

**THE DEPRESSION EXPERIENCED BY MATT HAIG'S  
DESCRIBED IN HIS *REASONS TO STAY ALIVE***

**THESIS**

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DESCRIBED IN HIS *REASONS TO STAY ALIVE***

**THESIS**

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2024**

## STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state this thesis entitled **“The Depression Experienced by Matt Haig’s Described in His *Reasons to Stay Alive*”** is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is an objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024

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Nur Annisa Fitriah

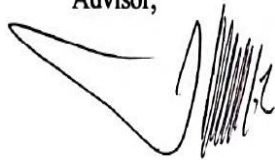
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**MOTTO**

“It will pass, everything you’ve going thru, it will pass”

(Rachel)

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is proudly dedicated to:

My dearest parents,

My Father, Ridwan and My Mother, Risma

My dearest Siblings,

Artika, Fauzan, Fahrul

I want to thank all my family and friends, whom I cannot mention individually,  
for the support and prayers so I can complete my thesis well

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The completion of this thesis is a testament to the hard work, prayers, and support of all the parties I mentioned earlier. I hope this thesis can contribute to the science of literary criticism, especially in psychology. However, this thesis still has many shortcomings. Therefore, critics and suggestions are needed for the future to make the research results perfect.

Malang, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The Researcher

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## ABSTRACT

**Fitriah, Nur Annisa** (2024) The Depression experienced by Matt Haig's described in His *Reasons to Stay Alive*. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor: Dr. Siti Masitoh, M.Hum.

Key Words: Depression, Symptoms, Psychological Approach

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Depression is one of the mental health problems that cause human suffering. This study aims to describe and explain the symptoms of depression experienced by Matt Haig, and identify the efforts he does to overcome his depression. This research is important because it provides insight to readers on the importance of awareness of mental health issues, especially depression, which should be openly discussed. This research uses Beck and Alford's theory of depression and Paul Gilbert's theory of overcoming depression, and utilizes a psychological approach based on the study of the writer as a type of an individual. The data source of this research was taken from the memoir *Reasons to Stay Alive*. The results of the analysis show that Matt experienced severe and continued symptoms of depression when he realized that he had to leave his life in Ibiza as a student, and return to London to face the transition to adulthood, which brings a life of responsibility. The symptoms affected not only his emotions but also his physical and behavioral. Matt experienced symptoms of depression such as dejected mood, negative feelings toward self, crying spells, low self-evaluation, negative expectations, distortion of body image, paralysis of the will, suicidal wishes, increased dependency, loss of appetite, sleep disturbance, fatigability, nihilistic delusions, somatic delusion, and hallucination. Then, the data found from this study shows that Matt overcome his depression by switching our minds to the kindness and compassion, changing unhelpful thoughts and feelings, and changing the behaviour.



## ABSTRAK

**Fitriah, Nur Annisa** (2024) Depresi yang dialami oleh Matt Haig dijelaskan dalam Alasan untuk *Tetap Hidup*. Skripsi. Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Dosen Pembimbing: Dr. Siti Masitoh, M.Hum.

Kata kunci: Depresi, Gejala, Pendekatan Psikologis

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Depresi adalah salah satu masalah kesehatan mental yang menyebabkan penderitaan manusia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan dan menjelaskan gejala depresi yang dialami oleh Matt Haig, serta mengidentifikasi upaya yang dilakukannya untuk mengatasi depresinya. Penelitian ini penting karena memberikan wawasan kepada pembaca tentang pentingnya kesadaran akan masalah kesehatan mental, terutama depresi, yang harus dibahas secara terbuka. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori depresi Beck dan Alford dan teori Paul Gilbert tentang mengatasi depresi, dan menggunakan pendekatan psikologis berdasarkan kajian penulis sebagai tipe individu. Sumber data penelitian ini diambil dari memoar *Reasons to Stay Alive*. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa Matt mengalami gejala depresi yang parah dan berkelanjutan ketika dia menyadari bahwa dia harus meninggalkan hidupnya di Ibiza sebagai mahasiswa, dan kembali ke London untuk menghadapi transisi ke masa dewasa, yang membawa kehidupan yang bertanggung jawab. Gejala-gejala tersebut tidak hanya memengaruhi emosinya tetapi juga fisik dan perilakunya. Matt mengalami gejala depresi seperti suasana hati yang sedih, perasaan negatif terhadap diri sendiri, mantra menangis, evaluasi diri yang rendah, harapan negatif, distorsi citra tubuh, kelumpuhan kemauan, keinginan bunuh diri, peningkatan ketergantungan, kehilangan nafsu makan, gangguan tidur, kelelahan, delusi nihilistik, delusi somatik, dan halusinasi. Kemudian, data yang ditemukan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Matt mengatasi depresinya dengan mengalihkan pikiran kita ke kebaikan dan kasih sayang, mengubah pikiran dan perasaan yang tidak membantu, dan mengubah perilaku.

<b>THESIS COVER</b> .....	i
<b>STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP</b> .....	ii
<b>APPROVAL SHEET</b> .....	iii
<b>LEGITIMATION SHEET</b> .....	iv
<b>MOTTO</b> .....	v
<b>DEDICATION</b> .....	vi
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b> .....	vii
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	ix
تجريدي.....	x
<b>ABSTRAK</b> .....	xi
<b>CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
A. Background of the study .....	1
B. The Problems of the study .....	7
C. Significance of the Study .....	8
D. Scope and Limitation .....	8
E. The Definition of Key Terms .....	9
<b>CHAPTER II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE</b> .....	10
A. Psychological Approach in Literary Criticism.....	10
B. AaronT. Beck and A. Alford’s Theory of Depression .....	13
a. Emotional Manifestations .....	14
b. Cognitive Manifestations .....	16
3. Motivational Manifestations .....	19
4. Vegetative and Physical Manifestations.....	21
5. Delusions.....	22
6. Hallucinations .....	24
C. Paul Gilbert’s Theory of Overcoming Depression.....	25
1. Switching our Minds to the Kindness and compassion .....	26
2. Changing Unhelpful Thoughts and Feelings.....	26
3. Changing the Behaviour.....	26
D. The History of Memoir .....	27
<b>CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHOD</b> .....	33
A. Research Design.....	33

B. Data source.....	33
C. Data collection .....	34
D. Data Analysis .....	34
<b>CHAPTER IV FINDING AND DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>35</b>
A. Matt Haig’s Symptoms of Depression .....	35
1. Emotional Manifestation.....	36
2. Cognitive Manifestations .....	41
3. Motivational manifestation .....	46
4. Vegetative and Physical Manifestations.....	50
5. Delusions.....	52
6. Hallucinations .....	54
B. Matt Haig’s Efforts to Overcome His Depression .....	56
1. Switching our Minds to the Kindness and Compassion.....	56
2. Changing Unhelpful Thoughts and Feelings.....	60
3. Changing the behaviour .....	61
<b>CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS .....</b>	<b>65</b>
A. Conclusions.....	65
B. Suggestion.....	66
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>CURRICULUM VITAE .....</b>	<b>70</b>

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher provides the introduction of the research. It consists of the background of the study, problems of the study, scope and limitation, significance of the study, and definition of key terms.

### **A. Background of the study**

Depression remains one of the most severe mental health problematic issues in today's global society, as its enormous impact on individual well-being has reached an unfortunate tipping point. It is estimated that around 250 million people worldwide experience depression, including 5% of adults, 5,7% of adults over the age of 60, and 2% of adolescents aged 15-24 (World Health Organization, posted on March, 2023). This alarming Statistic clearly demonstrates that depression can affect anyone, regardless of age or background, and continues to be a major issue in many countries.

According to (Lisa et al., 2024), over the last two decades, depression has become a widespread phenomenon affecting most societies globally. It disrupts normal functioning, impacts mental and physical health, and significantly diminishes quality of life. The consequences of depression extend beyond the individual, also having profound effects on families, communities, and the economy at large. People with depression often face decreased productivity, social relationship difficulties, and the need for expensive healthcare. (Limenih et al.,

2023), although effective treatments for mental health disorders such as depression are available, more than 75% of people in low and middle-income countries do not receive proper care. Significant barriers to treatment access include insufficient investment in healthcare services, a shortage of trained mental health professionals, and the persistent social stigma surrounding mental health disorders.

In cases of depression, (Prizeman et al., 2023) explain that the condition is characterized by symptoms such as feelings of sadness, loneliness, social isolation, and difficulties in maintaining healthy relationships, all of which significantly impact an individual's emotional well-being and capacity to perform daily activities. Therefore, (Klonsky et al., 2016) emphasizes the importance of fostering awareness about the symptoms of depression. If not addressed seriously, depression can lead to severe consequences, including high suicide rates globally, contributing significantly to the overall burden of disease worldwide.

Literature reflects various aspects of human life that are full of diversity and dynamics, by combining the imagination and experience. (Semi, 2012). The author is a creator who arranges ideas, conveys experiences, and processes information into works that represent various phenomena in human life (Yasa, 2012). Therefore, through literature, it can help readers understand various events and situations that occur in human life, both from a social, cultural, and emotional perspective. Representing depression in literary works is one way for authors to explore complex emotional experiences and provide space for readers to understand better the psychological conditions of characters reflected through their behavior. It can help increase understanding of mental health issues often considered taboo or rarely



discussed openly so that readers can draw conclusions and interpret them as applicable for life development. Therefore, (Wellek, R., & Warren, A., 1956) state that literature serves as a medium to discuss various problems that occur in life deeply and meaningfully.

Representation of the depression phenomenon in literary work can be found in the memoir *Reasons to Stay Alive*. It is about Matt's experience of depression with the various symptoms he faced. The story is told when Matt was 24 years old and did not realize that he was depressed. Throughout the symptoms he felt, such as sleeplessness and food deprivation, he was unable to endure the pain, and one way to stop the pain was to end his life. He realized that living from such a tragedy would bring him down even more, so he tried to eliminate the thoughts that made his depression symptoms worse. From this time forth, for three years, he tried to fight his depression by becoming a part of it. He tries to distract the mind in many ways, which is caught up in the pain and desperate thoughts, to keep it alive.

The researcher chooses to analyze depression in the memoir *Reasons to Stay Alive* by Matt Haig because this memoir presents various symptoms of depression. In the memoir, the symptoms of depression experienced by Matt are not only limited to affecting his emotions but also include physical disorders so that he feels isolated in living his life. By using this memoir as a research object, the researcher intends to investigate the various symptoms of depression experienced by Matt in depth, including how these symptoms affect his life as a whole. In addition to describing the suffering he experienced, this memoir also tells Matt's struggle to survive and find hope in his downfall. So, the researcher was interested in the

optimistic perspective on depression contained in this memoir, which is different from many other works that often describe it as a hopeless condition.

Another reason for choosing the object of the memoir *Reasons to Stay Alive* by Matt Haig is to provide readers insight into the importance of awareness about mental health issues, especially depression, that should no longer be a taboo. By discussing the topic of depression openly, it is hoped that readers can better understand the various symptoms that may be experienced in similar situations. Recognizing the symptoms of depression allows a person to deal with the condition more quickly and thus prevent more severe problems from occurring, as it not only affects the emotional state but also has an impact on the physical condition and the quality of life, ultimately making it worse for the person experiencing it.

