

Yes, that game! You stand in a circle, spin, and wait for fate to kiss you or humiliate you depending on your point of view.

I remember it like it was yesterday. The bottle stopped on me, I stopped breathing... and a girl planted a kiss on me, which I wore like a medal of bravery for a whole week.

I looked at everyone with a "don't ask, but if you want, I'll tell you" look. I blushed like a tomato, smiled like an idiot, and acted like someone who had just won an Oscar for best scene in the "luckiest person" category.

Unfortunately, that remained my only kiss for quite a long time after that. Not because I didn't try. It's just that I never got lucky again.

### **Operation: First Sex Mission: Balcony Edition**

Then came the moment that songs are written about, ballads are sung about, and beers are drunk in bars about - first sex.

Yes, but my "first" was more like a slapstick comedy: a scared boy, a ladder, and a whole family lurking upstairs. I was already in 12th grade, feeling a little bolder because I had started flirting with a girl.

One day, my phone buzzed with her message:

*"Come to my place. My parents are out."*

My hands trembled as I read it. This was it the moment, I was already mentally ordering a fanfare and rehearsing my victory speech.

I left home romantic, isn't it?

The romance ended on the sidewalk.

She waved to me from the window.

*"Don't go through the front door, or grandma and grandpa will see you. Take that ladder, climb up to the second floor, and come in through the window."*

So there I was James Bond with acne, starring in Operation: Awkward Erection. Climbing balconies in broad daylight, on a street full of gossips. If anyone had snapped a picture, it would have been a textbook illustration of What Not to Do for Sex (But You'll Do It Anyway).

I climbed. The old ladder groaned under my weight, rust flaking into my sweaty palms. My heart pounded not from passion, but from raw terror. Each rung felt like it could be my last. I could already see tomorrow's headline:

Virgin Dies Trying to Lose Virginity.

I made it inside.

From that stuttering student, I became the guy friends whispered about with raised eyebrows:

*"Do you know what he did to me...?"*

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## **Sex, noise, and nonstop glamour**

There were no weekdays, no breaks. Just faces, beds, and shiny alibis that changed faster than the sheets. And I was both the main character and the spark behind it all fast, beautiful, and without inhibitions.

No, this isn't bragging. This is the background. The atmosphere.

What my life looked like back then, how the cycle of stimuli and desires took shape.

Only then can you understand where it all started to fall apart later.

These stories aren't *"look how great I am."*

They're *"look what the top looks like... before you realize you're standing on the edge of the abyss."*

The internet was a wild territory low inhibitions, endless opportunities. Forums were like uninvited parties where everyone showed up with their most charming smile. You'd strike up a conversation, swap a few photos, flirt a little and that was it. You had yourself a date.

I'll give you a few stories to capture my life back then how it moved, how it sounded, how it felt.

One of them started out standard: chatting with a woman online, no expectations, no significance.

Three days later, I received a message:

*"I'll be in your city on a business trip. Shall we meet?"*

Of course we would meet. We met. We saw everything worth seeing and a little more. We had a great time, and we said goodbye like people who didn't promise each other anything which is exactly why everything worked out.

A few days later, a new number. A new message:

*"My colleague said you're very funny. I'm on a business trip too... Shall we meet up?"*

You guessed it - yes.

Another business trip. Another improvised scenario. Another story for my friends.

A month later a new message: both of them wrote that they were coming again. This time together.

All this overstimulation wasn't just exhausting my nervous system it was literally rewiring my brain. The research I devoured pointed to one key conclusion:

With chronic hyperstimulation, dopamine itself is usually produced normally. But the receptors the brain's "antennas" gradually go numb, unable to respond.

Something in me had gone numb a biochemical desensitization at the receptor level.

It wasn't a "lack of desire" it was a biochemical inability to feel it.

**Dopamine was ringing but no one was answering.**

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## **What is dopamine and why is it so important?**

Dopamine is one of the brain's main neurotransmitters a chemical messenger between nerve cells. But it's not just the so-called "pleasure molecule."

Dopamine is:

- the fuel of motivation it makes you want, seek, pursue
- the signal of anticipation it spikes not when you receive, but when you approach what you desire
- the spark of excitement, fantasy, and intimacy

Without the dopamine signal, there is no excitement, no butterflies, no inner drive. Even with perfect health and high hormones, without dopamine you're only a shadow of yourself.

But dopamine alone isn't enough someone has to hear it.

Dopamine is like a courier carrying an urgent message. But if the door on the other side is locked, the message never gets through.

Those doors are the receptors. More specifically, the D2 receptors in the striatum and mesolimbic pathway the brain's hubs for pleasure and sexual arousal.

If these receptors are active, the brain picks up the signal and you're filled with sensation. But if they're deactivated, the signal is there yet no one receives it.

And what drowns them out? **Chronic hyperstimulation.**

The exact lifestyle I'd been living for years. My brain adapted but in the worst possible way.

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## How the Brain Protects Itself and What We Lose in Return

The brain was never designed for chronically high dopamine. What it craves is balance.

When we bombard it every day with hyperstimulation porn, social media, endless novelty, caffeine a dopamine storm erupts. Peaks that are unnatural, unsustainable.

And storms always leave consequences.

To protect itself from overheating, the brain defends itself the only way it knows how by reducing the sensitivity of dopamine receptors.

It's a natural form of adaptation: *"If there's too much signal, I'll shrink the antennas."*

That's how receptor desensitization begins: dopamine is still released, but the feeling of pleasure grows weaker and weaker.

- **Intracellular endocytosis** - the D2 receptors are pulled inside the neuron and become temporarily inaccessible.
- **$\beta$ -arrestin signaling** - the receptors are phosphorylated and stop responding to dopamine.
- **Genetic suppression** - the gene responsible for D2 receptors reduces its activity, and fewer receptors are produced.

This entire process is called receptor downregulation and it's well documented in neuroscience:

*"Chronic dopamine overstimulation reduces D2 receptor density through GRK/ $\beta$ -arrestin mediated internalization and lysosomal degradation." Volkow ND et al., Nature Reviews Neuroscience, 2016*

*"The physiology, signaling, and pharmacology of dopamine receptors." Beaulieu JM, Gainetdinov RR. Pharmacol Rev. 2011;63(1):182–217*

### And the Consequences...

Libido disappears not because you don't want to, but because you can't feel the wanting.

Motivation collapses no excitement, no focus, no drive.

Spontaneous erections and fantasies vanish.

Desire becomes like an artificial command as if someone is saying "you must", but nothing stirs inside.

Dopamine is there but nowhere to land.

It's like pouring gasoline into a car with a broken ignition the fuel is there, but the spark is gone.

And that's when I finally said to myself: