I've decided that this will be my final post for a bit on this account. A lot of deep thinking has lead me here. It will be a long thread and I'm going to be very vulnerable. If you feel the need to respond, my DMs will be open, I just ask that you read the entire thread first. (1/x)

There has been so much discourse the last several days about marriage and sex, particularly the idea of whether or not a woman "owes" her husband sex. Whether she should "suck it up" or "take one for the team" and just have sex with him (2/x)

Whether this should be the expectation a man has when he gets married or not. Regardless of where you fall on this debate, I'd like to share some real life perspective on it. I've lived this scenario and it has been a defining part of the last decade+ of my life (3/x)

I was always the shy, introverted kid with very limited social skills. I've come to determine this was likely due to a lifetime of undiagnosed autism, but that's not entirely relevant. I was quiet and had a hard time interacting with my peers. (4/x)

It wasn't that I didn't want to. I desperately wanted to be accepted and fit in and have a normal experience like the rest of the kids in my high school had. I just… wasn't good at it. And this left me very alone, especially romantically. (5/x)

My first taste of relationships were long distance and entirely online. This was before the era of dating apps and DMs and a world where communicating and finding a partner through a comforting digital screen was everywhere, but through the magic of AIM, I met people. (6/x)

They didn't last long, but it helped give me a little bit more confidence than I had ever had before. I found out I had a pretty decent way with words as long as I was typing the thoughts in my head rather than saying them out loud in person. (7/x)

That said, I still really hated myself. I was miserably depressed after those relationships went sideways. I hated my appearance (I've always been the fat nerd with glasses.) I was in a really bad rut right up until the summer I was about to enter my senior year of college (8/x)

It was at this time that I met my future wife. We also met online, but the difference was, her college was 15 minutes up the road. This was my first opportunity to actually meet up and have a real dating life. She was beautiful, exactly my type, and we had so much in common (9/x)

She liked baseball, Disney movies, music, and we had similar personalities. And most importantly of all, she liked *me*. Like *really* liked me. And she was right there. We spent every weekend together for the entire next year. We fell in love, and yes, we had lots of sex. (10/x)

I was happier than I had ever been in my entire life. She was my best friend and the love of my life. We were happy. Truly. We were young but it really felt like this kind of magic could last forever. We were both romantically inexperienced, but it felt *right* (11/x)

To say I cherished her would be an understatement. She was the best thing to ever happen to me. She was a grade below me, and even when I graduated and she was still in school, we made it work with a little distance between us. (12/x)

We both moved back in with our parents after school for a brief while, saving up money, trying to get on a little bit of solid ground. We'd see each other a couple days a month, and it was absolutely dynamite when we did, emotionally, and physically too (13/x)

Once we both were able to save up some money, we got an apartment together. This is when things really got serious. And it continued to be great. Honestly the two years in that apartment were the best I've ever had. We were madly in love and having incredible regular sex (14/x)

I felt like I'd hit the lottery in life. Everything before I met her was a nightmare, but she made me happy. She made me feel like a good man, A man worthy of love, A man worthy of being *desired*. An entirely new experience for me, but one I desperately wanted to keep (15/x)

And she was just as happy, or at least she never gave me any indication that she wasn't. Our relationship was on extremely solid ground. We were a team. We made sure to take care of each other in every way that we could. (16/x)

When she had an opportunity to take a job that would really settle her into a firm career in education, we decided to go for it. We moved across the state, away from my family. I packed up everything I'd ever known and moved back to her hometown. (17/x)

I got my current job at the post office. We bought a house. We were really settling into a life. We never had kids, but neither of us really ever wanted them, and she has epilepsy and her meds would have caused birth defects in children anyway, so that was never an issue (18/x)

After several years of being together, when we were in our mid 20's, had stable careers and enough of a financial nest egg, I asked her to marry me. She delightedly said yes. We had incredible sex that night. Life was good. We were happy (19/x)

We actually got married twice. Once, a small ceremony at the City Hall of Boston, as she was coming up on her health insurance expiring and it made sense to tie the knot so she could be on mine. Then about a year later, a wonderful ceremony at Fenway Park (20/x)

It was right around that time that things started to shift. This was about ten years ago now. She had always had pretty debilitating endometriosis and menstrual cramps that could render her unable to even work for a day. Her doctor told her to try a Mirena IUD (21/x)

I don't know if it was the fact that we were now legally bound and she felt like she could stop performing or her hormones being messed up from the IUD, but our sex life started to drastically change. The IUD worked. It made her periods significantly easier to bear (22/x)

And I was happy for that! I would never have wanted to see her in any more pain than she had to endure, She was the love of my life. And we were still having some sex, it wasn't like it came to a complete stop. It bothered me, but I loved her. I wanted us to work (23/x)

We still had lots of fun together. We went on trips. We went to concerts, baseball games, everything we had always done. Everything we still do to this very day. But that is what brings me to the current discourse (24/x)

It really started to affect my every day state of mind. Her lack of libido made me feel inadequate as a husband. That feeling she had always given me before was gone and it made me feel undesirable. Made me feel like less worthy of being loved the way I needed (25/x)

