

## Speaking from Experience Living with Bipolar Disorder USA

### Transcript for Chapter 8 of 9: Staying positive

#### **Nadine –**

I think there's a lot of positive that has come into my life because of being bipolar. I'm kind of an eclectic, unique individual and others recognize that and are attracted to that so it brings me opportunities to...I hate to sound this way, but it's true...to educate and comprehend different people and different situations. I have friends from many different walks of life, many different ages...it's taught me a certain flexibility that I don't think most people have.

#### **Alexandra & Thomas –**

He's got tremendous insight. He's just very good with people because of that insight.

#### **Avonelle –**

It sort of brings you to a level of consciousness about yourself and people around you. I am a unique person, and I don't think I really understood that to the level that I do now because I have to look at what causes me to be my best and what doesn't and how can I live with this illness in such a way where it empowers me.

#### **Jan –**

Ya know, I've gotten stronger in learning to accept myself, learning how to understand that people don't understand and I have to walk away from that and it's a challenge to not have that effect on my self-esteem, but it's a positive because I've gotten stronger from it.

#### **Nadine –**

10 years ago...wow...I was extremely depressed, very afraid of what my old age would look like and isolated, again, and not sure what my future would be. Today, I feel that I have a grasp on my life, that I can actually direct what's gonna happen in my life. I feel very empowered, I feel very much in myself whereas before I was a lot more floating around and out of control. And now, I float still, but I know how and when to come back.

#### **Todd –**

The most important thing that's come out of my journey and my recovery is the fact that I honestly feel good. Growing up the way that I did, not only with being bipolar, but living through the traumas that my brother and sister and I did when we were children...I was very dead inside for a very long time and I did some very stupid things like jumping off things with a parachute...anything that would raise my adrenaline so that I could feel anything. And this whole process has made me be able to feel both joy and sadness. Having feeling again is invaluable. I can't describe how much that's worth. Just being here, being able to be a part of this, and going back to college, everything all together is...I literally can't describe how it feels.

#### **Tom –**

People recover at their own rate and everyone's recovery looks a little bit different, but there's no doubt in my mind you can recover to the point where you're doing the type of work that you want to do, that you do have friends in the community, that you have a good social life. When I first started working on these problems, and seeing other people with these problems, there were times where I thought, even to me, even though I believe in recovery and that everyone can recover, I've met people that I thought, "This situation does seem overwhelming." And then later on I found out, well, it wasn't overwhelming. These people got straightened out on their medications, all of a sudden they're back in a community college, the next thing you know they're back at work. So, I believe that recovery is possible and probable for every human being that is dealing with these disorders.