The researcher has identified several relevant previous studies that use Beck and Alford's theory in analyzing the symptoms of depression experienced by the main character. First, *The Depression Symptoms of the Character Nic Sheff in the Film Beautiful Boy by Felix Van Groeningen* by Aliya Aziz (2023), which analyses the symptoms of depression experienced by the main character named Nic using Beck and Alford's Theory, with the film *Beautiful Boy* as the source of research. The results of the study conducted on *Beautiful Boy* showed that Nic, as the main character, experienced the six symptoms of depression, namely emotional manifestations, cognitive manifestations, motivational manifestations, physical manifestations, delusions, and hallucinations. Next, *Gejala Depresi Tokoh Utama dalam Novel Resepsi Karya Fakhrisna Amalia* by Maemunah (2021). The study used the novel as the object of research, and the results of the research were four

symptoms of depression experienced by the main character, namely emotional, cognitive, motivational, and physical.

Next previous studies, *Main Characters Depression Describes in Room by Emma Donoghue* by Mazida (2022) which analyses the symptoms of depression experienced by the main character in the novel *Room*. The research found that the main character experienced four symptoms of depression, and the study found that the symptoms of depression experienced by the main character were caused by kidnapping and confinement, sexual abuse, pressure, and had an impact on helplessness, anger, and anti-socialness experienced by the main character. The other study, *Depression Disorder as Experienced by Nicholas in the Son Movie* by Tanti (2024), which analyzed the symptoms of depression experienced by Nicholas in the *Son* Movie. The result of the study shows Nicholas experienced four symptoms of depression by Beck and Alford theory. The symptoms of depression experienced by Nicholas are based on the cause of his parents divorce, so it can impact Nicholas life such as, concentration problems, sleep impact problems, and thinking about death.

The following previous research is *The Depression Symptoms of Virginia Woolf as The Author Portrayed in Mrs Dalloway Novel* by Margiana et al (2020). uses Beck and Alford's depression theory to see the symptoms experienced by Woolf as reflected through the characters of Septimus and Clarissa. The results of the study showed symptoms of depression experienced by Woolf in the character of Septimus, such as negative expectations, self-blame and self-criticism, paralysis of the will, avoidance, escapist, and withdrawal wishes, suicidal wishes, loss of

appetite, sleep disturbance, loss of libido, and hallucinations. Woolf's depressive symptoms are depicted in Clarissa's character, such as a dejected mood, negative feelings towards self, and low self-evaluation.

The previous research is *The Depression of Nora Seed as Reflected in Matt Haig's The Midnight Library* by Kusumaningrum (2021). This study found that Nora Seed experienced depressive symptoms of dejected mood, negative feelings towards self, loss of emotional attachments, low self-evaluation, negative expectations, self-blame and self-criticism, paralysis of the will, suicidal wishes, sleep disturbance and also found Efforts made in overcoming the depression experienced such as considering herself a volcano where every failure there is success and happiness to come. Nora knows the potential of her abilities and realizes that ending life is the wrong thing to do. Furthermore, *Tina Evans Depression in Dean Knootz's The Eyes of Darkness* by Rahmawati & Wahyono (2022), analyses the symptoms of depression experienced by Tina Evans, namely crying spells and sleep disturbance. The cause of Tina Evans' depression was the loss of a loved one and divorce from her husband. Then, the solution that Tina Evans did in overcoming her depression was to divert her mind by thinking positively, working hard, and opening herself up by talking to other people.

The following are relevant previous studies using the Paul Gilbert Concept in attempts to overcome the problem of depression. The First, *Portrayal of Depression in Emma Donoghue's Room* by Ramadhanti (2022), enables to overcome her depression by escaping from an isolated room and having a professional counsellor. Furthermore, *Depressive Cognition in Ned Vizzini's It's*

*kind of A Funny Story* by Septiawan (2019) which analyses the cognition of depression experienced by the main character based on the Beck Theory and how to overcome his depression by using Paul Gilbert's theory. The study's results showed how Craig overcame cognition problems by creating his own space, breaking big problems into small problems, overcoming boredom, planning positive activities, doing positive activities, and changing behavior.

Based on the exposure of previous studies shows that the analysis of depression in literary works is important and interesting, considering that the problem of depression in literary works is often a reflection of real problems faced by humans. Therefore, researchers believe that research on depression is still relevant to be conducted. Previous researchers tend to discuss depression in novels and films, but no one has discussed depression through memoirs. Therefore, the researcher intends to research depression experienced by Matt Haig as the main character by analyzing the symptoms of depression he experienced in his memoir *Reasons to Stay Alive* based on Beck and Alford's Theory. In addition, the efforts he made to overcome his depression are based on Paul Gilbert's theory.

## **B. The Problems of the study**

Based on the explanation of the research background above, the researcher raises the research problem into two questions as follows:

1. What are the symptoms of depression experienced by Matt Haig described in *Reasons to Stay Alive*?
2. How does Matt Haig overcome his depression in *Reasons to Stay Alive*?

### **C. Significance of the Study**

This research seeks to contribute both theoretically and practically regarding the depression depicted in *Reasons to Stay Alive* by Matt Haig. Theoretically, this research is expected to contribute to the knowledge of literary criticism, especially in the analysis of literary works using a psychological approach. Hopefully, this research can provide much information about the theory of depression and enrich the understanding of how depression is depicted in a literary work. Practically, this research makes it easier for readers to understand the symptoms of depression faced by the character and how to overcome the depression, specifically in Matt Haig's memoir *Reasons to Stay Alive*. In addition, this research is also expected to help future researchers by providing a valuable source of reference to research the topic of depression along with the symptoms and how to overcome depression using the different objects in a literary work.

### **D. Scope and Limitation**

This study conducted an in-depth analysis of the memoir *Reasons to Stay Alive* by using Beck and Alford's theory of depression to examine the symptoms of depression and Paul Gilbert's theory of how to overcome the depression. In particular, this research only focuses on the symptoms and how to overcome the depression on Matt.

## **E. The Definition of Key Terms**

There are several key words which become the main point of this study discussion, as follow:

### **1. Depression**

Depression is psychological disorder marked by disturbances in emotions thought processes, and behavior. It often involves persistent negative feelings, cognitive distortions, and changes in how an individual behaves or respond situation (Beck and Alford, 2009).

### **2. Symptoms**

Symptoms are subjective phenomena that individuals perceive as indicative of conditions that deviate from function (Armstrong, 2019). Meanwhile, (Cox et al., 2014) explain that symptoms are manifestations of disease that can indicate the presence of underlying health problems or disorders.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the researcher presents the review of related literature containing some general topics and specific things underlying theories to support the analysis.

#### A. Psychological Approach in Literary Criticism

According to Achiruddin Saleh (2018, p. 1-2) the term “*psychology*” itself was first found in the writings of ancient Greek philosophers about the nature of life. Especially in the work of Aristotle who used the term “*psychology*” to refer the essence of life. There are many terms for understanding psychology, but Aristotle limits psychology to the word *psyche* which means soul and *Logos* which means the study of. (Achiruddin Saleh, 2018) underlines that studying psychology is similar to studying the human soul, but due to the abstract nature of the soul, the psychology that occurs in humans can be seen from their behavior.

Furthermore, psychology is defined as a field of science about the soul that can be seen from behavior, both externally observable actions and internal thought processes. The study of psychology is used to understand and solve the problems of a phenomenon of life that affect human actions and behavior, including how humans can think, feel, and interact with the environment (Walgito, 2004).

Noam Chomsky in (Lodge, 2002), state literature as a significant way to develop an understanding of people and their life. As a creative art product of human thought, literature allows life as the main object, which is often influenced



by the environment and the author's life experience. Therefore, literature has the important role of bridging ideas and values about life, facilitates reflection on the self, and becomes a reflection of the complexity and diversity of human behaviour (Ayesha Dar, 2022).

Literature and psychology have a correlation that makes both complement each other and have a function in human life. (Endraswara, 2013) explain that, literature is a medium that represents various events and dynamics of human life through character depictions, including the phenomenon of psychology that reflects emotions, behaviour, and aspects of the human psyche that have changed over the course of their lives. Therefore, in literary analysis, psychology as a branch of science is used to avoid misunderstandings in interpreting the complexity of individual psychological conditions in literary works.

When conducting literary criticism with psychology, Wellek & Warren (1956), explained there are four psychological studies in literature based on the subject of research:

1. The psychological study of the writer as a type an individual. This research focuses on the personality, experiences, and the Writer's own mental state. The aim of this research is to understand how the psychological factors in the Writer's life can influence the literary works produced.
2. The study of the creative process. This research focuses on the process by which writing happened. It analyzes how the writer started and developed the idea for the work, as well as how the writer's thoughts and feelings played a

role in the creation of the work. It is more about the writer's thought process, not just the end result.

3. The study of the types and laws that are present in literary works. This research looks at the structure and patterns in the literary work itself. This research studied characters, storylines, themes and how the rules of psychology are applied in literary works. The aim of this research is to understand how psychological elements appear in the story and the characters of it.
4. The study of the effects of literature on the readers. This research examined the psychological impact of reading literature, which involves how literature can change a reader's perspective on life, provide moral lessons, and help the reader to understand their own or other people's feelings.

Based on the literary psychology approach discussed above, this research includes the psychological study of the writer as a type of an individual, which analyses literary texts by looking at the writer's life experiences that are reflected in their work. The psychological approach in literary analysis is a criticism used to understand and analyze literary texts through the lens of psychology, with the main focus on the mental processes, behavior, and emotions of the characters in the story (Minderop, 2010). Thus, through this approach, researcher can observe the psychological condition experienced by the author, and represented by the characters actions in behaviour, reaction, and response to the situation in the narrative in literary works.

## **B. Aaron T. Beck and A. Alford's Theory of Depression**

In the book *Depression: Causes and Treatment* by (Beck & Alford, 2009), it is explained that depression is a psychological disorder characterized by deviations in individual feelings, cognition, and behaviour. In the concept of depression, emotional deviation is characterized by the emergence of persistent and deep negative emotions, such as sadness, hopelessness, or anxiety. Individuals who experience depression feel helpless and hopeless about the future. This distortion in their emotional state makes it difficult for them to feel joy, even in pleasant situations. Negative emotions become dominant in daily life and hinder the individual's ability to have fun. In depression, cognitive dissonance refers to a negative mindset that views oneself as worthless and the world as a place full of obstacles and prospects that will continue to deteriorate. Such cognitive distortions tend to override positive thoughts and make individuals more vulnerable to depression. Beck and Alford (2009) also pointed out that depression also affects individuals behaviour; they tend to withdraw and become passive or even do no activities at all. Therefore, the emotional, cognitive, and behavioural distortions affect each other and worsen the condition of depression, which is then reflected through the symptoms experienced by individuals.

