

Depressive Symptoms of the Main Character in Julie Anne Peters' By the Time You Read This, I Will Be Dead

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine the psychological problems, namely depression, of the main character in the "By the Time You Read This, I Will Be Dead" novel by Julie Anne Peters. This research uses the theory of Beck & Alford (2009) to analyze symptoms of depression through the attitudes and statements of the main character. The method used is descriptive qualitative research. The results of the research showed a total of 21 data points that showed symptoms of depression in Daelyn Rice. These data are divided into various forms of symptoms, namely 5 data points each from emotional motivations, cognitive manifestations, and motivational manifestations, then 3 data points from vegetative & physical manifestations, 2 data points from delusions, and finally, there is 1 data point on hallucinations. The researcher concluded that of the six forms of symptoms, emotional motivations, cognitive manifestations, and motivational manifestations have the most data compared to other forms of symptoms. This research is significant because it contributes to a deeper understanding of depression and highlights the importance of recognizing early psychological symptoms through literature.

Key words: Psychoanalytic; Depressive Symptoms; Mental Disorder.

INTRODUCTION

In everyday life, humans are inseparable from various problems, hopes, and complex feelings. Humans and literature are interrelated because basically the existence of literature begins with their problems and their environment (Rahayu, 2022). With such circumstances, all of these are often expressed in literary works, so that they become a reflection of real human life. According to Wulan (2016), literary works are the result of human expression, which includes thoughts, feelings, and experiences conveyed through language. As a reflection of life, they not only function as entertainment but also as a medium for understanding various complex problems related to the human condition. Through language, literary works are able to raise themes that are relevant to various aspects of life, such as social, cultural, and psychological. They act as a container to describe this reality through strong characters, interesting storylines, and deep themes. Literary works not only describe the fictional world, but often become a window to understanding the real challenges and conflicts experienced by humans (Martinez & Rubenstein, 2016).

In literary criticism, there is an approach that discusses human psychology, namely the psychological approach. According to Meiliana (2020), the psychological approach reflects the influence of modern psychology on literature and literary criticism. In theory, it is based on the psychoanalytic theory developed by Sigmund Freud, which utilizes psychoanalytic concepts to understand literary works more deeply. The main purpose of this approach is not to cure mental disorders, but to interpret the hidden meanings behind literary texts (Hossain, 2017; Niaz et al., 2019). Psychoanalysis is used to reveal symbols, hidden motives, and inner conflicts experienced by the characters in the story. According to Freud in Bandhu et al. (2024), human behavior is driven by basic motivations, namely the desire to avoid pain and seek pleasure. Therefore, this approach helps identify how subconscious conflicts, hidden emotions, or past traumas of fictional characters can influence their actions, thoughts, and decisions.

In psychological conditions such as depression, psychoanalysis helps explain how complex psychological conflicts develop. Depression often reflects feelings of worthlessness, excessive guilt, or a desire to withdraw from the social environment (Beck & Alford, 2009). All of these can be traced back to the character's deepest internal conflicts. By using a psychological approach, we can understand how characters in literary works show these symptoms. These symptoms can be seen through the character's actions, dialogues, or inner monologues. This analysis provides a deeper understanding of how psychological conditions such as depression are constructed and expressed in literary texts. Therefore, in applying this analysis, the researcher uses one form of literary work, namely the novel entitled "By the Time You Read This, I Will Be Dead" by Julie Anne Peters.

In writing the novel "By the Time You Read This, I Will Be Dead", Julie Anne Peters was inspired after attending a conference discussing bullying and receiving many letters from teenagers who felt isolated and were victims of bullying. This experience made her realize how serious and widespread the impact of bullying is on adolescent mental health, including the risk of suicide. From there, Peters was motivated to write a novel that raised the issue with the aim of raising awareness and empathy for victims of bullying and the importance of social support. In this novel, she depicts the painful reality of bullying, such as body shaming and physical violence, which have a major impact on mental health, as experienced by the main character, Daelyn Rice.

In its narrative, this novel tells the story of Daelyn Rice, a teenage girl who has been severely bullied since childhood, both physically and emotionally, which makes her feel desperate and want to end her life. After several failed attempts to commit suicide, Daelyn finds a website specifically for people who want to end their lives and begins to make her final life plan, giving herself a deadline of 23 days. However, during that time, she meets Santana, a strange but caring young man, who slowly begins to open her heart and makes her reconsider her decision.

