shame we >

> were together for such a sad reason. I felt a bit of a twinge when she said that, a mix of feeling guilty for not feeling as sad too and also wondering why she would bring a downer on the party, because people weren't being sad. I look back now and think wtf, that was really, >

> really weird. So no wonder I didn't seem to react like 'normal' ppl would at my Mum's funeral. There was no coffin in the hall where the talk was held. A few minutes on my Mum, where the 'brother' forgot to mention my little brother when naming her children - as though she had>

> 3 instead of four. My brother did a huh? What about me sound, and I kind of laughed at his face, it was funny, the guy speaking was old and forgetful. Now I look back, what a strange reaction. How terrible to get that wrong, such a lack of thought or consideration >

> disrespectful. As usual, the customary few minutes on the person, the rest of the talk on religious propaganda. Why not to feel sad. Where was my brother? Then I remembered. I'd gone to pick him up, and he was paralytic, drunk. Could barely walk. Tried to drink his sorrows >

> away. In a way, at least he'd felt something in the first place that needed to be numbed. I've remembered bits of the funeral talk as I've been typin* this stream of consciousness, but 5his morning, at 7am, vivid memories, I couldn't, it was blocked out. Then I thought of how >

> the day after sh'd died I'd had to move into her old flat to look after my brother. My bedroom was her old bedroom, where she'd died. My brother had to go back to school to keep a routine almost straight away. I look back and think how, awful, how traumatising, no way of >

>acknowledging that trauma happened, just carrying on as normal. Filling in paperwork for social services to be my brothers legal guardian. No financial help like foster parents, just close monitoring of the disturbed child and the incompetent, inexperienced 21 year old daughter>

>who was thrown into taking care of a tearaway kid who was already under social services, traumatised with behavioural issues, now with a dead Mum & an older sister with no clue or experience to look after a teenager. Just as I was feeling sad about that, I fell asleep, and had >

> the work dream. Or was it a nightmare? Does sobbing uncontrollably count? Dream analysis where you use a mystical formula to say x=y seems bollox to me, but I do think that dreams mean something to the individual. Funny how I've equated work with grieving, having genuine >

> feelings of grief and sadness at the loss of something (my health, opportunities, growth, acknowledgement...etc) not being seen as valid, in a world where that doesn't and shouldn't exist for me. Me not recognising how bad this was fir a long time. Sobbing and sobbing >

> and being seen a mad, unstable, when the tears could be linked to genuine reasons. My little flat - the lack of privilege, denigration of that? People trampling over that and seeing me as nothing. Accessing intimate areas, like my bedroom, leaving me feel ashamed. As #LXPs we >

> use our bodies to access the experiential lens. It's a powerful tool when used and can do a lot of good, but it is a mixture of fragile in its strength, it can be destructive when abused, when accessed and denigrated rather than given the respect it deserves >

> In my case, eating me up, sobbing... waking up crying. In a dream. A dream when I should be sleeping, resting, escaping. But there’s no escape. It’s a puzzle to solve and my mind can’t help but keep trying to solve it, because that’s how I’m wired. There must be a way to >

> solve the puzzle, to make it right. To make people see... be treated fairly, cared about, respected. I’m reminded of singer #FionaApple who said that she thought if she bared her soul in her songs, wrote her truth in all of its detail, people would understand. But they didn’t >

> and she realised that people didn’t understand if they had the answers presented under their noses. People see and hear and interpret as is consistent with their existing beliefs. So communicating pain won’t and can’t be heard, unless people open themselves up to it & want to >

> Well, it’s been a blast having a flow of consciousness on Twitter, an example of how I process stuff, make links to existing conscious knowledge, understand things, discover things... part of the process of putting these insights back into work. Lots of things to chew on! ■***