Furthermore, Beck and Alford (2009) have classified six symptoms of depression in their book entitled *Depression: Causes and Treatment* such as, emotional, cognitive, motivational, vegetative and physical, delusions, and hallucinations. The following describes these symptoms:

a. Emotional Manifestations

According to Beck and Alford (2009), emotional manifestations are changes in feelings and behavior directly influenced by an individual's emotional state, for example, the occurrence of crying attacks in someone who rarely or never cried before experiencing depression. Feelings of distress, hopelessness, or anxiety can encourage individuals to show expressions of emotion that are unusual for them. This suggests that protracted emotional states can affect a person's response to everyday situations, change how they interact with the world, and affect their psychological well-being. Therefore, such changes can be seen through categories of emotional manifestations, such as Dejected Mood, Negative Feelings Toward Self, Reduction in Gratification, Loss of Emotional Attachments, Crying Spells, and Loss of Mirth Response.

a. Dejected Mood

Depressed people feel uncomfortable, and it is not easy to feel that everything is normal, which can be seen from their emotional expressions. Words that depressed people often use when asked, "How do you feel?" include miserable, hopeless, depressed, sad, lonely, unhappy, worthless, guilty, and anxious.

b. Negative Feelings Toward Self

The depressed person experiences negative feelings as a form of dislike towards themselves; these feelings occur as a result of persistent pessimistic thoughts and the belief that they are worthless or a failure in life. There are some expressions used by people with depression: First, at a low level, a person depressed

at this level will say, "I have let everyone down." On the mild level, this feeling is more disgust towards themselves to the point of saying, "I am a weak person. I do not do anything right. I am no good." Then, at the worst level, the depressed person will say, "I am a bad person. I do not deserve to live. I am a despicable person, and I hate myself."

c. Reduction in Gratification

Loss of satisfaction or interest in an activity was considered a major symptom for many depressed people. Loss of satisfaction leads to activities involving responsibility or effort no longer satisfying. People suffering from depression tend to be more interested in more passive activities; if previously they enjoyed doing pleasurable activities, slowly, these activities begin to become flat and meaningless.

d. Loss of Emotional Attachments

People suffering from depression will exhibit a loss of emotional attachment, which is characterized by a decreased interest in activities that involve emotional interaction with others, such as affection and love that should exist when with family or closest people but has now turned into indifference and hatred, causing them to limit themselves to people as if there is a wall that limits them.

e. Crying spells

Individuals who usually never cry may recognise the early signs of depression through the tendency to cry frequently. In this case, it mainly occurs in

women, but it does not rule out the possibility of occurring in men, it is just that the tendency to cry even without tears is much more common in women.

f. Loss of Mirth Response

Depressed people do not respond to jokes in the same way as regular people, such as laughing or making other jokes. It does not mean they are happy or enjoying the joke, even if they smile or laugh. It is all a fake smile because depressed people tend to take things seriously, not even reacting or getting upset if they find the humour rude or unfriendly.

b. Cognitive Manifestations

According to Beck (1967), cognitive manifestations of depression include a form of negative self-esteem. Perceived inadequacies in various aspects, such as ability, intellect, appearance, health, attractiveness, popularity, and opinion, are one of the pessimistic forms of cognitive manifestations. People tend to tolerate these negative expectations and reject the possibility of improvement for a change. According to Alford and Beck (2009), cognitive symptoms are classified into five parts: low self-evaluation, negative expectations, self-blame and self-criticism, doubt, and distorted body image. Beck and Alford (2009) classified cognitive manifestations into five categories: low self-evaluation, negative expectations, self-blame and self-criticism, indecisiveness, and distortion of body image.

a. Low Self- Evaluation

Low self-evaluation describes an individual with depression who exhibits a lack of self-confidence and a feeling of inadequate abilities. They are perceived as deficient in various aspects considered influential in shaping self-esteem, such as intelligence, strength, health, personal attractiveness, and popularity. In the context of social class, individuals with depression also feel insecure in terms of their economic status, education, or high-valued social skills in their social environment. They feel less financially successful, uneducated, or socially prominent. Feelings of inferiority lead them to view themselves as "less" or unequal to those around them, which in turn deepens feelings of worthlessness and social isolation, thus exacerbating their depression. People with low self-evaluation often say to themselves phrases such as, "I am Inferior", "I am inadequate", or "I can't do it".

b. Negative Expectations

An individual with depression tends to have negative expectations of the future and resists change or attempts at improvement, in contrast to others who are usually optimistic about the possibility of positive outcomes. Pessimism is a prominent characteristic of depressed individuals, reflected through a gloomy outlook on life. It affects the individual's mental state and the individuals around them. For example, given the suggestion to take antidepressant medication that has been clinically proven to be effective in helping reduce symptoms of depression, they often refuse or avoid taking the medication. It involves the belief that the medication will not give the expected results or even worsen their condition. Pessimism and resistance to treatment interventions or behavioural changes often

lead to frustration for family and friends who are trying to support their recovery process.

c. Self-Blame and Self-Criticism

Self-blame and self-criticism are two symptoms of depression. This happens when they realize that an achievement does not meet their perfectionist standards. For example, the standard in achieving a perfect course grade is A, but the lecturer gives him a B because he thinks that grade is the right grade for what he has done for a whole semester. This is difficult to accept, leading to an attitude of blaming and criticizing themselves.

d. Indecisiveness

Depressed people struggle to make decisions, vacillating between different options and uncertainties. They are bound to think that every choice they consider is wrong and fear that they will regret it later. A depressed person's decision-making will always be fickle and overwhelmed with doubt.

e. Distortion of Body Image

Depressed people often criticize their physical appearance when they notice deviations from their bodies. In most cases, distortion of body image is more common in women, but it does not rule out the possibility of it happening in men. Many ideas often arise when a depressed person comments on and finds fault with their physical appearance, such as, "why do I feel like my face is wrinkled?", "I'm ugly and disgusting", "I don't deserve anyone", and so on.



### 3. Motivational Manifestations

Motivational manifestations are symptoms that include the decline and loss of motivation seen in depressive behaviour. One of the main characteristics that can be observed is a regressive nature, where depressed people prefer less demanding activities or lack of initiative in tasks, especially those that require energy. They emphasize passivity over activity, dependence over independence, and often choose to escape rather than face problems. As a result, people with depression will accumulate more and postpone work so that later, it will feel hard for them when it can be done more efficiently as it should. Based on Beck and Alford (2009), classified motivational manifestations into four parts: paralysis of the will, avoidance, escapist and withdrawal wishes, suicidal wishes, and increased dependency.

#### a. Paralysis of the will

Paralysis of the will refers to difficulty in mobilizing to do basic tasks such as eating, drinking, getting out of bed, communicating, and taking medication, which should be very important as it can overcome their illness. In this case, despite being aware of what needs to be done, a person has no internal drive to do so, even when persuaded, urged, or threatened.

b. Avoidance, Escapist, and Withdrawal Wishes

Depressed people often have a desire to avoid, escape and withdraw from the routine of daily life. Most consider daily activities boring, meaningless, or burdensome, so they seek escape to more accessible and less demanding activities. In this part, the desire to withdraw is experienced as a definite motivation with a specific purpose. An example of a depressed student expressing his statement about what he was experiencing is that “it is much easier to daydream in class than to pay attention”. Deep in depression, a simple activity like this would feel very demanding and burdensome, so daydreaming becomes the easy way out as it does not require the same energy as paying attention.

c. Suicidal Wishes

Suicidal ideation is prevalent when a person is already severely depressed. It begins with passive thoughts such as 'I wish I was dead' or 'I want to kill myself' and then becomes a recurrent and deliberate thought. In this case, the sufferer desires to do so continuously or occasionally, according to the condition's intensity. Although the thoughts may diminish to disappear for a while, in severe conditions and on the verge of weakness, the suicidal impulse can easily be realized. Therefore, suicidal ideation is a severe and potentially fatal symptom in the context of depression.

d. Increased Dependency

Dependence on others tends to increase in depressed persons. This refers to an excessive desire for help, guidance, support, or direction from others, even tasks

they could have done themselves but did not attempt. Therefore, they expect the help of others to solve their problems and handle daily needs.

#### 4. Vegetative and Physical Manifestations

Vegetative and physical manifestations of depression refer to symptoms that occur automatically without the need to be conscious or directly controlled, as the autonomic nervous system regulates them. According to Beck and Alford (2009), vegetative and physical manifestations are classified into four categories: loss of appetite, sleep disturbance, loss of libido, and fatigue.

##### a. Loss of Appetite

In the book "*Depression: Causes and Treatment*" by Beck and Alford (2009), it is reported that 72% of people with depression experience a decrease in appetite, while only 21% do not feel the change. Loss of Appetite impacts not only their physical health but also the symptoms of depression, as nutritional deficiencies can decrease energy, make mood worse, and reduce the ability to go about daily activities.

##### b. Sleep Disturbance

A common symptom of depression is sleep disturbance, although many people without depression also experience it. In depressed people, levels of restlessness and excessive movement tend to increase during the night, resulting in less sleep. In severe cases, no sleep may occur, with the mind continuing to revolve around problems throughout the night. It does not only reduce the quality of rest but also exacerbates the symptoms of depression, as lack of sleep can increase

feelings of hopelessness, fatigue, and inability to cope appropriately with daily activities.

c. Loss of Libido

Loss of libido is one of the symptoms in individuals who are depressed. Decreased libido is accompanied by decreased sexual desire in both men and women and occurs when there is sufficiently strong stimulation. In more severe levels of depression, sexual desire is almost wholly lost, demonstrating the significant impact this disorder has on aspects of the sufferer's personal and emotional life.

d. Fatigability

The increase in fatigue in people who are depressed tends to be more intense and rapid compared to people who are not depressed. Fatigue can be felt physically, as a heaviness in the body, or as a lack of energy that continues to drain, so it is not uncommon for depressed people to issue fatigue complaints such as 'lethargic', 'tired', 'exhausted', 'too weak to move' or 'lackluster'.

5. Delusions

Delusions have been described as unrealistic and false ideas or beliefs derived from faulty inferences. Delusions are considered harmful as have the potential to cause feelings of discomfort and unpredictable behaviour, which can ultimately interfere with daily activities. Despite contradicting objective evidence and being considered irrational, delusions are closely held by the sufferer and can provide meaning in life. Therefore, Beck and Alford (2009) classify delusions into five

parts: worthlessness, crime and Punishment, nihilistic delusion, Somatic delusion, and Poverty.

a. Worthlessness

Being worthless in this world is one form of delusion that exists in people with depression. Depressed people only live with the feeling that their existence has no positive impact on others or the world, so they feel inadequate to receive love, happiness, or success. Depressed people express this feeling of worthlessness with the words 'I must weep myself to death', 'I cannot live but I cannot die,' 'I have failed so', and 'I am the most inferior person in the world'

b. Crime and Punishment

People with depression believe that being depressed means they have committed a great crime and deserve to be punished. They think that severe punishment, such as persecution or even the death penalty, is around the corner or will come in various forms. For people with deep depression, the place is a hospital for treatment and a prison. A few of them also said, "Will God never give up?" "Why should I be chosen to be punished?" "My heart has been lost," and 'Can't he see this?'. "Can't He leave me alone?". These beliefs make them feel even worse and worsen conditions.

c. Nihilistic Delusions

Nihilistic delusions in people with depression are characterized by the belief that nothing matters, and everything is over. Instead, the world is perceived as empty, and everyone, even the self, has died overnight. People with depression

believe organs are missing or have been picked up; for example, “my heart, liver, and intestines are gone. I am just an empty shell.”