Regarding research, several researchers have studied this novel from various perspectives. One of them is Samosir (2019), who analyzed Daelyn's inferiority. This study discusses how feelings of inferiority are depicted and their impact on Daelyn's life. This study uses a sociological literary approach from Wellek and Warren, as well as Alfred Adler's inferiority theory. In addition, Risanto and Hapsari (2020) also analyzed this novel. Their research focuses on the stages of Daelyn's decision to commit suicide as a form of escape, based on Roy Baumeister's escape theory.

When compared to the current research, previous research has discussed the psychological aspects of the character Daelyn Rice, such as inferiority (Samosir, 2019) and suicidal ideation as a form of escape (Risanto & Hapsari, 2020). However, neither study did not specifically analyzed depressive symptoms as a clinical phenomenon based on established psychological theory. Therefore, this study presents a new contribution by analyzing Daelyn Rice's depressive symptoms based on Beck & Alford's theory (2009). Different from previous studies, this study identifies and categorizes emotional, cognitive, and behavioral symptoms specifically about the character's condition in relation to a psychological approach.

Based on the previous explanation, in conducting this analysis, the researcher used a psychological approach with a focus on depressive symptoms as stated by Beck & Alford (2009). The theory is used to analyze the novel "By the Time You Read This, I Will Be Dead" by Julie Anne Peters. The analysis focuses on the main character to reveal the symptoms of depression she suffers from. By applying a psychological approach, the researcher hopes that the results of this research can help describe the mental condition, namely depression, which occurs in the main character.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Related Study

Research about depression has been carried out previously by several researchers. The research conducted by Margiana et al. (2020) aims to identify the symptoms of depression experienced by Virginia Woolf, which are depicted through the characters Septimus Warren Smith and Clarissa Dalloway in the novel *Mrs. Dalloway*. Virginia Woolf's personal details, character narratives, and remarks from the two primary characters served as the source of the research data. Beck's cognitive theory of depression is used in this research, which falls under the qualitative method. The results show that the symptoms of depression in Septimus include negative expectations, self-blame, paralysis of will, the desire to avoid, escape, and withdraw, and suicidal ideation. In addition, physical symptoms such as loss of appetite, sleep disturbances, loss of libido, and hallucinations were found. Meanwhile, the symptoms in Clarissa include depressed mood, negative feelings towards herself, low self-evaluation, delusions of worthlessness, and suicidal ideation.

Another research on depression was conducted by Annisya (2020), who analyzed the symptoms, causative factors, and forms of depression in the character Hannah Baker in the novel *Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher (2007). Through a qualitative approach, the researcher used the theory of depression developed by Aaron Beck to analyze Hannah's psychological background. In this novel, it is told that Hannah chose to end her life after experiencing various traumatic experiences at school. Before committing suicide, she left thirteen voice recordings addressed to individuals who played a role in her suffering. Based on the results of the analysis, this research concluded that Hannah's depression was closely related to social pressure and lack of emotional support, which is in line with Beck's concept of depression. These findings provide insight into the serious impact of psychological problems on adolescents in their social context.

Besides the two previous research studies above, a research by Aziz (2023) also explores the theme of depression, with a special focus on its symptoms. The research is titled *Depression Symptoms of Nic Sheff in Beautiful Boy* by Felix Van Groeningen. It aims to identify the symptoms of depression experienced by Nic Sheff in the film *Beautiful Boy*. This study specifically examines the character's depressive symptoms based on the six aspects of depression proposed by Beck and Alford. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the researcher presents data in narrative form and applies a literary psychology approach. Data collection techniques include reading and note-taking, with the primary data taken from dialogues and scenes in the film. In contrast, secondary data is obtained from reference books and related documents. The findings reveal that Nic experiences various symptoms of depression, including emotional, cognitive, motivational, and physical aspects, as well as delusions and hallucinations.

Further research that analyzes depression was conducted by Islam et al. (2023). This research explores the symptoms, factors, and coping mechanisms of depression in the character Laurel in the novel *Love Letters to the Dead*. This research collected data by rereading the novel, taking notes, and categorizing relevant information. The findings indicated that the two primary causes of Laurel's depression were her psychological susceptibility and a stressful environment, and painful life experiences, including the loss of her sister, May. Laurel showed symptoms of depression, including emotional manifestations such as depressed mood, cognitive manifestations such as self-blame, motivational manifestations such as the desire to withdraw, and physical manifestations such as sleep disturbances. In addition, Laurel used defense mechanisms such as repression to avoid painful memories, displacement to divert emotional energy, reaction formation to display a positive attitude, and sublimation to establish new relationships.

