

The YouTube stars heading for burnout: 'The most fun job imaginable became deeply bleak' (Part 1)

Notes & Cues:	Article: <p>When Matt Lees became a full-time YouTuber, he felt as if he had won the lottery. In February 2013, he had his first viral hit, an abridged version of Sony's announcement of its PlayStation 4 video game console, dubbed with a cheerily acerbic commentary. Within days the video had been watched millions of times. The boost to Lees' ego was nothing compared with the effect it had on his career. Overnight, Lees had what seemed like the first shoots of a sustainable career.</p> <p>Excitement soon gave way to anxiety. Even in 2013, Lees was aware that his success depended not so much on smash hits as on day-by-day reliability. "It's not enough to simply create great things, " he says. "The audience expect consistency. They expect frequency." By the end of the year Lees had grown his channel from 1, 000 subscribers to 90, 000, and caught the attention of one of his influences, Charlie Brooker, who invited Lees to collaborate on writing a Channel 4 special. For a month Lees worked 20-hour days, dividing his time between the TV script work and, ever conscious that missing a day's upload could cause his videos to tumble down the search rankings, his YouTube channel.</p> <p>At the end of the month he was pale, gaunt and tired in a way that, he recalls, seemed "impervious to rest". Lees developed a thyroid problem, and began to experience more frequent and persistent stretches of depression. "What started out as being the most fun job imaginable quickly slid into something that felt deeply bleak and lonely, " he says.</p>
Summary:	