#### d. Somatic Delusions

Somatic delusions make depressed people believe that their bodies are decaying or that they have a deadly incurable disease. People suffering from depression often make statements such as, "I can't eat." "The taste on my tongue is terrible" and "My intestines hurt," In addition, some people believe they have not slept for months.

#### e. Poverty

Delusions of poverty in depressed people come from an exaggerated fear of their financial situation or possessions. Fear is often expressed through thoughts such as, "All my money is gone. How can I live?" "Who will buy food for my children?" Moreover, this person may even be willing to beg despite having more than enough money. It reflects a highly distorted perception of their financial situation, which is part of the symptoms of depression that affect the way they perceive and understand reality.

### 6. Hallucinations

Hallucinations occur when a person experiences something that can be perceived with the senses but does not exist in the real world. People suffering from depression experience hallucinations triggered by their sense of sight and hearing, such as seeing shadows or figures that do not exist or hearing voices that criticize, blame or threaten themselves. In addition, Beck and Alford (2009) provide

examples of hallucinations expressed by people with depression, including: “I hear people talking through my stomach”; ‘I see and hear my dead mother’; ‘Voices telling me not to eat’; ‘Voices telling me to walk backwards’; ‘Seeing and hearing God and angels’; ‘Seeing my dead father’; ‘Animal faces in the food’; ‘Seeing and hearing animals’; and ‘Seeing dead people’. These hallucinations show how perceptual problems in depressed patients indicate a disconnect with reality.

### **C. Paul Gilbert’s Theory of Overcoming Depression**

According to (Gilbert, 2009), depressed people often face a variety of negative thoughts and complicated feelings from systems in the brain that are difficult to understand and control. The negative thoughts come from intractable problems and unattainable goals. These situations are the primary triggers for depression, as a deep sense of hopelessness and disappointment pushes a person further into negative feelings. Therefore, people who experience depression usually try a variety of efforts to overcome the impact of depressive symptoms in their daily lives. The negative feelings experienced can be controlled because negative feelings felt continuously without resolution can prevent a person from living life and developing themselves.

According to Gilbert (2009), several approaches can help individuals overcome depression through a cognitive perspective. These approaches can help change the mindset and behavior underlying depression, focusing on how a person views himself, thinks about the problems faced, and behaves in everyday life, which includes:

### 1. Switching our Minds to the Kindness and compassion

One of the first steps in relieving depression is to change the self-critical view to a loving and kind view, so the individual can accept themselves more gracefully and accept the love and support from other people. When an individual feels a sense of support and affection from other people, the feelings of self-blame and worthlessness which often exacerbate depressive symptoms can be reduced. This can lead to increased self-confidence, the strengthening of social relationships, and improved overall emotional well-being (Gilbert, 2009).

### 2. Changing Unhelpful Thoughts and Feelings

The emphasis in this approach is on direct changes in thought patterns and feelings associated with depression. In this approach, the individual needs to recognize and counter negative or unrealistic thoughts that exacerbate depression with more realistic and constructive thoughts (Gilbert, 2009).

### 3. Changing the Behaviour

Depression can affect a pattern of behavior, such as a reduction in social withdrawal, a loss of interest in pleasurable activities, and a decrease from the energy to do daily tasks. This approach emphasizes the importance of changing behaviors that exacerbate depressive symptoms by taking small steps to improve daily activities such as exercising, doing social activities, or engaging in activities that make you happy. A few simple behavioral changes can improve mood, and generate positive effects which can help eliminate persistent negative thoughts (Gilbert, 2009).



#### **D. The History of Memoir**

The book *Literary Theory: An Introduction* by Eagleton (1996, p.56-96) discusses the concept of literature evolving through changing forms or genres in a hierarchical system. The dominance of certain literary forms, such as novels, poetry, or drama, can vary in different periods, while other forms are considered less mainstream. However, this hierarchy is not fixed, as dominant forms can lose influence over time and be replaced by previously less significant ones. This shift is explained by the concept of *Defamiliarization*, introduced by literary critic Viktor Shklovsky. *Defamiliarization* involves presenting something ordinary or obsolete in a new perspective to capture the reader's attention.

In literary development, *defamiliarization* occurs when a dominant literary form becomes imperceptible because the devices, techniques, or writing styles are so universal that they become impactful. When this happens, other literary forms that are less familiar will emerge to invigorate the readers' experience differently. Overall, when a literary genre becomes too prevalent or closed in readers' perception, other literary forms that are lesser known can emerge, enhancing literature with diverse perspectives. Thus, the goal of *defamiliarization* makes less dominant literary forms a dynamic and relevant creative space in readers' minds.

In addition, (Eagleton, 1996) classified genres in literary works into two main categories: fiction, which includes novels, poetry, drama, and prose. Then, the category is non-fiction, which includes biographies/autobiographies, memoirs, essays, journalism, documentary forms, and other variants of "life writing." One of the non-fiction literary works used in this research object is the memoir *Reasons to*

*Stay Alive*, written based on a true story of the author's experience at a certain moment and categorized as a memoir. Although this literary work is non-fiction, it has several characteristics that make it similar to a novel.

As a memoir, it does not merely convey facts or events from real life but constructs a story with strong character development, plot, and narrative structure. Literary techniques commonly found in novels are employed in this memoir as well, for example, the use of flashbacks in novels, not only to inform the reader of events that happened in the past but also to show why the characters behave the way they do in the present. This serves to enhance the understanding of the storyline and characters. The technique allows the memoir to present life experiences in a more coherent and artistic way, thus making it not just a work that recounts life experiences but also a work that is full of meaning.

According to Eagleton (1996), the development of nonfiction literature began with St. Augustine's *Confessions*, an influential fourth-century autobiography that established the genre of religious autobiography. This genre focuses on spiritual crisis and self-discovery and reflects a period in which nonfiction literature was utilized to disseminate religious doctrine or record historical events. Consequently, many subsequent works adopted a comparable format in portraying spiritual transformation. In contrast, *Essays* published in the 16th century by Michel de Montaigne represent one of the earliest examples of autobiography that lacked religious or didactic purpose. Montaigne presented personal reflections on life, human nature, and morality. This work, which became an early example of nonfiction literature by combining literary techniques and facts,

provides insight into the human experience and real events in nonfiction literary works.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the non-fiction genre continued to evolve as interest in science increased. In this century, writers focused on exploring scientific, philosophical and social ideas relating to intellectual progress and freedom of thought. Significant works from this century include the writings of scientist Rene Descartes in 1637, entitled *Discourse on the Method*. It is an autobiographical literary work that introduces the methods of rationalism and scepticism as ways to achieve truth. This work illustrates the evolution of non-fiction literature from a mere record of reality to a more systematic expression of philosophical thought.

Furthermore, *Candide* by Voltaire in 1759 is a non-fiction literary work in the form of a satirical novel that reflects the emergence of social criticism and rational thinking in non-fiction literature during this period. These elements were employed to prompt readers to reflect on social conditions. Meanwhile, autobiographical works also began to develop during this period. The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin is one example. In this work, Franklin recounts the events of his life and reflects on the values and principles that shaped his character, including the importance of hard work, charity, and self-reliance.

The ninth century also witnessed a significant growth in non-fiction literature, as advances in printing technology made it easier to spread ideas. Writers such as Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* is one of the most famous memoirs that combines observations of nature with philosophical reflections. In the 20th century,

writers like George Orwell and Virginia Woolf produced essays and memoirs that conveyed facts and used literary techniques to explore themes more deeply. For example, *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf explores her experiences as a woman facing gender inequality, discusses the challenges she faced in writing and education, and the importance of having intellectual freedom and personal space to support creativity conveyed through a story in the form of a compelling narrative. In the same century, 1966, non-fiction literature started to gain more significant popularity, one of which was the famous work *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote. It is a non-fiction novel because it uses narrative techniques typical of novels to tell a true story. Later, works such as Tom Wolfe's *The Right Stuff* and Joan Didion's *The Year of Magical Thinking* combined journalistic facts with literary narratives and personal reflections, also known as new journalism.

Non-fiction literature has witnessed a notable evolution from the late 20th century to the present, expanding the range of forms and genres produced. Memoirs are becoming increasingly popular as individuals have the opportunity to write down their life experiences as a form of expression. Through memoirs, the writer can detail defining events in their life and the impact of these experiences, packaged in a narrative writing style with literary techniques grounded in reality. Eagleton (1996) asserts that if we narrow the definition of literature based on fiction, we would be leaving out many factual writings that were instrumental in the history of literature itself. Thus, fictional literary works today are inseparable from the influence of non-fiction literary works that were first discovered based on experience. Fiction literature, although focusing on imagination and creativity,

utilizes reality and life experiences as material for the story by adding imaginative thoughts that enrich the narrative. Therefore, fiction and non-fiction literary works help the reader see and appreciate literary works from various perspectives. Both invite readers not only to understand but also to feel and take lessons from the life journey conveyed through the goals applied by the author in creating his work.

In addition, the book *Creative Nonfiction: Researching and Crafting Stories of Real Life* by (Gerard, 1996) guide that emphasizes the research and narrative techniques necessary for writing nonfiction stories while maintaining factual accuracy and integrity. The book covers methods of gathering factual information, narrative techniques, and the importance of privacy and consent when writing about real-life individuals. It serves as a theoretical and practical foundation for various nonfiction literary works.

Furthermore, in the book *The Memoir and the Memoirist: Reading and Writing Personal Narrative* by (Fard, 2016) readers can use the book to understand the art of memoir writing. Larson (2007), provides guidance on how to construct a personal narrative, ranging from a chronological plot to a more complex structure that reinforces the emotional and psychological journey experienced by the writer. As the book's author, Larson (2007), recognizes that writing a memoir can trigger old memories or wounds, so he offers advice on how to deal with them professionally. In addition, the book explains how memoirs have become an important part of literature and how they have influenced our understanding of society. Overall, this book can guide the writer who wants to Express Life

Experience through a literary work by considering literary techniques and ethical aspects in composing memoirs.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

This chapter discusses the research methodology, including research design, data source, data collection, and data analysis.

#### **A. Research Design**

In this study the researcher interprets and analyses a literary work and classifies it into literary criticism, which involves the process of analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of literary works through reading, critical thinking, and literature review (Fard, 2016). This research focuses on the memoir *Reasons to stay Alive*. The aims of this research is to analyze the symptoms of depression using Beck and Alford's theory and how to overcome depression based on Paul Gilbert's theory, as experienced by Matt. In addition, the researcher used a psychological perspective to look at the psychological aspects in the interpretation of the text.

#### **B. Data source**

The data used in this research is the memoir of *Reasons to stay alive* by Matt Haig. The memoir was published in Great Britain by Canongate Books on March, 5th, 2015. The data was taken in the form of words, sentences, phrases in the book with 177 pages divided into 5 chapters.

### **C. Data collection**

The researcher used several stages to collect data in this study. First, the researcher read and understood the story in *Reasons to stay Alive*. Secondly, the researcher marked the sentences that were relevant to the research problem. Third, the researcher collected data by taking notes on the symptoms of depression experienced by Matt based on the category. Fourth, the researcher collected data by taking notes on how Matt overcome his depression.

### **D. Data Analysis**

After collecting the data, the researcher continued to analyse the data in accordance with the research problem. During the analysis process, the researcher identified the data obtained according to the problems faced by Matt. Then describe and explain the data based on Beck and Alford's theory to analyse the symptoms of depression and Paul Gilbert's theory to analyse how to overcome depression. At the end of the study, the researcher reviewed the results of the analysis with the suitability of the theory to avoid misunderstandings in analysing the data.



## CHAPTER IV

### FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings and discussion in which the answers of the two research questions are presented in this chapter. There are two research questions in this chapter that need explanation: (1) What are the symptoms of depression described by Matt Haig in *Reasons to Stay Alive*? (2) How does Matt Haig overcome his depression in *Reasons to Stay Alive*? This chapter presents data about the symptoms of depression experienced by Matt in *Reasons to Stay Alive* using Beck and Alford theory, and the efforts Matt overcome his depression using Paul Gilbert theory.

The research findings showed Matt experienced symptoms of depression such as dejected mood, negative feelings toward self, crying spells, low self-evaluation, negative expectations, distortion of body image, suicidal wishes, increased dependency, loss of appetite, sleep disturbance, fatigability, nihilistic delusions, somatic delusions, and hallucinations. In addition, it also found Matt's efforts to overcome his depression include switching the minds to the kindness and compassion, changing unhelpful thoughts and feelings, and changing the behaviour.

#### **A. Matt Haig's Symptoms of Depression**

Depression is defined by Beck and Alford (2009) as a psychological disorder characterized by deviations in individual feelings, cognition, and behavior. Beck and Alford introduced the six symptoms of depression, which consist of emotional manifestation, cognitive manifestation, motivational manifestation,

vegetative and physical manifestation, delusions, and hallucinations. Depending on the aspect, provides a specific indication of the way depression affects various dimensions of life, from deep-seated feelings to visible and physical responses.

Based on the memoir *Reasons to Stay Alive*, the researcher has identified the symptoms of depression experienced by Matt Haig in the story, such as the theoretical framework conceptualized by Beck and Alford.

## 1. Emotional Manifestation

Emotional Manifestations refers to symptoms of depression characterized by changes in feelings or behaviors as a direct result of a person's emotional state. Beck and Alford (2009) state, changes in these feelings occur due to a decrease in mood which is described by Dejected Mood, Negative Feelings Toward Self, Reduction in Gratification, Crying Spells, and Loss of Mirth Response.

### a. Dejected Mood

The first symptoms of depression that Matt experienced occurred when he was studying in Spain, precisely in one corner of the island of Ibiza, which is famous for its beauty and tranquility. Despite being in a beautiful and relaxing place, his feelings changed drastically after he learned something that disturbed his mind and changed his mood.

*“Anyway, I was twenty four years old. I was living in Spain in one of the more sedate and beautiful corners of the island of Ibiza. It was September. Within a fortnight, I would have to return to London, and reality. After six years of student life and summer jobs, I had put off being an adult for as long as I could, and it had loomed like a cloud. A cloud that was now breaking and raining down on me” (Haig, 2015, p.14).*

Based on the quote, it shows that Matt experienced an emotional struggle when he realized that in two weeks, he had to leave Ibiza and return to London. His life in Ibiza had been one of student life and carefree summer jobs without the burden of responsibility. The sentence “*After six years of student life and summer jobs, I had put off being an adult as long as I could,*” show how Matt has been trying to avoid the responsibilities of being an adult by continuing to live life as a student and summer worker. The sentence “*I had put off being an adult*” shows the fear and anxiety that continues to haunt him about the future and adulthood that he can no longer avoid. This fear reflects the symptoms of depression, especially dejected mood as described in Beck and Alford (2009) theory where someone who is depressed shows feelings of discomfort and does not easily feel okay which can be clearly seen from their expression of feelings.

Matt showed his feelings that were not fine by analogizing it as “*it had loomed like a cloud. A cloud that was now breaking and raining down on me.*” This analogy shows the contrast between the student life that he enjoyed is likened to a clean and bright white cloud with the reality of the upcoming adulthood life is analogized as a dark cloud that is raining down. The dark clouds are an expression of Matt's feelings of emotional distress, describing his feelings of anxiety and being trapped in undesirable situations.

#### b. Negative Feelings Toward Self

Persistent negative feelings towards the self are one of the symptoms that often appear when someone is depressed. According to Beck and Alford (2009), Negative feelings toward self is a condition in which a person has a poor view or

perception of themselves. This involves feelings of worthlessness, disappointment with oneself, or the belief that one is not good enough. A person with these feelings often doubts their abilities or the decisions they make, feels guilty, or even sees themselves as a failure or incompetent.

*“But one lunch break I felt this intense bleakness inside me as if a cloud had passed over my soul. I literally couldn’t stomach another hour phoning people who didn’t to be phoned. So I left the job. Just walked out. I was a failure. A quitter. I had nothing at all on the horizon, I was sliding down, becoming vulnerable to an illness that was waiting in the wings. But I didn’t realise it” (Haig, 2015, p.33).*

The data shows Matt obviously describes negative feelings towards himself when applying for a job after graduating from university. He was at an interview at a recruitment office in central London. Matt received an offer to work as a salesperson, but he felt he lacked competence in the field. Eventually, the company placed him in the position of selling advertising space for newspapers under the supervision of an Australian manager who explained the basic principles of sales. However, during the explanation, Matt found it difficult to focus his attention and eventually concluded that the job was not for him. Desperately, he decided to just leave the job.

The decision to leave the job unceremoniously shows that Matt did not give himself the opportunity to learn and adapt to meet the demands of the job. It is as if Matt has no control over the situation he is facing, allowing his mind to create a negative outlook and give continuous pessimistic thoughts.

Overall, the data above shows how negative Matt feels about himself, evident through the phrases he uses. By call himself as “*a failure*,” Matt immediately judges himself as incompetent, even though he has not really tried to do the job. In other

words, he has already closed off his possibilities for growth. The phrase “*A quitter*” reinforces a bad outlook and only creates a pessimistic mindset that prevents him from seeing the potential in himself. Furthermore, when Matt said, “*I had nothing at all on the horizon.*” It is clear that Matt is unable to see a positive future or see opportunities to change his situation. This expression shows how strong the negative feelings gripped him, so that he felt he had no direction or hope that could help him get out of this condition.

c. Crying spells

A person who experiences depression tends to recognize its early symptoms through the urge to cry more often, reflecting higher emotional sensitivity. Usually, this is more common in women due to their tendency to be more sensitive to feelings (Beck & Alford, 2009). However, it does not rule out the possibility of this also being experienced by men, as was the case with Matt.

*When you are the lowest ebb, you imagine wrongly that no one else in the world has felt so bad. I prayed to be those people. Any of them, I craved to exist in their minds. I could not cope with the relentless self-torment any more than I could cope with my hand on a hot stove when I could see buckets of ice all around me. Just the sheer exhaustion for never being able to find mental comfort of every positive thought reaching a cul-de-sac before it starts.” I cried” (Haig, 2015, p.46).*

Matt never imagined the pain that depression made him feel like a person at rock bottom. The sentence “*The sheer exhaustion for never being able to find mental comfort of every positive thought reaching a cul-de-sac before it starts*” shows how Matt felt mentally exhausted because every time he tried to think positively, it always ended in a dead end. He could not find a glimmer of hope, and this made him feel even more depressed and hopeless. Depression made him feel like he was trapped in a mindset that found no way out. When Matt says “*I cried,*”

it shows how the crying came as an expression of immense emotional distress. This crying was not just an ordinary reaction but an outlet for deep and unbearable pain. It was a form of final release from an emotional burden that had become too much to bear. Matt felt like depression had completely overtaken him.

Matt calls himself a fan of The Cure, a famous British rock band that has songs with dark lyrics and a melancholic musical atmosphere. Songs that are created to give the impression of sadness, serenity, sadness, sentimental, moody, slow, and gloomy.

*“I had never been one of those males who were scared of tears, I'd been a Cure fan, for God's sake. I'd been emo before it was a term. Yet weirdly, depression make me cry that often, considering how bad it was. They seemed to come from my gut, my stomach was trembling so much. The dam had burst, and once they came they couldn't stop, even my dad walked into the bedroom. He looked at me and couldn't understand, even, though it was all too familiar” (Haig, 2015, p.46).*

The quotation above, In the sentence *“I had never been one of those males who were scared of tears”* shows that Matt has a progressive understanding of masculinity, where he as a man is not ashamed to express his emotions, whereas other men are trapped in traditional norms that hold back expression. However, although he identifies as someone who is open to emotional expression, the sentence 'depression makes me cry that often' shows that this time his depression brings the experience of crying into a more frequent and more painful dimension.

The phrase *“seemed to come from my gut”* means that her crying was deep and came from strong feelings. This is not just a normal reaction to something that makes her sad, but also shows that she has reached an emotional limit that she can no longer hold back, as described in the phrase *“the dam had burst.”* After crossing that line, all the pent-up emotions finally come out and are difficult to control. Matt's

frequent crying as a result of depression shows that he has been holding back the pain and emotional distress for too long. When these suppressed emotions surfaced, he felt unable to contain himself anymore, so his crying broke out and overflowed, reflecting how deeply he felt the pain of his depression.

## 2. Cognitive Manifestations

According to Beck (1967), cognitive manifestations refer to negative thought patterns and beliefs that often appear in depressed individuals, especially related to their views of themselves, the world, and the future. These cognitive manifestations become symptoms of depression that can worsen an individual's condition, as they constantly feel lacking in various aspects, such as intellectual ability, appearance, health, attractiveness, popularity, and potential for happiness. Cognitive manifestation in Beck and Alford's (2009) book is classified into five parts: Low self-evaluation, Negative Expectation, Self-Blame and Self-Criticism, Indecisiveness, and Distortion of Body Image. In this study, researchers found three symptoms of Matt's depression in *Reasons to Stay Alive*.

### a. Low-self Evaluation

According to Beck and Alford (2009), low self-evaluation is a person's negative view of themselves characterized by low self-confidence and a tendency to overly criticize every action or achievement they do. People who experience symptoms of low self-evaluation often feel that their efforts are never reasonable enough or adequate. They underestimate their abilities and work, even when others

see them as positive or passable. In this case, Matt experienced this, where he was not confident in his abilities.

