

To hypomania and back again

Business



To Hypomania and Back Again Hypomania is a mental state that lies between Eumania(normal minds) and Mania(insane minds), typically characterized by elevated mood, ample energy, and episodes of emotional fluctuation. The atmosphere of the novel *The Great Gatsby* by F.

Scott Fitzgerald is one of escalating moods and energies because it takes place in the roaring twenties: a time of unfathomable vitality and “spectroscopic gayety”(Fitzgerald 44). At the center of it all is Jay Gatsby, ever set on a mysterious goal. An undoubtedly page-escaping aspect of the novel is love... and it's complications. Although Gatsby began a deep, loving attachment to Daisy Buchanan when he discovered she could fill the perpetual void inside him, his longing was augmented so greatly by his cerebral fluids that he forgot about Daisy herself and became transfixed on the idea that her love could be attained, yet this infatuation increased until he was driven insane by the illusion of possession and in the end, Jay realized this conundrum and returned to the initial, genuine love he once felt. Five years prior to the book's 'current' time, a lonely soldier born by the name of Jay Gatz has been striving to change his barren life. Born on a farm to a poor family, left to follow his mountain-moving ambition, he soon joined the army.

By this time, things were already set in motion to change Gatz's-now Gatsby's-life. However, this soldier's revelation came when he met an upper-class girl named Daisy Fay. With a flood of Oxytocin the two fell in love with each other. Gatsby's infatuation became “a way to fill up the hollow spaces”(Ross). This love for Daisy completely shifted his ambitions, now he would focus on making the relationship prosper; that she would one day

marry him. When they were separated because of Gatsby's military obligations, all he could do was yearn to be reunited with Daisy.

Through "the power of our expectations and our longings" his love towards Daisy would mutate: out of the war would come a different man (Birkets 91). In 1919, The Great War came to an end. Gatsby, who had been deprived of Daisy's "excitement in her voice that men who had cared for her found difficult to forget," has come home an awarded veteran (Fitzgerald 9). Daisy Fay, now Daisy Buchanan, is no longer attracted to Jay whom she'd forgotten. But this doesn't matter to Gatsby, because he's going to make her remember.

Some think she has ascended to become an ideal, but Gatsby sees her as an object, a trophy, another medal to earn. Why does he do this? The answer is chemical. The single most prominent chemical secreted during infatuation is Dopamine. Dopamine stimulates the brain's reward system, it drives us to obtain rewards. This chemical, along with Serotonin and Norepinephrine, have augmented Gatsby's passion tenfold. So much so that it sends him into Hypomania.

Internet blogger Suzanne Ross agrees, stating "nothing less than total possession of this woman [Daisy] will satisfy him [Gatsby]." This obsession is an extreme case of something every individual experiences: the effects of cerebral fluids. When a person sees someone they fancy, their brain releases chemicals that affiliate the subject with pleasurable reward. Because of this enjoyable stimulation, the subject stays a prominent thought in the person's mind. One's behavior will be modified as to attract attention from the subject

and appear as a potential mate, all very primal and evolutionary! Gatsby's condition is identical, only exaggerated.

He requires less rest, he maintains ignorant optimism, as well as modified behavior. Where one would strut around their crush to impress them, Gatsby throws flamboyant and gay parties filled with light and music. In a sense, Jay is using wealth to gain Daisy's love. Throughout the book, the two constantly commit adultery until one day when Daisy's husband confronts the mysterious Jay Gatsby. Here is where Gatsby verbalizes his insanity, not only does he want Daisy to marry him, he craves for her to tell her husband she never loved him. In an unfortunate sequence of events, Gatsby is betrayed and abandoned his dream(Daisy).

Despite his efforts, Gatsby absolutely " the truism that money can't buy you love"(Donaldson 100). For all his wealth and materialistic possessions, he still could not obtain Daisy's affection. Nevertheless, there is still one final point to make about the bootlegger's infatuation. Jay Gatz's love for Daisy Fay is genuine. From the very first time the two met to the very last time they meet, his love remains.

While it may have mutated because of his ambitions and self-deprecation, his love's incorruptibility points directly to sincerity. Behavioral and mental patterns explain the process. In the beginning, he did what most males do: he had " deliberately given Daisy a sense of security"(Fitzgerald 149). One of the most defining traits of love is the mighty will to ensure your partner's safety. Jay knew he did not have the requirements to protect Daisy, but he

maintained the facade anyway because he loved her. In the previous paragraph, the descent into Hypomaniac obsession was explained.

Interestingly, throughout this entire obsession he seems to yearn to return to a different kind of love - one he felt before. As detailed in the book, he wishes he could restore the earth-shattering chemistry, "Gatsby himself embodies in a grotesque way the desire to transcend time"(Miller, 86). He is displeased with his current state, displaying an impressive amount of introspection which is astonishing. Why? Because most maniacs don't believe they're crazy or that anything is wrong with them. Introspection is the last thing one would expect from an obsessive person.

Gatsby knows that his dream has become twisted and distorted, or at least, at the end of the novel he does, which is very laudable. During the plot, the 'repeating the past' concept progresses to an epiphany: "when, at the end, not even Gatsby can hide his recognition of the speciousness of his dream any longer"(Bewley 97). This epiphany is most easily analyzed by defining the "speciousness" of Jay's dream, or in other words, the fact that the dream appeared to be right and romantic, but it was not as it seemed. As a result of this revelation-occurring after Daisy murdered Myrtle-Jay's love regresses. The author signifies this with the event of Gatsby completely taking the blame for a crime that his loved one committed. Only sincere or "true" love(which is, of course, ineffable) could compel a person to do that and as a result of this sacrifice, Gatsby is killed.

He complacently died loving Daisy the same way he did five years prior: genuinely. Although Gatsby began a deep, loving attachment to Daisy

Buchanan when he discovered she could fill the perpetual void inside him, his longing was augmented so greatly by his cerebral fluids that he forgot about Daisy herself and became transfixed on the idea that her love could be attained, yet this infatuation increased until he was driven insane by the illusion of possession and in the end, Jay realized this conundrum and returned to the initial, genuine love he once felt. In Fitzgerald's story, Romeo(Gatsby) dies for Juliet(Daisy) without her weeping a tear, "one thing is certain: while Gatsby pitifully fails to grasp the light at the end of his pier[Daisy], his confession of love is not a falsehood"(Petrucci). Works Cited

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