

Punta Cana: a despicable place in the tropics enjoyed by thousands every year for its beaches and superb vacation weather and someplace I can't stand. Spring breakers from all abroad conjoin here in a sad attempt at the ideal spring break. The laws of the land allow drinking at the age of 18, very enticing for high school seniors many of whom are newly considered adults. I've always believed that drinking can be tolerated as long as it's controlled and in moderate amounts. For whatever reason, my peers want to drink excessively to the point they can't properly function. That doesn't sound like the ideal spring break to me, one filled with blurry memories and unhealthy life choices. For reasons unknown to me, my girlfriend decided it's the only place she wanted to go on spring break. Despite my personal vendetta towards the place, I decided to join in on the trip, but I never made it to Punta Cana. Soon after my decision to go, my girlfriend decided to break off our relationship, I was left in shambles.

The week following the breakup felt like the journey Dante went through in "The Inferno:" a trial through the different levels of hell, encounters with the demons that are my thoughts at every turn. I spent most hours depressed and binge watching Netflix while eating disgraceful amounts of junk food, concealing the feelings the best I could. Not only was the breakup a big wake up in how much that girl meant to me, but more importantly, what went wrong. In the following weeks I realized all the faults in the relationship; while she remained in my heart as many fond memories, the feelings began to subside. To prevent such a case from happening again I began educating myself through countless YouTube searches for advice and motivation. Finally finding an answer to my pain, self improvement, it was so simple. If I wanted something in my life to change, then I just had to get up and make it happen.

What started out as a vanilla goal became an out right obsession. I took self improvement to it's absolute limits, through which finding something in me that I didn't realize I had. The will of fire, the will to never give up and push until everything is gone and there is nothing left to burn. I began to wake up at 5:30 everyday and jog for 10 minutes, then I'd get ready for school. I set up goal cards every week, failing a goal called for a punishment of doing push ups. I started to hit the weightroom more often and put more weight on. If I didn't fall into bed at night in absolute exhaustion, I would get angry and tell myself to push harder because it meant I wasn't working as hard as I could. After a couple of weeks I started to see improvement that I couldn't believe.

I went from struggling to do thirty push ups to easily completing seventy. From having a horrible sleep schedule to going to bed at a proper time every night. From pushing back tears every time I saw my ex-girlfriend to laughing and looking back on the experience. My body began to reflect the improvement, I started to develop a more muscular physique. Changing my style along with my improvement gave me a more mature appearance. I put the past behind me and took it for what it was worth. The improvement and success I found was due to a big change in my lifestyle, in the end it proved to be what was best. Now I'm a firm believer in the idea of pain and gain, meaning that all true gains in life come from pain that has to be withstood, no matter how deep a scar the pain leaves, the gain always prevails above all.