

No Longer Wanting to Die

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The New York Times:

In January 2012, two weeks after my discharge from a psychiatric hospital in Connecticut, I made a plan to die. My week in an acute care unit that had me on a suicide watch had not diminished my pain.

Back in New York, I stormed out of my therapist's office and declared I wouldn't return to the treatment I'd dutifully followed for three decades. Nothing was working, so what was the point?

I fit the demographic profile of the American suicide — white, male and entering middle age with a history of depression. Suicide runs in families, research tells us, and it ran in mine. My father killed himself at age 49 in April 1990. A generation before, an aunt of his took her life; before her, there were others.

Shame runs in families, too, and no one in mine talked much about mental illness.

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A few weeks after I arrived, I was enrolled in a dialectical behavior therapy skills group.

D.B.T. is a therapy that was developed in the 1980s by the psychologist Marsha M. Linehan as she worked with suicidal patients suffering from borderline personality disorder. In spite of my 30 years as an avid, often desperate medical consumer, I'd never heard of it.

Read the whole story: [*The New York Times*](#)