*“As part of my joint English history degree I took a module on art history. Though I didn’t realise it at the time, that mean that at the some point in the term I would have to do a presentation on a modern art movement (I chose cubism). It sounds like nothing, but I was dreading it as much as you could dread anything. I had always been scared of performing and public speaking.*

*‘Everyone gets nervous,’ my mum told me, on the phone. ‘it’s nothing. And the closer you get to it, the closer it is to being over.’*

*But what did she know?*

*I mean, what if I got nosebleed? What if I couldn’t speak at all? What if I pissed myself (Haig, 2015, p.129).*

.....

*For about five weeks I couldn’t really enjoy anything because this was coming up, and I couldn’t do a no show because it was assessed, as part of course work. The thing that I was particularly worried about was the fact that I had to coordinate reading my words with presenting of slides. What if I put the slides in upside down? What if I spoke about Juan girls portrait of Picasso while actually showing a Picasso? There were a seemingly infinite number of nightmare possibilities” (Haig, 2015, p.130).*

During his time in Ibiza, there were many symptoms that Matt felt but he did not realize it. The quote describes a situation where Matt was anxious about presenting, and shows that Matt was experiencing the depressive symptom of low self-evaluation, as he was not confident in his abilities. The fear of small possibilities that haven't happened or even won't happen, such as nosebleeds or showing the wrong slides, shows that he has an exaggeratedly low judgment. This kind of thinking is often found in depressed people who experience low self-evaluation and is difficult to control, which only makes Matt doubt his abilities even more and always believe that the decision not to do is the best way.

Matt's worry of not being able to enjoy any activities for five weeks before the presentation shows how dominant this fear was in his life. This reflects how the impact of low self-evaluation not only affected the way Matt perceived his abilities,



but also reduced his overall quality of life. As a result, he was more often stuck in feelings of fear and was not confident in his intelligence or competence to succeed when he presented. This shows how low self-evaluation can exacerbate depression and make it even harder for someone who suffers from it to believe in themselves.

#### b. Negative Expectations

According to Beck and Alford (2009), depressed people tend to have negative expectations of themselves, a state known as pessimism. They feel that the future will not bring good things, and believe that nothing can overcome their depression. In this case Matt felt that there was nothing that could overcome his depression.

*"Oh god." She said, "we're going now."  
 "where?" I said  
 "To the medical centre."  
 "They'll make me take pills," I said. "I can't take pills, medication didn't work for me."  
 "Matt you need pills. You are beyond the point at which not taking pills is an option. "we're going okay?" (Haig, 2015, p.22)*

The quote above, Andrea, Matt's girlfriend, expresses her concern for Matt's condition, which is worsening, and tries to convince Matt to get medical help. Matt showed the signs of depression symptoms, namely Negative expectation, as described by Beck and Alford (2009), where depressed people tend to be pessimistic and feel like there is nothing that can overcome the suffering they experience. The sentence, *"I can't take pills, medication didn't work for me,"* represents Matt's unbelief in the effectiveness of the medication that would be of help to him. This form of pessimism could have been a barrier in the process of helping him to overcome his depression. The perspective could have exacerbated his depression because if medical treatment did not work, Matt felt there was no way out that could

help him. However, Andrea's persuasion forced Matt to take the medication that he tried for months.

*“Anti-depressant pill still fill me with fear.” It doesn't help that names sound like sci-fi villains such as, fluxotine, venlafaxine, propranolol, zopiclone. “They didn't help me, or distanced me from that terror.” I also knew that they would be very easy to become addicted to, and that the fear of not taking them could rapidly overtake the fear of taking them. (Haig, 2015, p.28).*

After consuming anti-depressants for a long time, Matt did not feel any significant change in his condition. He still perceived his depression as something that could not be overcome completely with the pills. According to Beck and Alford (2009), one of the symptoms of depression is negative expectation, which is a pessimistic attitude towards the possibility of change or solution. This is depicted in the statement *“They did not help me, or distanced me from that terror;”* which shows that Matt felt the pills only provided a temporary respite from his fear without completely solving the problem underlying it.

Instead, what he has in mind is that the drug only makes him addicted and will create new problems. This perspective reflects how negative expectation can reinforce a depressed individual's sense of hopelessness, as the solution offered is instead perceived as a burden that exacerbates the conditions experienced.

During his depression, even though Matt desperately needed something that could help with his depression, he felt that nothing could change his perspective, as he did not believe that it was possible to recover.

*It is a strange irony that it was during the period when I needed my mind to feel better; that I didn't want to actively interfere with my mind. Not because I didn't want to be well again, but because I didn't really believe feeling well again possible, or far less possible than feeling worse (Haig, 2015, p.29)*

The quote above shows that Matt did not try to improve his condition, not because he did not want to be healthy, but because he believed recovery was impossible. The sentence, “*Not because I didn’t want to be well again, but because I didn’t really believe feeling well again possible, or far less possible than feeling worse,*” shows that it is easier for Matt to imagine himself feeling worse than imagining improvement. This perspective reflects the depressive symptom of negative expectation, where the pessimistic mindset is greater and rejects change. In addition, this mindset is reflected in his interactions with medical treatment. Moreover, When Matt refuses to take medication, he does it with the belief that the medication will not help his condition.

Overall, the symptoms of depression experienced by Matt, namely Negative expectations, became a challenge, and they maintained the belief that nothing could help him recover from depression. Thus, his condition will continue to worsen and make it more desperate.

### c. Distortion of Body Image

Depressed people often experience feelings of self-blame, especially physically, when something is perceived to be wrong with them (Beck & Alford, 2009). As experienced by Matt, who stated that he hated himself after receiving negative comments about his appearance.

*One of the girls I fancied more anything-looked at me and then made a disgusted face to her friends. Then she spoke words that I would remember ‘ugh, I don’t want that sitting next to me.’ With his spider legs on his face.’ At about five the afternoon I went into the bathroom at home and used my dad’s razor to shave the hairs off my moles. I looked at my face and hated it. I looked at the two most prominent moles on my face. (Haig, 2015, p.49).*

The quote above shows that the negative comments from the woman he liked left a deep emotional impact. The sentence 'I looked at my face and hated it' shows that the criticism triggered Matt's dislike of himself, leading to the extreme action of trying to remove the birthmarks (moles) on his face with a razor. This action reflects Matt's attempt to fix something he perceives as a flaw, which is essentially a response to his shame and dissatisfaction with himself.

In this case, Matt experienced symptoms of depression in the form of distortion of body image, which is a negative perception of his physical appearance. This distortion is exacerbated by the negative comments he receives, making him feel that the birthmark on his face is a normal thing that other humans must have into something deviant.

### 3. Motivational manifestation

Motivational manifestation is a symptom of depression based on decreased motivation, leading a person to favor passive activities, which can worsen the depression experienced. Beck and Alford (2009) classify motivational symptoms into four categories: paralysis of the will, avoidance, escapist, and withdrawal wishes, suicidal wishes, and increased dependency. In this study, the researcher found three symptoms experienced by Matt

#### a. Paralysis of the will

Paralysis of the will is one of the symptoms of depression referring to a person's inability to engage in any positive activity or activities, even when persuaded (Beck & Alford, 2009). In this case, Matt appeared to lose the ability to

engage in positive activities and avoid social interaction, which is a common feature of depressed people.

*“Do you want to go out on Saturday night? Come on, mate. Old times sake.”*  
*The idea was ridiculous. I couldn't leave the house without feeling an infinite terror*  
*“I can't.”*  
*“what's the matter?”*  
*“I'm just not feeling well. My head's a bit whacked.”*  
*“That's why you need a good night out. If you're feeling down. Get andrea to come*  
*too. Come on, Mate.”*  
*“Paul, you don't understand....” (Haig, 2015, p.51).*

In the quote, Matt is portrayed as a person who experiences symptoms of depression paralysis of the will, seen from his inability to leave the house even though his friend, Paul, tried to persuade him in various ways. The sentence, *“The idea was ridiculous. I couldn't leave the house without feeling an infinite terror I can't,”* shows the fear that paralyzes Matt, so he feels that leaving the house is something he cannot do. According to Beck and Alford (2009) a depressed a person's fear can be a barrier that makes them unable to make decisions to act or do positive activities.

Furthermore, In the sentence, *“I'm just not feeling well. My head's a bit whacked.”* Shows Matt's attempt to give an excuse for the rejection. He used the ill alibi to avoid Paul's invitation. Paul's response, as in the sentence, *“That's why you need a good night out. If you're feeling down. Get Andrea to come too. Come on, mate.”* Which continues to persuade Matt to go out with him, try to convince that going out with him can help Matt feel better. Including offering the solution of inviting Andrea along to keep Matt feeling good, but Matt still loses his paralysis ability.

## b. Suicidal Wishes

According to Beck and Alford (2009), Suicidal Wishes are the most severe symptom experienced by depressed people, it reflects the emotional pain experienced is too much to bear longer. So, this is one of the ways that can overcome the pain of depression. Matt has experienced in his experience who felt trapped in unbearable pain, so that there was a desire to die as a way out.

*“While my girlfriend was in the villa, oblivious, thinking that I had just need some air.*

*I walked counting my steps, then losig count, my mind all over the place*

*“Don’t chicken out,” I told my self or think I told myself.*

*“Don’t chicken out.”*

*I made it to the edge of the cliff. I could stop feeling this way simply by taking another step. It was so preposterously easy, a single step versus the pain of being alive. (Haig, 2015, p.18-19).*

In the quotation there is an act of attempting suicide, The sentence, *“I made it to the edge of the cliff. I could stop feeling this way simply by taking another step. It was so preposterously easy, a single step versus the pain of being alive,”* depicts an action that reflects suicidal wishes, by standing on the edge of the cliff, Matt is in a critical situation, where he perceives death as an “easy” solution compared to the pain he continues to feel.

*“Why would I stay alive? Wouldn’t it better to feel nothing than to feel such pain? Isn’t zero worth more than minus one thousand?” (Haig, 2015, p.118)*

In the quote, Matt is asking Andrea what he's living for, as though his life has no meaning anymore. He feels that a life full of feelings is much worse than feeling nothing at all. Matt analogizes the severity of his situation, where even a life without feeling (0) feels better than (-1000) but suffering. This shows how depression has made him lose hope and a sense of purpose in life, and leads to thoughts of ending life as a way out of unbearable misery.

### c. Increased Dependency

Increased Dependency is one of the symptoms of depression that describes dependence on other people in carrying out their lives. According to Beck and Alford (2009), increased dependency occurs because depressed people feel unable to overcome life's challenges. So, they need the help of others to overcome them. This happened to Matt who always relied on his parents and girlfriend, Andrea, who always relied on her parents and girlfriend.

*“If I was outside, and I wasn't with Andrea or one of my parent's, I wasn't able to cope.” (Haig, 2015, p.75).*

In the quotation, it shows that Matt feels very depressed and cannot face situations outside the home without people he relies on. It shows that depression has made Matt feel weak and helpless, so he relies heavily on other people to lead his daily life. This kind of dependency is a symptom of a depressed person, where the individual loses control and needs the presence of others in dealing with the situation at hand, when in fact he is able to deal with it.

