

Kristy's Story

Written by Joshua Cole

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I'm 23 years old now...i don't know where to start. Ok the basics: I was born in Houston, TX and I have an older sister who i love so dearly. My parents divorced when I was 5years old. I grew up with my reality of my family being my mother, my older sister, my grandparents (mom's parents) and my four maternal male cousins. We have all been so very very close and I owe my life to them. My mom moved the three of us (mom, sister and self) to San Marcos, TX; three hours away from Houston. I then only saw my Dad once a year, he disappeared and never once came to visit us.

I grew up always isolated, quite the loner. I started having extreme difficulty with moods and relationships with others as far back as 8 years old; although my mom says she noticed something when i was only 4 years old. Things got worse when i was 13. i began thinking of suicide, abusing drugs, and hurting myself. Since age 13, I've been on 16 different meds, 3 in-patient hospitalizations, and been on a quest to find a healthy and content way to live. I've also had every diagnosis you could think of, until it was for sure clarified a couple months ago that I have bpd, severe ptsd (from drug abuse and abuse from step-mother), generalized anxiety disorder, and it's still in question if I'm bipolar or not.

I moved to Seattle, Washington by myself when i was 19 after graduating high school at 16 years old. I did not know anyone up here. I needed a change of scenery, thinking that if I was around the mountains, the water and the fresh air that i could get better.

My dad remarried soon after my parents divorced. He then had two children (girls) with his 2nd wife. my older sister and I became very close with our two younger half-sisters and in turn became closer to my dad. The older of these two younger sisters, Shelby, passed away at 10 years old on June 4th 2003 from a brain tumour. I was at her side while she laid in her bed and passed away. I learned more about life and death in her last 4 days than i have in my entire life. My dad calls me everyday now, and we have a great relationship.

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I've lived in Seattle now 4 years and I've gotten worse. However, strange to me that I ended up here where DBT was invented a mile away from my apartment. I'm now a research subject at the research facility where DBT was invented and I'm receiving DBT of free...interesting how things work out I guess. I've seen great progress some days and huge steps backwards other days. But I'll get there.

I have found great compassion, inspiration and support from being a musician and from my friends (that includes everyone here), family and from working with other mentally ill patients for the past 5 years. I hope to get myself together enough to be able to finish college. I want to get a PhD in nursing and work with people with mental illnesses. I am now working my arse off and fighting so hard to get better. I've learned so much about life from having this disorder by having so much deep emotions, but I am past ready to live my life without so many interruptions.