

Episode_10_Texanna.mp3

James Fisher: [00:00:01] 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

Keaton Leikam: [00:00:17] 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 here.

Texanna: [00:00:31] I'm hesitant to tell you what my rock bottom moment is because I feel like maybe I haven't experienced it yet.

Texanna: [00:00:39] Unfortunately my name is Texas and my current diagnosis is depression um so I uh grew up in a very sheltered very Baptist home.

Texanna: [00:01:07] I am a child of the ministry my dad and my grandfather were both pastors and the rest of my family um are in music ministry within the church. Um. And for those of you who aren't aware there's a lot of stigma surrounding mental illness and how we treat or even acknowledge it in the Christian community.

Texanna: [00:01:31] So for the longest time I experienced debilitating anxiety with out even the hope of treatment or any type of service to help alleviate some of my my issues. I moved to Colorado when I was 19 and within a year met the person who's now my husband. Um and he grew up very differently than I did. He grew up in the Midwest. I grew up in the south. And his family has always been very acknowledging and supportive of his mental health journey. He has clinical depression. So he has tried medications in the past he's been to therapy um and his family has really just uh pushed him very supportively through this journey or you know even just stood by his side when when he didn't want any pushing. And on my side it was just like if you're a minor in the home these are the feelings zero allowed to feel and if they're not on this list we're not talking about it. I would be scared to anyway. And so when I first started dating my boyfriend who is now my husband it was good for a few months and then I just remember I was I was 20 and I was in traffic actually right around here. I lived on Colfax and Josephine at the time and I think I was just on like 18th or something and the traffic was bad and I just remember feeling anger for the first time in my life. Like True true. Like I had never actually felt the feeling of anger before. And I think it was because my feelings of fear had always trumped my feelings of anger in my household growing up. And it was like just like I could feel everything shaking loose. And from that kind of pushed into this period of depression that kind of was coming out of my senior year of high school. But that really just like with my like new found anger became like the perfect storm for all of my relationship issues and the way that I viewed the world and myself and my abilities. And so eventually Miguel my husband and his family kind of encouraged me to go see their family GP. I didn't even go see a psychiatrist or a medical. You know I'm sorry a medication manager. I just saw a general practitioner and I think maybe we talked for like a minute. And I just couldn't hold it together and he was like you absolutely need some help. And so just from that like I just started sobbing and I think it wasn't it wasn't for anything other than just like the relief of being acknowledged. And a poor person. I'm a poor person. I. I teach children with autism and I tour so neither one of those career opportunities really have me rolling in the big bucks or anything so I feel like I need to talk to someone probably to two issues with that. My first issue with that is it costs money. I don't spend money because I don't have it. So there's that. And then the second snafu in this equation is that I typically find myself to be more capable of pulling someone through a mental crisis than whoever it is that I'm paying to do that for me. So I don't really like to pay someone for their time when I have to drag them through the hour. I would love to find a therapist that I felt like I could come to for wisdom I could come to for support I could come to for something that I don't already have but the people that I have talked to thus far have not been that for me and I I admit and

and acknowledge that I haven't tried as hard as I could to find the best therapist but I think therapy and medicine both fall into a category of needing to trial and error that issue out of it to get what you need going on. And I definitely have not put in the work in the therapy department but I think I need to because when I think about my childhood and I think about my relationship with my dad and my relationship with my mom they were split and it dawned on me recently that when I try to conjure any memories of my time with my father I can only think of like one scenario like one room in the house one age that I was one night in my life and it's really hard for my memory to expand to any other experiences that I've had with those family members in that house in that time of my life. And when I think about my childhood with my mother all I can think about are very traumatic memories. And I know that I've had some wonderful times. So that is a source of pain damage to.

Texanna: [00:07:45] I was driving home to my boyfriend. We're living in this carriage house. On that big red house behind Pancho tacos.

Texanna: [00:07:57] Like just right there there's like this big huge red house. So we lived in the carriage house of that place it was like 550 square feet. I had one hundred and twenty pound dog and two people living in that house. I was never making enough money. You know I. I was a host of a jazz club I took care of this kid took care of that kid. You know played the occasional gig. And I just remember. I remember coming home after bike feeling anger for the first time and it was only like four minutes till I was gonna be like at my doorstep and I knew my boyfriend was gonna be there and I just didn't even I don't even think I told him I just he could tell them I was wrong he asked me what was wrong and he's just like I'm just like upset right now. But I didn't. I couldn't. Like how are you supposed to be 20 years old and be like I think I just got angry for the first time.

