

EXHIBIT # 29
DATE: 6-8-12
JUDGE: LM
PLFF
DEFT

EXHIBIT #5

Suicide is among the 3 leading causes of death worldwide for people aged 15-44. The majority of these people, if not all, suffered from depression and a curable type of mental illness. Mental illness is an equal-opportunity illness, for every one of us is impacted by it in some way. One in every four people deal with it, and many are not seeking the help they desperately need because the stigma prevents them from doing so. Mental illness is not what people need to be ashamed of, but the stigma and bias is what shames us all.

My boyfriend Conrad Roy suffered from depression and social anxiety for 2 years. He decided to take his life on July 13th, fearing that nothing would ever get better.

I took this as a wakeup call. I want to speak out, to fight the public stigma and to give a clearer picture of what mental illness is all about. I want to find a way to minimize the number of people suffering from it anyway I can. Nobody deserves to have to deal with the grief and pain that comes to losing a loved one to suicide as I did. Even though I could not save my boyfriend's life, I want to put myself out there to try to save as many other lives as possible. And if I can, through my experience, shed light on the way out of a difficult situation that I know so many people are going through, then that is what I want to do.

Because Conrad loved and played baseball, and being such the dedicated Red Sox fan that he was, I think that the best way to raise awareness for mental illness is to host a tournament here at the PAL in his honor.

Once the understanding of how important it is to prevent the stigma and get help is out there, people dealing with mental illness can stand up together and not be ashamed of themselves anymore. Once they begin to accept mental illness as a part of who they are, the rest of the population will realize that they are just like them, but with a little something extra, and help will be on its way.

Exhibit #1

People have always made a lot of assumptions about me. You know you look and you see this girl whos had eating disorders and friendship issues and now the death of her boyfriend to suicide and you just immediately make assumptions. And I think people really started identifying me with those assumptions, which is the typical thing for people to do and I understand that. But at the same time, I felt like I had to step in at some point and relate to people my experience. Relate to people the truth of my life and where I come from . . . and if I can, through my experience, shed light on the way out of a similar difficult situation that I know many people are going through, then that's all that matters to me that's the most important thing to me.

I know that theres millions of people who have dealt with death of a loved one to suicide and I feel like for many of them, dealing with that tragic loss leads to the dissingrigration of a person. But in my case, I feel as if Conrads death has really opened my eyes to the world and is giving me a strength I never knew I had. Its definitely the most difficult thing Ive ever had to experience but this adds on to my personal journey of becoming the person I am today. I just try to do the next right thing, its as simple as that. I have so many opportunities you know, and theres so many opportunities to do the wrong thing and just lose myself completely and go back to old habits of struggle. But in life when you are faced with an unfortunate and difficult circumstance, theres no book, no guide, no right answer on how to make it through to the other side. You just sort of wake up one day and you have two paths in front of you. One where you rise, and one where you fall. And choosing the path to rise is certainly not the easy path, but its the brave and right one.

For a while I had no idea who I was or where I was going in life or what I wanted to do, and now I feel as if Im finally discovering who I am and have some idea of where I wanna go with my life. And I want to help out as many people as I can on my journey, wheter it be brining awareness to suicide or being the person someone calls when they need someone to talk to. What Im trying to do now is to help people going thru either a loss or an eating disorder, and helping them find something that inspires them. If I can help them find something that they can get excited about, then that will become their new direction:

You know Im very self critical, very self aware and I know when I do something well and when I dont. And I always look for ways I can be better and ways that I can fix things that are wrong if I have the chance. Ive taken so much that was unsaid from my experiences, that Ive really learned a lot.