Depression

Depression is a complex mental health condition that affects not only mood but also the way a person thinks, feels, and acts. People with depression tend to view

themselves, their situation, and their future negatively, often feeling hopeless, powerless, and inadequate, which can sometimes lead to thoughts of death or even suicide attempts (Mursalim & Mustikawati, 2022). According to Beck & Alford (2009), depression is a psychological condition characterized by mood swings such as sadness and apathy, negative self-concept with a tendency to blame oneself, a desire to escape or harm oneself, vegetative changes such as anorexia and insomnia, and disturbances in activity levels in the form of retardation or agitation. In general, depression is characterized by feelings of deep sadness, loss of interest or pleasure in daily activities, and a variety of other symptoms that affect a person's ability to live a normal life. Moreover, depression is even a leading cause of disability, and if left untreated, can increase the risk of suicide (Remes et al., 2021).

Symptoms of Depression

Depression manifests in various ways and, according to Beck and Alford (2009), is best understood in terms of severity, mild, moderate, or severe, rather than diagnostic categories like bipolar disorder or schizophrenia. Symptoms may differ across individuals, but they generally fall into emotional, cognitive, motivational, physical, and perceptual domains.

Emotionally, depression is marked by persistent sadness, emptiness, hopelessness, and a loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities. Patients often develop negative feelings toward themselves, lose emotional closeness with others, cry more frequently, and report a diminished sense of humor. Cognitively, depression distorts thought processes, leading to low self-esteem, harsh self-blame, indecisiveness, and negative expectations about the future. Distortions in body image are also common, with patients perceiving themselves as unattractive or damaged despite lacking evidence.

Motivation is similarly affected, as patients often lose the will to act, withdraw from responsibilities, or become overly dependent on others. In severe cases, this lack of drive may escalate into suicidal wishes, ranging from passive thoughts about death to active plans to end life. Depression also disrupts biological functions, causing appetite loss, sleep problems such as insomnia or hypersomnia, chronic fatigue, and reduced libido. These vegetative and physical symptoms directly impact daily functioning and quality of life.

In its most severe forms, depression can involve delusions and hallucinations. Delusions often extend from cognitive distortions, leading sufferers to feel utterly worthless, guilty of imagined crimes, or convinced that life is meaningless. Somatic delusions, such as believing the body is diseased, and delusions of poverty, are also common. Hallucinations further complicate the condition, with patients hearing accusatory voices, seeing dead people, or feeling watched, all of which intensify their emotional distress and reinforce feelings of guilt and worthlessness.

METHOD

Design and Samples

The qualitative descriptive method was applied in this research. This method was chosen because it helps the researcher describe and understand the character's feelings and thoughts in detail. Since the research focuses on the depression experienced by the main character, this method is suitable for analyzing the story and explaining the symptoms clearly based on the character's words and actions in the novel. This aligns with the perspective of Creswell and Creswell (2018), who state that qualitative research is useful in exploring human experiences and producing descriptive data in the form of words and expressions. Therefore, the data source for this research is the novel "By the Time You Read This, I Will Be Dead", with particular attention given to the character's behaviors and expressions.

Instrument and Procedure

This research adopted Beck and Alford's (2009) theory to examine the depressive symptoms experienced by the main character. The data collection process was conducted through observation by reading the novel multiple times in order to understand the character's emotional and psychological journey fully. To support the observation, the highlighting technique described by Leavy (2017) was utilized, in which sentences or quotes relevant to the theory of depression were marked as potential data. These marked segments were then compiled as raw data for further analysis.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this research used the content analysis approach as outlined by Miles et al. (2018), which is suitable for processing written texts like novels. The analysis process consisted of three main stages: identifying relevant textual data, grouping similar data to validate patterns, and categorizing symptoms according to Beck and Alford's framework. A total of 21 textual data, including direct quotes, narrative passages, and character dialogues, were analyzed based on their relevance to the symptoms of depression experienced by the main character. Therefore, the research findings were presented in narrative form, focusing on descriptive explanations rather than using diagrams or visual representations. As Taylor et al. (2016) emphasize, qualitative approaches aim to convey findings through words or verbal descriptions to provide a deep understanding of the subject being studied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Emotional Manifestations

People with depression often go through emotional changes. These changes may include constant sadness, feeling bad about themselves, not enjoying life, feeling distant from others, crying more than usual, and losing their sense of humor (Beck & Alford in Aziz, 2023).