Texanna: [00:09:00] So um. And that just kind of spun out of control. So the first time I felt anger was like Oh that is so scary. And I hated a lot.

Texanna: [00:09:08] And then it just happens more and more and then my anger was um a lot of times sparked by my relationship. Which made it really difficult for my husband my boyfriend at the time who is a pretty passive person to deal with that. And normally when I get angry I can feel it like coming.

Texanna: [00:09:39] I can feel it coming on and I start to get scared of myself when that happens because I just haven't figured out how to pump the brakes.

Texanna: [00:09:48] I don't know how to gracefully I don't know how to safely I don't know how to and still get my point across because I'm upset about something at that time you know it's something was important enough to me to where now I'm a danger to myself I'm so angry so I can't like the the resolution of the issue has to be big enough to encompass the resolution of my issue before my anger became the issue you know so I'm not going to back down until I've figured out a solution to my initial problem even though I now feel bad that I've created a more enormous issue by expressing anger the way that I do and a lot of times I feel like I can watch myself just unleashing anger unleashing some weird hatred that isn't even truly belonging to my spouse or my partner at the time. It never is. It's always misplaced my anger is always either you know situational and I always feel like a victim of my my life. My my situation. And somehow me feeling like a victim makes me pissed off. Off I am. I'm just so over being the underdog that I can handle it.

Texanna: [00:11:15] And then I take it out. Of course on my dear beautiful husband who never takes his anger out on me.

Texanna: [00:11:23] So that makes me feel like a winner. So yeah it's difficult. The anger at being your part is difficult. You know other than my medication manager telling me that my zoloft kind of

slows my anger time. I'm not I'm not taking anything from anger. I don't know really if there's a good step to take something for my anger without taking some mood stabilizer that has a million like tentacles into just other parts of just regular old health and I don't want to get into those those hard the hard medication.

Texanna: [00:12:03] I don't want to I don't want to develop a dependency I'm a mood stabilizer and then I won't even know who I am. I don't know and maybe I'm just you know talking out my ass and what's people need to be on with neighbors. I may need to be in a mood stabilizers. I don't know. It just seems a little scary.

Texanna: [00:12:19] But this is coming from someone who waited five months to start just your regular old low dose so loft so.

Texanna: [00:12:36] The Golden State is a Dennis and all of his friends are doctors and his parents just mentioned that like almost everyone they know is on some type of anti depressant and that there isn't any shame in trying to find the medication that's right for you and that makes you feel like you've found your place in the world.

Texanna: [00:12:58] And so just knowing that it was less a hey it seems like you need some help.

Texanna: [00:13:06] Why don't you go find it and more of like a. Join us on the other side. Type thing was something where I was like Okay I'm I'm I'm cool with this. Oh I'll try now I think honestly that. And I my my plan coming into tonight was to say like this is not going to be the episode where like the girl is like. And that is how I lived happily ever after. Like I'm going to be like I don't have it all together. Like I don't know what the fuck is going on half the time. And like the medication that I'm on right now. Sure it makes my life better than it was before I was on the medication. But who knows maybe there's like an even better medication that I could be on that I'm not. So when I went to the GP and he was like This is what you need I took it.

Texanna: [00:14:00] I you know gave it the time for the side effects to calm down so that I can truly see how it is. And it was better but I just wonder if kind of depression was the bandaid diagnosis that I was given given my current situation or how I seemed in the visit at the time and I just feel like I'm largely a more anxious person than I am a depressed person. So I don't know. However if I spend three days off of my antidepressant my world falls apart.

Texanna: [00:14:38] So I don't actually I don't know anything except for keep taking my meds which even then doesn't happen like I will be on tour and like I'll run out while I'm on tour and so I'll be like 48 hours without meds I'll be like I'm fine nothing happened. It's been 48 hours. I don't need my meds anymore. And then 72 hours hits and I'm like holy hell everything sucks everything sucks. I can't do it I can't do it. Somehow everything got a hundred times harder. Everyone hates me. All of a sudden you know like I'm somehow like walking into all of these conflicts. Everything takes 10 times the effort and I'm done I'm done. I can't lift another finger. I can't help another person I can't fake another interaction. I can't do it. So I think a lot of times it just becomes too much and I don't know what that too much comes from. I'm not sure if it's like oh my depression needs this or if I'm just have a broken psyche and maybe there's a lot more. Well I know that there is a lot more that just hasn't been acknowledged that I need to work through. So I am not at any type of a final destination on this mental health journey by any stretch of the do you have a clear idea of why.

