

Depression vs Feeling Sorry for Yourself

By ELAINA J. MARTIN



I got some comments regarding me last blog post, "Stop feeling sorry for yourself!" Some people found what I had to say offensive. I didn't mean to offend though was not surprised by the reaction that came my way. I understand where you are coming from, but depression and feeling sorry for yourself are two different things.

Feeling sorry for yourself because you have bipolar disorder means you haven't accepted it yet. You haven't taken it in and said, "Yes, I have a mental illness but I will not let it define me." Feeling sorry for yourself is marinating on the negative aspects of our illness – and yes, I am aware there are many.

Depression is another beast altogether. Depression isn't feeling sorry for yourself, at least it has never been about that for me. I find the two distinctly different. Depression is a black abyss sucking you towards it, telling you lies. Depression is lethargy, a heaviness almost too much to hold, the steal-er of that spark in your soul that tells you to live.

So should you tell a depressed person to stop feeling sorry for herself? Maybe not.

But the truth is, if you do, she will just feel more misunderstood because her depression isn't about pity, it's about that black abyss. Depression isn't feeling sorry for yourself. I am not telling anyone to "stop being depressed!" That is ridiculous, like telling a pianist he can't have a piano. It does no good. The abyss is too black. The weight of life too heavy to listen to a blogger tell you to stop having a mental illness or episode. I would never say that.

So, dear reader, I am sorry if I offended you. Hopefully now you will know where I am coming from on this topic. Keep the comments coming.

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