Dejected Mood

Data 1

"Hurting Kim or Chip is not my intent. I have no intent. I have no reason to live, that is all. When I am gone, I do not want to be remembered" (Peters, 2010, p. 59)

This quote reflects the dejected mood because Daelyn shows feelings of hopelessness, emptiness, and helplessness, which are the essence of depression. The statement that she has no reason to live and does not want to be remembered indicates a loss of meaning in life and a belief that her existence is not important to anyone.

Negative Feelings toward Self

Data 2

*"I do love them.
I hate the world they brought me into. I will be remembered as a fat, frightened, weak, stupid kid. Too scared to stand up for myself." (Peters, 2010, p. 136)*

This quote shows self-hatred, where depressed patients often describe themselves in extremely negative terms. Daelyn identifies herself with words such as "fat," "frightened," and "stupid," indicating a drastic decline in self-image. This is not just a feeling of disappointment but has become a form of self-deprecation.

Reduction in Gratification

Data 3

"Is that place still there?' Dad asks. He separates the newspaper, handing me the comics. I do not read the funny pages anymore. Can I go to my room?" (Peters, 2010, p. 7)

This quote illustrates a decline in satisfaction, where Daelyn no longer enjoys things that used to be pleasurable, such as reading comics. This is a common symptom of depression, namely the inability to experience pleasure (anhedonia). Her request to go to her room shows a desire to withdraw from interactions and easy activities, indicating that activities that used to be pleasurable no longer provide meaning or emotional relief.

Loss of Emotional Attachments

Data 4

"She checks the rearview mirror to merge into the street. Her face is filled with worry lines. 'Your father has a late meeting with a client, so it will just be us for dinner.' She smiles expectantly. I cannot even look at her." (Peters, 2010, p. 1)

This quote shows the loss of emotional attachment, where Daelyn is unable to respond to her mother's smile or attention. This is a condition in which once meaningful relationships become empty or unimportant. Her inability to see her mother emotionally indicates a significant emotional distance, and this can be very disruptive to family dynamics and increase feelings of loneliness in patients.

Data 5

"Green Boy plops down next to me on the bench. Too close. My arms press to my sides. He inches closer. I shoot him a fiery glare. 'Yikes!' He slides back an inch. 'If you want me to go, just say so.' I do not because I cannot. I would move if there were any other place to sit near the loading zone." (Peters, 2010, p. 13)

Daelyn's cold and rigid reaction to Green Boy shows emotional distance and reluctance to engage in social interaction. This attitude reflects a form of self-isolation, where depressed patients distance themselves because they feel that social relationships no longer provide comfort or security. Loss of attachment is often the main reason patients seek professional help, because they feel unable to form meaningful relationships.

Cognitive Manifestations

Depressed individuals may think negatively about themselves. They might have low self-worth, feel hopeless, blame themselves for many things, struggle to make decisions, and even believe they look bad physically (Beck & Alford in Aziz, 2023).

Low Self-Evaluation

Data 6

"What did she see in me? What does she see that I do not? She smiles again. No, Emily. Do not choose me. I am not worth your time."

This is my fault. Mine. Making her think I would be here for her."
(Peters, 2010, p. 134)

This quote clearly shows low self-evaluation, where Daelyn sees herself as someone who is not worthy of love or appreciation. She doubts other people's positive perceptions of her and considers herself unworthy of attention. Individuals with depression often have very negative self-evaluations, and this includes doubts about their attractiveness, abilities, and self-worth. Daelyn even blames herself for other people's expectations, reflecting the perception that she always disappoints others.

Negative Expectations

Data 7

"I am sorry you do not get it, Mom. Sometimes I do not get why I do the things I do. I just know I wake up every morning and wish I were dead." (Peters, 2010, p. 35)

This quote reflects a very pessimistic view of the future, where each day begins with a desire to die. Individuals with depression often lose hope and believe that nothing positive will change in their lives. These thoughts are a common foundation for suicidal ideation, as the patient no longer sees the future as something to strive for or enjoy.