It becomes even clearer when Matt tries to do it himself when buying goods at the store, based on the quote below:

*The weirdness. That feeling of being outside alone, it was as unnatural as being a roof without walls. I would see the shop up ahead. The letters 'Londis' still looking small and far away. So much sadness and fear to walk through.*

*“There is no way I can do this.”*

*“There is no way I can walk to the shop. On my own, and find milk, and Marmite.” (Haig, 2015, p.76)*

The quotation shows that Matt feels very uncomfortable and anxious when he is outside without the presence of Andrea or his parents. He describes the experience as a “*roof without walls,*” which echoes the isolation and loss of

protection he feels. The sentence “*There is no way I can walk to the shop. On my own, and find milk, and Marmite,*” reflects the feeling of hopelessness he faces, he feels that walking alone to the store is a big challenge that is impossible without Andrea and his parents who usually accompany him everywhere. Increased Dependency that Matt experiences shows how depression can hinder an individual's ability to live daily life independently, and the presence of others is one of the ways to help him.

The presence of Andrea does provide a sense of calm to Matt and becomes his primary support in dealing with his life.

*I also needed to be near Andrea.” If I was near Andrea I was infinitely calmer than when I wasn't (Haig, 2015, p.106).*

#### 4. Vegetative and Physical Manifestations

Depression is caused by the mind and excruciates the mind, but its effects can also attack the physical, Beck & Alford (2009). In this case, the researcher only found three symptoms of Matt depression, there are loss of appetite, sleep disturbance, and fatigability.

##### a. Loss of Appetite

When depression not only attacks the mind but also affects basic body functions, such as eating patterns, people who are depressed often do not realize that their bodies actually need food intake. Beck and Alford (2009) support this symptom that there are 72% of people with depression who lose their appetite. In this case, Matt reflects this symptom.



*I had gone days without proper food. I hadn't noticed the hunger because of all the other crazy stuff that was happening to my body and brain. Andrea told me I need to eat. She went to the fridge and got out a carton of Don Simon Gazpacho. I took a sip. The moment I tasted it was the moment I realised how hungry I was (Haig, 2015, p.22)*

The above quote shows Matt ignored his need to eat for several days. He didn't even realize he was hungry because his mind was filled with emotional upheaval and mental stress that took up all his attention. This shows that depression can make a person ignore basic needs, such as hunger. In this situation, Matt was helped by Andrea by telling him that he had to eat it by giving him liquid food called Gazpacho. When Matt tasted it, he realized the hunger that was previously ignored. This shows that the depressive symptom Loss of Appetite often occurs in people suffering from depression, where the body gives signals, but is blocked by the mental stress that dominates the consciousness of people with depression.

#### b. Sleep Disturbance

Sleep disturbance is one of the symptoms experienced by depressed people, characterized by difficulty sleeping. According to Beck & Alford (2009), this is often caused by high levels of anxiety and excessive thoughts especially at night. In severe cases, depressed people tend not to sleep for days at a time. This condition is also experienced by Matt as in the following quote:

*"I stayed in bed for three days, but I didn't sleep." (Haig, 2015, P.15).*

#### c. Fatigability

People who are depressed often feel tired, even to perform small activities, as physical and mental energy is drained by the heavy emotional burden. In Matt's

case, Fatigability is seen in the activities he does in the Shop to look for milk and marnite, being a very heavy task for him.

*The woman I wanted to be was not particularly fast at her job. I think she was the slowest person there had ever been at her job. I think she may well have been the incentive for the later move towards self-service checkouts in many shops. Even as I wanted to be her, I hated she slowness.*

*"Hurry up", I didn't say. Do you have any idea of what you are doing?"*

*"Do you need a bag?"*

*I sort of need a bag, but I couldn't risk slowing her down any more. Standing still was very hard.*

*"No. It's okay." I only live around the corner.' (Haig, 2015, p.79.*

Matt's fatigability is seen in his frustration, and his ability to wait calmly, and his choice to avoid additional interactions even if it is to his own detriment. The sentence, *"I sort of need a bag, but I couldn't risk slowing her down any more. Standing still was very hard,"* shows how Matt refused the bag even though he actually needed it. The sentence, *"No. It's okay. I only live around the corner."* shows Matt decision to refuse because he felt unable to face the longer waiting time and further interaction with the woman who was the caseworker. This visible depression makes him exhausted even just to do simple activities.

## 5. Delusions

Delusions are a form of perception disorder or beliefs that deviate from reality. Although contrary to reality, for people with depression this often happens. Beck and Alford (2009) classify delusions into six parts, worthlessness, crime and punishment, nihilistic delusions, somatic delusions, and poverty. In Matt's depression symptoms, there are two forms of delusion, Nihilistic delusions, and somatic delusions.

#### a. Nihilistic Delusions

Depressed people who experience nihilistic delusion feel that the self, others, or the world as a whole does not exist and has come to an end even though this is not the case.

*Everyone you have ever met will be dead this time next century. Yep everyone you know is just a collection of slowly deteriorating cells (Haig, 2105, p. 43).*

The above quote shows where Matt is experienced symptoms of Nihilistic delusion feeling that human life has no lasting meaning or purpose. Matt sees his outlook on life as pessimistic, which is in stark contrast to the fact that life, although full of difficulties, also offers opportunities for growth, change and influence. For him, everyone he knows will just be a part of death and decay. Nihilistic delusions can worsen depression as they cause the sufferer to feel isolated in their mind and hopeless.

*“Do you think they’ll be home soon?”  
 “Yes” said Jenny, patiently. “of course they will. They’re only a mile away. That’s not vey far, you know?”  
 “I knew.”  
 But I also knew they could have got mugged or killed or eaten by dogs. They weren’t, of course. Very few Newark on Trent residents ended their Saturday night being eaten by dogs. They came home. (Haig, 2015, p.48).*

In The sentence *“But I also knew they could have gotten mugged or killed or eaten by dogs,”* shows that Matt imagined the worst scenario to his parents which in reality is unlikely to happen. This perception is a form of Nihilistic delusion as a symptom of depression.

## b. Somatic Delusions

Somatic delusions are symptoms of depression that involve perceptions about one's body condition. People with depression often feel that something is wrong or abnormal with their body. People who experience this symptom see their organs as damaged and cause suffering.

*During my breakdown, living back with my parents, I used to imagine reaching into my own skull and taking out of the parts of it that were making me feel bad (Haig, 2015, p.56)*

In this quote, Matt's belief shows that he attributes his bad feelings directly to the physical part of his body, namely the brain. Based on Beck & Alford's theory (2009) somatic delusion often appears in people with depression when they view their body as the source of the problem. This is an indication that Matt experiences somatic delusion as part of his depression symptoms.

## 6. Hallucinations

Depressed people often experience hallucinations, which occur in the absence of real external stimulation, but are perceived as real by the individual experiencing them. Matt experienced hallucinations while suffering from depression.

The symptoms of Hallucinations that he experienced during his depression by seeing inanimate objects such as shoes, pillows, clouds, as having evil negative powers. This reflects a misinterpretation of reality, where these objects become a source of threat to him.

*I was scared for everything. If I looked at an object shoes, a cushion, a cloud for long enough then I Would see some malevolence inside it, some negative force that,*

*in an earlier and more superstitious century, I might have interpreted as the Devil (Haig, 2015, p. 26).*

The quote above connected his feelings of seeing these objects with the devil, which as we know the context of the devil always has evil powers. This experience shows the severity of Matt's depression where his perception disorder has started to affect the way he sees the world around him.

Secondly, Matt's symptoms of hallucinations occurred when he was left by Andrea to see her mother in the hospital. It causes worry for him, because this is the first time Andrea will leave him alone. Waiting for Andrea's return brought unreal images to his mind.

*While waiting for them to come home with Andrea from the hospital I paced from room to room. The first ten minutes my heart was pounding. I could hardly breathe. Andrea was dead. Her parents were dead. I was picturing the car crash too vividly for it not to have happened (Haig, 2015, p. 107).*

The sentence “*Andrea was dead. Her parents were dead. I was picturing the car crash too vividly for it not to have happened,*” is an indication of hallucination, as Matt was convinced that Andrea and her parents were dead, even though there was no evidence of the event. Matt's clear images of the car crash were so intense that he began to accept them as reality, blurring the line between imagination and fact. This highlights how depression, can distort perceptions and lead to hallucinatory experiences, where individuals perceive events that did not in reality occur.

## **B. Matt Haig's Efforts to Overcome His Depression**

Depression can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender or social background. In fact, at severe levels, depression can lead a person to commit suicide (Ko Sun et al., 2021). However, someone who is depressed can still live their daily life, even though it feels very heavy. This was also experienced by Matt Haig, a depression sufferer who shared his experiences through the memoir *Reasons to stay Alive*. In the memoir, he described the efforts that helped him to overcome the symptoms of depression that he felt until he was able to survive. Matt's efforts are in alignment with the concept of overcoming depression by Paul Gilbert, who shared *Steps to overcome depression* into three categories, namely switching your mind to the kindness and compassion, changing unhelpful thoughts and feelings, and changing the behavior.

### **1. Switching our Minds to the Kindness and Compassion**

Depression took a heavy toll on Matt, leaving him feeling trapped and overwhelmed by his emotions. Negative thoughts consumed him, leading him to view himself as a failure and worthless. According to Gilbert (2009), a crucial step in alleviating depression is to shift our mindset towards kindness and compassion. This involves changing our self-perception to be more loving and accepting. By embracing this approach, individuals can learn to gracefully accept themselves and open up to receiving support from others. Feeling compassion and support can help combat the feelings of worthlessness and self-blame that often worsen depression symptoms.

Luckily Matt has Andrea, his loving girlfriend and his parents, who never leave Matt even at his lowest moments. Their presence became a savior that opened Matt's mind that he was still worthy of love and had a reason to survive. It is when Matt is feeling very tired and crying continuously because he is unable to cope with his own thoughts, the support from his father becomes a very meaningful reinforcement, as described in the following quote:

*He came over to me, and saw my face, and the tears were contagious. His eyes went pink and watery. I couldn't remember the last time I'd seen him cry. He said nothing at first but hugged me, and I felt loved, and I tried to gather as much of that love as I could. I needed all of it.  
 'I'm sorry,' I think I said.  
 'come on,' he said softly. You can do this. Come on. You can pull yourself together. Mattie. You're going to have to  
 'I'll try, Dad, I'll try' (Haig, 2015, p.47).*

The above quote shows how important affection and support are in helping Matt deal with his depression, especially in dealing with feelings of hopelessness. Hugs and words like “*You can do it*” and “*You have to be strong*” from his father become very meaningful to him, providing deep emotional strength. These words not only gave him the strength to fight his negative feelings, as he knew they would come back, but this support became an important way for Matt to overcome his depression, as his parents' presence and affection gave him the strength to keep trying again to face the challenges at hand and also made him feel less alone in his struggle with depression. When Matt finally said, “*I'll try, Dad, I'll try,*” it reflected his courage and determination to keep going despite the hardships. The emotional support he received not only overcome his depression, but also laid the foundation for him to rise up and face life's challenges with more confidence.

