

Episode_3_Cayleigh.mp3

[00:00:02] Please be advised we will be discussing subjects that may not be suitable for all audiences and will include subjects that some will find challenging traumatic or triggering

[00:00:16] Welcome to You Don't Fight Alone. A podcast sharing the stories of those of us successfully living with mental illness and how we got there.

Cayleigh: [00:00:32] My rock bottom was around I would say like 2014 and all by all accounts I should have been like having a great time with life. I had just gotten married. Then just out of nowhere I started falling completely apart and eventually got to the point where it was a struggle for me to maintain personal hygiene to keep my apartment clean to do laundry.

Cayleigh: [00:01:26] My name is Cayleigh Deller and as of right now my diagnosis is depression anxiety. My pill bottles some of them say depression with anxiety and some anxiety with depression. At one point we flirted with a bipolar 2 Dec diagnosis but then my psychiatrist that I have going to after my PCM was like Now you don't have bipolar. That's not a thing we're going to do.

Cayleigh: [00:02:00] So. Time for another change of medicine I would call into work just because I just could not get out of bed that day.

Cayleigh: [00:02:23] I slept as much as possible during my off time just so I wouldn't have to deal with my brain I gained about 50 pounds because I eat my feelings so that was a very dark place.

Cayleigh: [00:02:41] And it was the first time what actually upon reflection after a while released it wasn't the first time I had suicidal thoughts. But I would.

Cayleigh: [00:02:55] And just going into work which wasn't the most satisfying work but I had a great supervisor. I would imagine going to work and just like shooting myself in my cubicle or something. Mind you I've never touched a gun in my life. I hadn't. Then I still haven't they actually come scare me to be completely frank. But as always I went to a gun and at the time my husband was stationed in Japan he's in the Navy and so he would be.

Cayleigh: [00:03:26] Out to sea on a ship. And the only contact I would have with him is the occasional email. So it was really hard to be conveying to him the email. Oh yeah. I'm thinking about killing myself.

Cayleigh: [00:03:44] We just got married less than a year ago. So. And you weren't dealing with this with me. Like before we got married. I would wear clothes that hadn't been washed to work. Be And Yeah.

Cayleigh: [00:17:18] And then I would use my lunch breaks to just crawl under my desk and nap in the dark yeah I tried hiding it to begin with but toward toward the end of my tenure that particular job I just didn't care anymore and crawled under my desk covered up with a blanket and I would also sit at my desk trying to do work with like a hood up to try to just keep the worlds away hood up blanket up. But I tried to go to work as much as possible because I needed to. And needed my insurance and I needed the paycheck and I didn't have anything to fall back on I forced myself to go even if every day as I went into work I was filled up with dread. The closer and closer I got to my job.

Cayleigh: [00:17:56] I eventually figured that I should seek out help. So I turned to.

Cayleigh: [00:18:02] My doctor by general physician and the whole time I was in Michigan and working with that particular doctor it never really felt like he fully believed me.

Cayleigh: [00:18:12] I guess when I tried to explain what was going on. Because. I'm really good at like faking it and it's so it's really hard for me to turn it off when I go to the doctor because I'm so good at putting on a facade. But then I did end up going to like a kind of talk therapy.

Cayleigh: [00:18:29] It wasn't with like a psychiatrist or psychologist. It was with the with a social worker was who was at this particular clinic that my insurance at the time it was kind of helpful just to talk things out.

Cayleigh: [00:18:41] But at the same time I don't think we were just looking at things as being situational and not something more we relocated to Colorado and I was like Oh right so fresh start.

Cayleigh: [00:18:54] And finally living with my husband for the first time ever moving to Colorado.

Cayleigh: [00:18:59] You know it's a great adventure. And I got here the first job I found was a really good fit. And it's still.

Cayleigh: [00:19:07] No. The first few months I was great. It was awesome. But then I started to start spiraling down again and having. Bad mental health days.

Cayleigh: [00:19:18] So that's when I realized that I needed to do something and that this was more than just a situational thing. My mom. Had a master's in counseling so I grew up like hearing about like how to you know. Think through things and oh you know sometimes you know your brain just doesn't work the way usual brains work and just learning to.

Cayleigh: [00:19:38] OK with things being different for people and having to with things differently and maybe having to seek out help sometimes and that it's okay to seek out help for things. So luckily I didn't have that hurdle that I'm sure a lot of people do. Just from my upbringing bringing. My biggest concern was just finding something that would actually help me consistently. And something that I would be able to stick with and be able to afford.

Cayleigh: [00:20:07] So I talked to my new doctor about my history drugs I had been on before.

Cayleigh: [00:20:13] What worked what didn't work and immediately my doctor was like All right let's let's pick up where you left off trial. What was working for you before what you were taking last and we'll go from there. And what immediately made me feel better was like I felt like I finally had a doctor who believed me. I don't know if part of it was a difference between going from a male doctor to a female doctor. I don't know if that might've been part of it even just subconsciously for me. But at no point she asked me Oh do you really feel that way or were you really thinking that she would actually dive in and ask more questions about how I felt instead of being dismissive continually trying to come up with new ways to approach things. And then eventually referring me over to outpatient psychiatry.

Cayleigh: [00:20:56] I've been working with the same psychiatrist for a little over a year.