Data 8

*"What awaits you?
Eternal peace. Serenity.
The light on the other side.
What awaits me is unknown. The only certainty is that life is an eternal hell."* (Peters, 2010, p. 136)

Here, Daelyn rejects the possibility of any solace or improvement in her life and instead views the future as an eternal hell. This is an extreme form of negative hope, where not only is the present dark, but the future is seen as even worse. This view closes off the possibility of improvement because the patient draws negative conclusions in uncertain situations and cuts off the connection to hope or recovery.

Self-Blame and Self-Criticism

Data 9

"The moving did not help. Changing schools all the time. Kim and Chip rationalized it with Chip's new job assignments, promotions. They were embarrassed by me, their sick, fat, psychotic creation. I should have figured out sooner how we moved every time I... what did Kim call it? Regressed?" (Peters, 2010, p. 63)

This quote shows very harsh and irrational self-criticism. Daelyn blames herself for the family's decision to move, even though it was due to her father's job. She believes that she is the cause of her parents' shame and suffering. This is a form of excessive self-blame, where patients take responsibility for things that are not directly their fault, which reinforces the cycle of guilt and low self-esteem.

Distortion of Body Image

Data 10

"I am not that skinny. I am not fat anymore, but I am not skinny. I will never be skinny. I went to fat camp. We are not going to talk about what happened there. I was forced to go. I still feel fat. I will always be fat and ugly." (Peters, 2010, p. 79)

This quote reflects body image distortion, where Daelyn still feels fat and ugly even though, objectively, this is not the case. Depressed patients often have unrealistic perceptions of their physical appearance, and these feelings persist even though they do not correspond to reality. This distortion worsens the overall self-evaluation and becomes a major trigger for shame, low self-esteem, and reluctance to socialize.

Motivational Manifestations

Depression also affects a person's motivation. They may lose interest in daily activities, want to withdraw from routines, have thoughts of suicide, and become overly dependent on others (Beck & Alford in Aziz, 2023).

Paralysis of the Will

Data 11

"Mom says at Sunday brunch, "Let us take a drive." Is it still brunch when your eggs and bacon are blenderized? When your waffles and strawberries are pureed and sipped through a straw? I do not want to "take a drive." I want to go back to bed." (Peters, 2010, p. 27)

This quote shows the paralysis of Daelyn's will. She does not respond to her mother's invitation to do light activities such as going for a walk, something that is usually fun or refreshing. Instead of feeling interested, she wants to go back to sleep. This is a form of loss of internal drive to act, even when the activity is simple and does not require much effort. Daelyn cannot motivate herself to engage, indicating that her will and mental energy have been paralyzed.

Avoidance, Escapist, and Withdrawal Wishes

Data 12

"The wind lifts my hair and I think, Take me away. I cannot be feeling this, whatever it is. Interest? I stand to leave. "Wait." He

scrambles to his feet. "I am not making fun of your reading tastes. You should see the crap I read." ... Where is Dad? He has stranded me. I gaze down the street as if wishing will make Dad magically appear." (Peters, 2010, p. 14)

This quote shows a strong desire to escape, both physically and emotionally. Daelyn feels uncomfortable with the social interaction that is taking place and wishes something like the wind would carry her away. This also reflects a regressive pattern, which is the urge to avoid emotional and social responsibilities. Daelyn would rather escape than face discomfort or the possibility of emotional connection, even when there is no real threat.

Data 13

"Why isn't he in school, anyway? Even yesterday, when I got out early, he was there. He is a stalker. It is a relief he is not here. I need to be alone, physically and emotionally." (Peters, 2010, p.19)

This quote makes clear Daelyn's desire to withdraw from social interaction. She is relieved that the person who usually makes her uncomfortable is not present, and explicitly states the need to be alone, both physically and emotionally. In moderate to severe levels, patients tend to avoid all forms of social contact, even with people who mean no harm, as a form of self-protection from the emotional pain they feel constantly.

Suicidal Wishes

Data 14

"She pauses on the threshold. "You really do look tired, sweetheart. You should get to bed earlier. Get more sleep." I intend to, Mom. Eternal rest." (Peters, 2010, p. 25)

This quote contains suicidal ideation in a passive form, where Daelyn equates death with "eternal rest." This term is often used by individuals with depression who do not explicitly express suicidal intent, but indicate that life feels too overwhelming to continue. This form of thinking occurs in the mild to moderate stages and is often the precursor to the development of more active suicidal thoughts.

