

With therapy I have learned to cope better

by Cathrine in Michigan

My name is Cathrine. My birth was traumatic and a root cause of my mental and physical conditions. I suffer from BPD (Borderline Personality Disorder), Depression, ADD, Anxiety and panic disorders. Some of my mental problems I have suffered from all my life and some have gotten worse and developed due to my hypothyroidism and my environment.

I had a slightly difficult childhood. My parents ran a full time business and their beliefs and philosophies on discipline were rather strict and included corporal punishment. I won't say I was really abused but punishment was strict and painful and sometimes my father lost his temper a bit and went overboard on the spanking. It made me resentful and angry as well as scared of him.

I grew up rather lonely and depressed. I was in special ed and I was slower. I also grew up socially isolated. I had no neighbors close by and peers to play with. I was also overweight and chubby and from a family living in poverty. I grew close to friends and people who abandoned me or turned against me. I also was sexually molested at a very young age and then when I was in middle school by a friend's relative.

In 1st and 2nd grade I would write that I wished I was dead in my journals and folders. I only had counseling and had seen social workers provided by the school. My parents overlooked my mental problems because my brothers were more severe and caused him to act out in violent and illegal ways.

I suffered much of the time silently and had to cope myself. I did that by drawing, art and music which were my talents and strengths. They were things I was most confident in. Things took a bad turn in high school. I began self harming and grew greatly depressed. Life at home was going very bad. I cried out for help but no one seemed to be able to give me help or understand me. I began dating online looking for a boyfriend. I had almost an obsessive compulsion to bike 10 miles a day and chat on the computers. I dated a few guys and encountered heavy disappointments but eventually found someone. I felt ok at the time personally due to having a good routine of sleep, exercise and social stimulation.

I got married and things sort of fell apart. My husband and I have had our pitfalls and problems. It was not made any better by our situation with unemployment, costs and my family.

I finally sought help for my ever-worsening mental health state when a huge fight broke out between me and my parents and their friends over their drug use. My parents and their friends often smoked pot. I hated it so much and one day they began cursing me and my husband about how we lived and their friends didn't understand my problems and put me down in many ways while my parents just sat and allowed the verbal abuse. I got so upset I self harmed myself and wanted to die. So I called a crisis line and was able to enroll into mental health treatment. I was worried I would not get therapy because I had no insurance or a way to pay. I got to get therapy for free because Medicaid denied me and I have been in therapy for over a year and a half.

When I went to therapy I was unemployed, miserable, and unable to cope with anything. I would flip out, isolate, self harm and scream at everyone. I would also hear

voices and experience similar experiences to bi-polar and schizophrenic sufferers. I get weekly therapy, and I am part of a weekly group therapy called DBT (Dialectical Behavioral Therapy) which is for people who suffer from BPD and Bi-polar. I also was put on medications to help balance my neurochemicals in my brain and function better.

With therapy I have learned to cope better. I now am enrolled in college to get a degree. I get an art group provided to me by my local mental health provider. I am coping better now and achieving my goals in life.