Cayleigh: [00:21:01] So we started off with on what meds I was taking which has been a work in progress the last like almost two years now. It feels like changing medications are slowly tweaking the amount I'm taking. I recently just had another increase in dosage for one of the medications I'm

taking. And what we were doing was just like about every six weeks or so kind of checking in and seeing how things were going. Evaluating if we needed to change medications or anything. And it got to the point where I was like I s I feel like I still need something more I need more than just meds. Like they kind of got me through for a while but. Like I needed to do a bit more so they referred me to this group group therapy where it was about.

Cayleigh: [00:21:40] What's it called mindfulness.

Cayleigh: [00:21:42] A mindfulness counseling. So being aware of what's going on. Like. Understanding maybe like things that trigger emotions and also different strategies for helping yourself to maybe calm down in certain situations.

Cayleigh: [00:21:58] I found it somewhat helpful but still not entirely. So I actually just started a couple weeks ago some cognitive behavioral therapy weekly with the same psychiatrist I'd been checking in with intermittently. For me it's an accomplishment just to get through a given workday.

Cayleigh: [00:22:16] I would love to do more I want to. I want to be more active in the community.

Cayleigh: [00:22:20] I'm trying to be more of a part of where I am living now in Colorado in Aurora. It's it's such a challenge to just get through a given day and by the time I get home I just I collapse on the couch and I'm. Part of me dreads the next day just because I know it'll be a struggle to do it all over again. Just to stay awake the whole day from the expenditure of energy to keep up the the face that I am a functional adult who has nothing wrong with them and is not thinking about.

Cayleigh: [00:22:48] You know maybe jumping in front of traffic or flinging themselves off the side of a third floor balcony or something. At any given moment no I'm totally fine and I've put together a professional I can do things. And yeah that's that's something. No no medication is going to treat.

Cayleigh: [00:23:03] That's the realization that that's just something I'm going to have to live with and maybe I'm just going to have to eventually accept the fact that I simply can not do all the things that other people are able to do. I mean no one chooses.

Cayleigh: [00:23:17] To have brain work the way it does I sincerely encourage people to be more open about what they're going through because I really thought I was very alone in what I was going through until I started opening up about it on social media.

Cayleigh: [00:23:32] And then there were so many people that I knew who seemed like they had their shit together saying oh yeah me too.

Cayleigh: [00:23:39] And not just people who were experiencing the same thing as me but other people to people who were dealing with bipolar people who were living with borderline personality disorder with just any kind of combination of diagnoses that I never knew about. Just like they never knew about me and it it created like this kind of unofficial network of support you know that there is at least those people who will get it even if they're not necessarily experiencing the exact same thing. They still have more of an inside perspective on what you're going through.

Cayleigh: [00:24:12] I would say that looks can be deceiving. A lot of the people who are diagnosed with mental health issues. Any kind are very high functioning people. Who are very intelligent capable people talented professional individuals. So don't punish your friends. I don't think that they don't like you. Don't stop inviting them to things just because you've they've flaked out a hundred times.

Cayleigh: [00:24:36] Because by excluding them that's only going to make things worse for them.

Cayleigh: [00:24:41] I just.

Cayleigh: [00:24:41] Everyone needs just keep an open mind and listen and. Expect the unexpected of people a lot of us never saw our first.

Cayleigh: [00:24:49] Down coming. I didn't see mental dam breaking. As I said for for all intents and purposes I should have been feeling great at the time when I had my first real colossal breakdown or as I have liked to say in the past when my brain broke and I feel like ever since I've I've tried to you know rubber band it and whatnot back together but it's never been quite the same sense since like 2014 when I just broke down and it's it's been. Far rougher ride sense and I don't know if it's just because I used up my well of resilience as a teenager and as a college student or if I just.

Cayleigh: [00:25:28] More in tune with myself and my inner workings and started to realize even more just how screwed up I was. Maybe there's a lot of other people out there who have yet to make the same realization. And also.

Cayleigh: [00:25:43] At the same time the people who've realized it but still aren't comfortable being open about it no matter how many of us that it's time to be open about it no matter how much we have to chip away at the stigma. It could be something as simple as pride people. Not wanting to appear.

Cayleigh: [00:25:56] Have any kind of weakness if they perceive mental illness as weakness whereas as I said I I embrace my darker perspective on life. I feel like able to see more sides of an issue feel like embracing. Diagnoses of depression anxiety whatever else may happen.

Cayleigh: [00:26:14] Led to me being a more empathetic person I would tell myself to be honest with myself.

Cayleigh: [00:26:22] Be honest with my friends and family about what I was going through. At the time.

Cayleigh: [00:26:27] I saw it as a personal failing. I saw it as. Something that was a massive roadblock.

Cayleigh: [00:26:35] I was just getting my actual adult professional life really going. I thought it was something to be ashamed of and to hide. Things that I was already telling myself about Lake No. There's nothing wrong with you know having a mental illness but it's one of those things were like oh it's OK for other people nice for other people when they're going through it. But not right for me.

Cayleigh: [00:26:56] Like it's not my life it's not something I want to personally be associated with but as soon as I started being more open about it the easier it was to live with and the more people I was able to connect with who understood. So I would tell myself to be as open and honest. As early as possible.

Cayleigh: [00:27:13] Because then it would be even easier to live with

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