It made me realize that a physical intimate connection with the woman that I had chosen to spend the rest of my life with was something that I needed to stave off the demons of my past. The constant feeling like no one would ever want me in that way. (26/x)

We talked about it. We cried about it. We tried to fix it. I would never in a million years force myself on her. That is genuinely disgusting and I have always cared deeply about her pleasure. I asked time and time again if I was doing something wrong. (27/x)

The answer was always no. The answer was always that her body and her brain just weren't talking to each other. The answer was always that she loved me and she would try and do better. And it would always go the same way (28/x)

We would brainstorm ideas as to how we could work together to make sex a part of our lives again. Games, toys, scheduling sex, making a concerted effort to have regular date nights, weekends away. And sometimes it would work for a couple of months. (29/x)

And then the drop off would happen again, and we would be left having that same difficult conversation. She was happy with me, I was doing everything right, but she could not see me in a sexual way. (30/x)

I wish I could say this didn't devastate me. I wish I could say I was ok with her simply telling me she loves me. With hanging out and having fun and living our lives together *without* the need for physical intimacy. But that just isn't reality. (31/x)

I didn't get married to my romantic partner of nearly 7 years because I didn't desire her physically. My attraction to her never waivered. I never stopped showing her affection the way she needed. Why was it so hard for her to show the same to me? (32/x)

I never stopped holding up my end of the marriage. Running the household financially. Making sure she never wants for anything. Spoiling her at every opportunity. Trying to initiate physical romance in a way that she used to like (33/x)

And she would always continue to say the same thing. It's not you, it's me. But regardless of that, *I* lost my confidence. I lost my self esteem. Covid hit and like many people I started to get more and more depressed. (34/x)

I realised while trapped inside that I was actually trapped in more ways than one. I was trapped in a relationship that I was no longer getting loved the way that I needed. I was trapped in a marriage that no matter how hard I tried, nothing seemed to work (35/x)

But I stood by her. Through everything. Taking care of her in every way. Through ups and downs. Through brain surgery. Driving her everywhere. Doing everything I possibly could to be a good husband. Hoping that we could find that spark again. (36/x)

But it never happened. Eventually, I stopped having those hard conversations. Eventually, I stopped trying to initiate. Sometimes, she will see me sad and even "take one for the team" as men have been saying throughout this discourse. (37/x)

The problem is that the damage was already done. I knew that she no longer was able to see me as someone to be physically attracted to, and that broke me. Our relationship has never been the same. Obviously men and women think about sex differently (38/x)

I don't want to generalize because everyone is different. And certainly sex can be as enjoyable for women as it is for men, I have experienced it first hand. But for this man, I *need* that sense of a woman yearning for him physically to be happy and confident in himself (39/x)

Without that in my life, I became an absolute shell of what I once was. And that is what lead me to NSFW twitter. It wasn't just that I wanted to get off. It was a needed sense of human connection with people willing to show me that I could be a desirable man again (40/x)

I never wanted to be here. I stumbled upon it by accident. What I wanted was my wife, the one person I ever truly loved, to be able to love me how I needed. In the way that made me happy. In the way she did when I made the decision to build a life with her (41/x)

But that isn't what happened. She never changed. If anything, we had become even more distant. Even the "pity sex" came to an almost complete stop. And I spent more and more time connecting with other people on here (42/x)

You can say that makes me a terrible person. You can say that I am a disgusting man for that. I often feel that way myself. But I can't help the fact that when I feel like I am a complete, undesirable, unfuckable, ugly, fat piece of shit, it makes me want to kill myself (43/x)

And I felt that way for years as I practically had to beg my wife to love me the way I loved her, in the way that I need to be loved. But it never improved, and I have remained trapped in a relationship that looks nothing like it did when I fell in love (44/x)

We are still friends, of course. We are still doing all the things that we have always done together. But I'm not in love with her the way I used to be, because of a lack of marital physical intimacy. And I found this as an escape from the prison that has left me in. (45/x)

Why not just leave her? Because I still care deeply. Because marriage is complicated, but divorce even more so. It would financially ruin us both. And I am terrified of disrupting our comfortable habits. I'll always love her as a person. Even if not romantically (46/x)

We basically live as good friends and roommates more than anything else. I would have never come here if I still had hope for rekindling that spark. I think it is dead and it is never coming back, and I am trying to come to terms with how I can live with that (47/x)

My depression is ongoing, and so many of you have helped me along the way and for that I am eternally grateful and I won't delete this account because I hope you will stay in touch. If you choose not to, I will understand (48/x)

But to put a bow on the discourse I just want to say, everyone has their own love language. Everyone has their own needs. Everyone sees sex differently. No, no one should *ever* be forced to have sex when they don't want to. But relationships are only happy and healthy (49/x)

When both partners are in a competition to spoil the other. When one side stops doing everything they can to make their partner feel loved in their love language, stops wanting to give them what they need, even if that means showing them you desire them physically with sex (50/x)

That is how relationships die. I hope you all find peace, love and happiness in whoever you end up giving your love to, and don't end up trapped in a relationship where you never feel whole like me. (51/51)