Texanna: [00:16:10] I take my anger out on my spouse when initially it wasn't about him. And I think that that is because I am what I feel to be outwardly upset. I'm exhibiting behaviors of distress. You know he can tell them I'm not in my normal state of mind that I'm not happy and I think that because my husband is a gentle and passive person by nature and because probably he's

been conditioned by my not so behavior in the past.

Texanna: [00:16:55] He doesn't want to delve into it.

Texanna: [00:17:01] Maybe because he sees my anger as a Pandora's box or my just my emotions in general as a Pandora's box. But by him not acknowledging it it makes me more upset. So by that point he's avoiding the issue. I'm angry about what I was angry about before and now I'm also angry at him for not checking on me for not responding appropriately. I'm not trying to you know talk through it with me and I think a lot of times I see myself as a villain when I'm angry and how revolutionary would it feel to have somebody you know stretch out an arm instead of put up a hand when I'm in that place. So I think that definitely exacerbates my anger when my spouse chooses to turn a blind eye and then I think the other thing is how are you going to be angry at yourself when your spouse is home. You're not. It's just that's natural. Humans do that. You don't even have to have mental health issues to project your anger onto someone that's just like a human flaw that everyone does. And unfortunately I think I have it down pat so which I to this day I don't know if I completely agree with or maybe there are some exceptions to this rule but if you're going through a tough time if you just don't feel like you are you know in a safe spot if you feel like you may be a danger to yourself or or you know if you're just not feeling right and you feel like you need some help taking medication can be like using a pair of crutches and as your situation improves or as you learn to find a different perspective or whatever else happens on your journey you can wean off of them or do whatever you need do you don't always have to use crutches.

Texanna: [00:19:07] However I would love to know about a metaphor for using medication forever because they can't afford to see myself ever going off of my medication. That's changed my life and I need it very much so.

Texanna: [00:19:18] But in that moment just the acknowledgement of meeting it. Taking it the fact that there wasn't any shame surrounding my dad my decision to go on medication was really important to me in that moment and helped me make that decision a lot easier. However my anxiety in taking medication pushed off my filling of that prescription for probably another five months.

Texanna: [00:19:47] So it was it was a while before I even started my medication.

Texanna: [00:19:52] I don't even know if I remember what it was but I do remember the moment I decided to do it like I just remember that that was really big that I was just like you know what. This is ridiculous. Like it's not gonna be a life or death death moment even if it's not right. You know like even if I'm like whips shouldn't have done that. Like it's not gonna be like some Mario game over like I blink and then I'm like gone you know. So I just decided to go for it and I had a little bit of like sluggishness the first couple of weeks and like some weird cloudy miss but that kind of just went away. I don't know. I know a lot of people talk about being on anti depressants and how you know how horrible it was because they just never felt like themselves or you know that they always had just a cloudy mind. But I feel like that isn't really my experience. However I may have just gotten lucky in the first medication that I tried being what was best for me. I would tell my younger self not to be as afraid as she was of everything I was so afraid of my mother. She was like the quintessential Southern Baptist Mom. Just if you disobey. It's gonna hurt. You have tons of shit to do at the house. If you don't do it it's gonna hurt. If you hurt. Don't tell me you know my mom used to say if you're not bleeding barfing you're on fire.

Texanna: [00:21:53] Tell me about it.

Texanna: [00:21:57] But my younger sister she's she's five and a half years younger than I am and she experienced some pretty significant relational woes with my mother. I think at one point she

was contemplating getting a restraining order against my mom on my mom against and I see that it just wasn't the most safe situation and my sister had the balls to tell my mom not to touch her and I never did that. Not once. I never said get your hands off me. I never said I don't want to live here because I don't feel safe.