Data 15

"I wonder how he would react to Through-the-Light. If he believes a website has the power to influence me to kill myself. Would he find the comfort I do in knowing I am not alone? In feeling acceptance for my decision? No one is putting thoughts in my head, Chip, that were not already there." (Peters, 2010, p. 60)

In this excerpt, Daelyn is demonstrating active suicidal ideation. She not only feels the desire to die, but has sought information and validation from outside sources (websites) that justify her decision. The assertion that “no one put it in her head” indicates that she has been seriously and consciously considering the idea for a long time. This is a form of planning and acceptance of the idea of death, which reflects a severe level of depression, where patients feel that death is the only way out of their suffering.

Vegetative and Physical Manifestations

Depression often leads to physical problems. These problems include trouble sleeping, poor appetite, lack of interest in sex, and constant tiredness (Beck & Alford in Aziz, 2023).

Sleep Disturbance

Data 16

“‘Are you okay?’ I do not answer because I cannot talk. Anyway, rhetorical question. She says, “You look tired. Did you have a rough night?” I do not sleep well. I have nightmares.” (Peters, 2010, p. 24)

This quote describes the sleep disorder experienced by the character Daelyn, shown through the statement that she did not sleep well and had nightmares. When someone often has nightmares and does not sleep well, it is a form of insomnia, one of the most common symptoms of depression. This kind of sleep disorder not only disrupts the quality of physical rest but also worsens a person's emotional and mental condition. The fatigue that is seen physically and the inability to answer also reflect the deep psychological impact of continuous sleep deprivation due to depression.

Data 17

“I do not sleep. All night long, I am wide awake, thinking, Secrets, secrets, secrets. There are secrets in my past no one needs to know. Secrets in my present that might kill Kim and Chip. I do not want to take my secrets with me when I go.” (Peters, 2010, p. 51)

This quote shows the symptoms of insomnia, which is the inability to sleep even though the body needs rest. Daelyn experiences sleepless nights because her mind is constantly filled with worries and secrets that burden her. Sleep disorders like this often occur in people with depression and contribute greatly to mental and emotional exhaustion, worsening mood, and the inability to carry out daily activities.

Data 18

“I cannot sleep. I know what is bugging me. I need to choose a method. The last method I chose was absolutely wrong.”

*To sit at my desk, I have to strap on the neck brace. It is a pain.
I log on to Through-the-Light and select WTG.*” (Peters, 2010, p. 60)

This quote again shows insomnia, this time caused by intense mental stress due to suicide planning. Not only is Daelyn unable to sleep, but a highly emotional decision completely consumes her mind. This form of insomnia shows how strong the relationship between sleep disturbance and suicidal thoughts is in major depression, and suggests that physiological disturbances often reflect profound psychological burdens.

Delusions

Some people with depression may have delusions, such as strong false beliefs about themselves or others. These can include feeling worthless, sinful, foolish, sick (somatic delusions), or believing they are financially ruined (Beck & Alford in Aziz, 2023).

Worthlessness

Data 19

"Why did you give birth to such a loser? Why didn't you admit I was hopeless and fat and stop trying to make me fit in? This world was not meant for me. I was born too soon, or too late. Too defective." (Peters, 2010, p. 47)

In this quote, Daelyn is displaying a form of delusion of worthlessness. She not only feels worthless, but irrationally believes that her very existence is a mistake. This type of belief reflects a very severe level of depression, where cognitive distortions develop into absolute and false beliefs about one's own worth. Patients may begin to feel that the world would be better off without them and that they do not deserve to live.

Nihilistic Delusions

Data 20

*"Life is so unfair.
The last question was the one I had been asking all my life. Why are you here?
That is the question.
Why am I here? What is my purpose?"* (Peters, 2010, p. 131)

Daelyn exhibits nihilistic delusions, which are beliefs that life has no meaning or purpose. This type of delusion occurs when the patient loses all hope for the future and feels that his or her existence is meaningless. Daelyn's existential questions are not merely self-reflection, but indicate a feeling of extreme existential emptiness, which is common in severe psychotic depression.

In some cases, people with depression may experience hallucinations. This means they might hear, see, or feel things that are not actually there (Beck & Alford in Aziz, 2023).

*“My limit is one nasty comment in the hall. “Double wide, step
aside.” While I slit my wrist, the voice plays over and
Over and
Over and
over and over and
overandoverand
over and over and over and over and over and,
SHUT UP.” (Peters, 2010, p. 63)*

CONCLUSION

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