

Anxiety and Depression Deteriorate into Psychosis

by Grace in New Jersey

I work for a public school system as a substitute teacher and teacher's aide and have been doing the same job for over three years. I have my own apartment and writing business. The two pets that I have are a hamster and a goldfish, which is all I can handle right now. I have been dating the same man for over 11 years and he has helped me tremendously through my recovery.

If you saw me seven years ago, you would not believe your eyes. I was a wreck. I was experiencing the first symptoms of an illness unknown to me. What started out as anxiety and depression turned out to be something more serious. This is how everything went downhill. It was my junior year at college. I started to experience severe anxiety and depression over my classes. I told my mother my symptoms. She did something you don't do to someone with a mental illness. She ignored the problem.

When I dropped out of college, my mother persuaded me to return to a nearby campus. So, under pressure from her, I applied to the nearby campus and got in. I met my boyfriend at college and he started to notice my symptoms after three months of dating.

One of my symptoms was having psychotic thoughts. A psychotic thought is a thought that does not make sense and is not based in reality. My psychotic thought was this - I thought one of my professors was trying to poison me and by eating some chalk, the poison would stop working. My boyfriend continued to stick by me even though I was behaving strangely at times. I would avoid social situations because they were too much stress for me. That year, I graduated college.

My boyfriend moved me into his parent's house because my mother refused to let me live with her. I tried holding a dozen or so jobs. But, at each job, I was let go. Sometimes, it was in a matter of hours. Sometimes, it wasn't until a couple of months later. Gradually, over a period of five years, my symptoms grew worse. I began experiencing auditory and visual hallucinations when I was 25 years old. Under advice from a counselor, my boyfriend took me to see a psychiatrist and psychologist. They had a name for the unknown illness. I had schizoaffective disorder, a form of schizophrenia. My psychiatrist and psychologist recommended that I go to partial-care, an intensive therapy program for people who have mental illnesses. I was scared at first, but my boyfriend encouraged me to get help.