Texanna: [00:22:39] I never stood up for myself because I think I just I'm like I'm sure like a lot of other children in the Southern Baptist World just assumed that I didn't I couldn't do anything for myself. I didn't have those rights I wouldn't I wouldn't have a chance in hell and so I just never stood up for myself like I should have and I feel like because of that I probably ended up in the church for longer than I would have been. To be perfectly honest and I'm not saying that it was necessarily um a terrible time. It was just a time that was kind of injecting certain beliefs and perspectives into my young life that now I realize are very toxic and I don't think that it's necessarily a a malignant or malicious move on the church's part. I think that those people think they're doing what they should do. But a lot of times they just end up teaching intolerance and hate and that's what I came away with was like just this belief that all of these acquaintances from school and acquaintances that I met along the way. We're gonna go to hell because they hadn't accepted Jesus Christ as their personal lord and savior and didn't float my boat just because it meant so many Christlike people who aren't followers of Christ and people within the church can't seem to get it together.

Texanna: [00:24:23] So that's kind of why I left.

Texanna: [00:24:31] How would you talk to this population of people who are very sheltered and have very hard and fast beliefs surrounding the things that we're talking about on this podcast. A lot of that you know you have to think like you can't just be like What do you think is wrong.

Texanna: [00:24:51] There has to be a different way around that and also there are lots people in that community that are hurting for the reasons that we were hurting. We got help for and they haven't.

Texanna: [00:25:00] So I think a lot of times you can the best way I'm sure is to approach it from a perspective of sympathy. You know there are people within that population that are going through a lot and they don't take their meds every morning. They don't think that they ever could. They don't have that outlet. They don't go to therapy. Crazy people go to therapy in the Southern Baptist World and even then it's like air. Is that just like you know.

Texanna: [00:25:29] What was that saying like snake water wasn't snake oil. Yeah snake oil selling snake oil.

Texanna: [00:25:35] Anyway I think that therapy and mental health medication in the Southern Baptist World is snake oil. So I think that I would tell someone in the Southern Baptist world who may be dealing with any issue regarding mental health that because as you learn in an evangelical church no one can argue with your testimony. So I will tell you that my testimony is that my life was changed by medication that I struggled through my everyday that I struggled through every reaction that I had to anything that I experienced. Every perception that I had of my personal relationships my my fear of everything that I that I ever did that I was ever planning to do.

Texanna: [00:26:26] My hopelessness my dark and cloudy head all of those things are I would say 90 percent managed. That might be a lie.

Texanna: [00:26:38] 70 percent managed by medication.

Texanna: [00:26:45] And but 70 is a lot folks.

Texanna: [00:26:47] 70 is a lot. So worked for that 70 percent. Try some try some medicines today.

Texanna: [00:26:58] Truly though I like medication didn't didn't make me lose my faith medication isn't the reason I stepped away from the church. Medication has helped me.

Texanna: [00:27:11] Medication can help you and nobody has to know that you take medication. Like even if you are an 18 year old student an 18 year old child in your parents home go to the doctor on your own time like figure it out.

Texanna: [00:27:27] Be a sneaky sneaker then go to the doctor and get some meds hipper protects who you talk to and what you get. So you you go and you can figure it out and if you're not 18 yet I'm very sorry. Talk to people.

Texanna: [00:27:46] Talk to lots of people. Start. Start planning how you're gonna take care of yourself. Journal take some time for you where you are. So many thousands of other people have been there before. But if you're of age just go talk to somebody. Literally. It's the easiest thing to do. I know it seems hard it's daunting yada yada yada. Make the appointment talk to somebody fill your prescription.

Texanna: [00:28:16] If you if you feel as though your mental state isn't comfortable isn't right. What do you have to lose. You know that's kind of what it really boiled down to for me was um you know is it going to be the end of the world if I go talk to somebody about this is it gonna be the end of the world. If I give this medicine a go for a couple of weeks.

Texanna: [00:28:49] A lot of times it seems like a daunting task to go get prescribed something because that means you have to bring it up. You have to talk about it. You have to talk about how you feel. I understand a lot of times that that can be super uncomfortable. Not your favorite part of the day but in the end that could mean that your favorite part of the day is now your most mundane part of the day because you just feel better you know. And if you give it a couple of weeks if you give it a few weeks and you're not feeling it.

Texanna: [00:29:23] What I so encourage you to do even though I've never had to do it is just engage in a little bit of trial and error. I know that sounds rough because we're talking about medications that alter your state of mind or alter your feelings in your body the way that you go about your daily life.

Texanna: [00:29:44] But I can speak from personal experience that my life is a lot more comfortable and I feel like it's more worth it now. It's a lot easier just to have my eyes open and walk through the world.

James Fisher: [00:30:18] For more information and to donate please visit. Youdontfightalone.org.

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