*'we're going to get you better.' Said Andrea  
 'It's not easy, being there for a depressive'*

*'Matt, Listen, Just listen, just get this through your head, okay, you make it, and on the other side of this there is life. L-I-F-E, You understand?' Stop worrying! 'yeah, 'I said, and tried so hard to believe it.'* (Haig, 2015, p. 81).

In the quote, it can be seen that Andrea also plays an important role as a figure who provides emotional support and motivation to Matt to survive the struggle against depression. She tries to convince Matt that your life still has meaning, as she said, *“Just get this through your head, okay, you make it, and on the other side of this there is life. L-I-F-E, you understand?”* the sentence is a firm encouragement that aims to help Matt open his eyes and realize that this depression can be overcome, there is another life waiting for him after his struggle. The sentence *“stop worrying”* is a form of Andrea's assertiveness to Matt to stop focusing on worries that only worsen his condition because if negative thoughts are allowed to continue, it will only exacerbate the depression he is experiencing. Andrea's support shows the important role of affection and positive encouragement in Matt's recovery process.

Andrea's sincerity and love for Matt is not only limited to verbal support, but also concrete actions that support Matt to survive his depression.

*When the depression hit, Andrea was there for me, she'd be kind to me and cross with me in all the right ways. She was someone I could talk to, someone I could say anything to, being with her basically being with an outer version of myself. The force and fury she'd once only displayed in arguments she now used to sterr me better. She accompanied me on trips to doctors. She encouraged me to ring the right helplines, she encouraged me to read and write. She handled all the organisational side of my life* (Haig, 2015, p.85)

The quote above shows the various actions Andrea took towards Matt who was struggling with depression. Andrea is able to be an accepting figure and listen without judgment, and provide an opportunity for Matt to express his feelings



safely. This is important because people with depression often find it difficult to share their feelings. By providing an open communication space, Andrea helped Matt release the emotional burden that had been suppressing him.

Based on Andrea's support and affection, Matt felt a form of progress from himself, trying to distract his mind with writing, and even reached the stage of publishing his articles.

*I was thinking. About trying to get an article published in a newspaper. It wasn't happy thought, but a neutral one. But it was a break in the clouds, a sign that the sun was still there, somewhere (Haig, 2015, p.91).*

Based on this quote, Matt managed to reach a point where he began to see new possibilities. “Neutral” thoughts are a huge improvement for a depressed person, as it shows a break in the dominating negative thought stream.

*'You've got a publisher'  
'what?'  
'just had the phone call. You are going to be a published author'  
'what? Seriously'  
'seriously.'  
For about six months my lack of self-esteem had been artificially addressed. I would lie in bed and go to sleep, smiling, thinking wow. I'm quite a big deal. I'm going to be published (Haig, 2015, 109).*

The quote above shows that Matt's work was accepted for publication, providing external validation of his worth. For years, depression made Matt feel like a failure and worthless. However, this achievement was tangible proof that he had abilities and his efforts were recognized by the outside world. In the context of a depressed person, moments like this have a tremendous impact, as they can help reduce the repetitive cycle of self-criticism. The sentence “*I would lie in bed and*

*go to sleep, smiling, thinking wow. I'm quite a big deal. I'm going to be published"* shows the confidence that is starting to emerge in him as a positive change.

The process of Switching our Minds to the Kindness and Compassion is evident in Matt's journey. Not only did it serve to overcome feelings of worthlessness and self-blame, but it also became the foundation for Matt to move forward. With the love and support he receives from those closest to him, Matt learns to find the courage and determination to move on. Matt's journey towards publishing his work is an illustration of how love and support can help someone with depression rediscover a sense of self-worth and meaning in life. This achievement proves that in the midst of darkness, the opportunity to rise is always there, especially with the support of people who care.

## 2. Changing Unhelpful Thoughts and Feelings

Changing Unhelpful Thoughts and Feelings is a way to challenge negative thoughts that worsen feelings and replace them with more rational and positive thought patterns. According to Gilbert (2009), this concept aims to resolve the thought patterns that exacerbate depression. In this way, a person can overcome the intensity of negative emotions, improve their perspective on the situation, and pave the way to overcome their depression.

*Nothings lasts for ever. This pain won't last. The pain tells you it will last. Pain lies. Ignore it. Pain is a debt paid off with me. (Haig, 2015, p.84).*

In this quote, Matt begins to realize that the emotional pain he feels often affects his mind in an unrealistic way. Depression creates the belief that the pain

will last forever. The statement "*The pain tells you it will last*" shows Matt's awareness of this mindset. Matt firmly rejects the belief that his pain is permanent. He calls pain lies and ignores it. This process shows how he is trying to fight the depressive mindset of viewing pain as temporary. Matt replaced his beliefs with more positive thoughts, such as "*Nothing lasts forever*" and "*This pain won't last.*" By describing the pain as a "*debt paid with himself,*" Matt tried to give his suffering a temporary meaning, which helped him not to give up and continue to persevere.

It helped him create distance between himself and his pain. By putting into practice, the view that pain is temporary, Matt was able to calm himself down and reduce the intensity of the negative emotions he felt. This created space for emotional recovery and strengthened his resilience in dealing with depression. Matt's method is in accordance with Paul Gilbert's concept of Changing Unhelpful Thoughts and Feelings. By engaging both rational and positive thinking, Matt managed to break the cycle of negative thoughts that often reinforce depression, He not only challenged destructive thoughts, but also replaced them with more empowering beliefs, which became the foundation for his emotional recovery process.

### 3. Changing the behaviour

When Matt felt trapped in depression, he found it very difficult to go about his daily routine, even to perform simple activities. However, he began to understand that even though his feelings of depression were very strong, making small movements or changes in his daily activities could have a positive impact on

his feelings. The following are some excerpts from Matt's behaviour that he managed to change so that he could overcome his depression.

*I forced myself into them. I think this helped. It is quite gruelling, always facing fear and heading into it, but it seemed to work. On the day's when I was feeling very brave, I would say something impossibly heroic like 'I am going to go to the shop to get some milk and Marmite'. (Haig, 2015, p.75)*

The quote above shows that one of the ways Matt overcomes his depression is by facing his fears head on. Since suffering from depression, Matt has become the most fearful person to meet many people and even to walk alone when traveling outside Matt feels anxious and often cannot survive if he is not accompanied by Andrea, his girlfriend, or his parents. By challenging himself to stay in situations that triggered his depression symptoms, Matt chose to stay in those situations and forced himself to face his fears rather than avoid them. Although this process was hard for Matt, he found it rewarding. Each time, he managed to face a situation that was difficult for him to do, such as walking outside by himself and meeting people, he felt a sense of progress and freedom compared to how he used to be confined to his room and dependent on Andrea and his parents.

Paris was one of the pivotal experiences for Matt in his fight against depression. During one of these trips, Matt, who usually felt trapped in fear and anxiety, finally found room to breathe. During those few days in Paris, he felt something he never expected before a long lost sense of normalcy and life. The new atmosphere, the different environment, and the possibility to get away from his routine at home helped Matt gain a fresher perspective on his life.

*"Those few days in Paris. In fact, I felt more normal than I did at home" (Haig, 2015, p.104).*

The quote above shows that Matt began to realize a positive emotional shift in himself. Being in a new environment, such as Paris, gave him the space to release some of the mental burden he had been feeling. This new environment helped alleviate some of the pressure that used to hold him back. This experience is proof that dealing with depression is not just about internal change, but also about the importance of a supportive external environment. The trip gave Matt a chance to get away from the fear and anxiety that is often stronger when in a familiar place, like his home. Paris gave Matt a break, a space to feel free, and a chance to face himself without the pressure he was used to. It also emphasizes that avoiding his fears will never be a solution, but stepping out of his zone can have a very positive impact on his condition.

Since his depression, Matt has faced difficult times where even basic needs like eating and sleeping feel like a huge burden to him. Depression kept him stuck in a cycle of physical and mental exhaustion, making it almost impossible for him to do simple activities, let alone exercise. However, slowly, Matt began to try small things to change his lifestyle. One of them was running. At first, running was not an easy thing for him, given his weak physical and mental condition. However, over time, this activity became a way for Matt to overcome his emotional burden.

*"I would come back from a run and stretch and have a shower and feel a gentle sense of release, as through depression slowly evaporating from inside me" (Haig, 2015, p.110).*

The quote describes how running helped Matt feel a great emotional release. After running, he began to feel lighter, as if the depression that had been shackling him began to slowly fade away. This activity not only improved his physical health,

but also provided significant recovery benefits for his emotional and mental state. Through this routine, Matt discovered that his body and mind had the potential to heal even the deepest of wounds, a small step that brought about a big change in his life.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In this chapter, the researcher presents the conclusion and suggestions, divided into two parts. First, the researcher presents the conclusions from the discussion in the previous chapter, particularly about the elaboration of Matt Haig depression symptoms and the identification of Matt Haig efforts to overcome his depression in the memoir *Reasons to Stay Alive*. Second, the researcher gives suggestions for relevant future research.

#### A. Conclusions

*Reasons to Stay Alive*, the object of this research, highlights the life of Matt Haig, who experiences depression. Based on the results of the analysis in the previous chapter, the first problem of the study shows Matt Haig's symptoms began when he was in Ibiza, where he felt many strange sensations in his body, which made things worse. He also knew that he would be returning to London, ending his studies, and entering a challenging phase of adulthood. Matt experienced symptoms of depression in emotional manifestations such as dejected mood, negative feelings toward self, and crying spells. Then, Matt experienced cognitive symptoms such as low self-evaluation, negative expectations, and distortion of body image. Matt, who is an unresponsive person toward his daily activities, reflects motivational symptoms of depression such as paralysis of the will, suicidal wishes, and increased dependency. Matt also experienced his symptoms of depression seen by the physical such as loss of appetite, sleep disturbance, and fatigability. Matt's

depression was also quite severe, characterized by nihilistic delusions, somatic delusions, and hallucinations.

Then, the second problem of this study shows that Matt has made various efforts to overcome his depression. Matt switches his thoughts to kindness and compassion by getting support and affection from his parents so that he has a purpose to continue living. Next, Matt changed unhelpful thoughts and feelings, replacing negative thoughts with rational thoughts. Finally, changing the behaviour with activities that can help overcome his depression, such as facing fears head-on, run, and leave his comfort zone.

## **B. Suggestion**

The researcher realized that this study needed to be thoroughly analyzed perfectly, there are still many other dimensions that can be explored more deeply. However, for further researchers interested in analyzing the relationship between literature and psychology, especially regarding depression, this research is expected to contribute to the science of literary criticism. For future research, it is suggested researchers can explore further discussion of mental disorders represented in literary works through character development. Analyzing literary works with mental health issues can provide information to readers regarding the psychological experiences of individuals who are often still considered taboo in society.



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## CURRICULUM VITAE



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