

At the Moment of Importance: Discouragement Trumps All

By: Kevin Hines

At the very moment you're diagnosed as "mentally ill," you need your family's comfort, support and encouragement. Instead, most mental illness diagnoses are followed with the words: "Snap out of it" or, "this is just a phase and it will pass." Some patients are even tormented by the question: "Why are you always so dramatic?" And, the terrible cliché "it's all in your head."

The reality is, yes, mental illnesses do reside in the brain and since the brain is the most powerful organ in the human body, mental illness is far more than being too much inside one's head: this is what causes the erratic behavior, the depression, changes in the sleep/wake cycle that often accompany a mental illness.

My name is Kevin Hines and I am an Internationally known speaker, author and advocate for mental health awareness. I have been a public speaker in this field for over ten years. In lieu of a psychology degree, I have "real life" experience about mental illness, because I, too, have been diagnosed: I have bipolar disorder. It is an imbalance of chemicals in one's brain that affects the way one thinks and feels. It causes me to have terrifying hallucinations (both auditory and visual), painful depressions and manic episodes filled with racing and, often, grandiose thinking.

There are twenty-seven million people globally who have been diagnosed with BPD and millions more who suffer from mental illnesses every year. As the number of cases of BPD and mental illness continue to increase, family and friends need to become educated on the true nature of mental illness.

Your understanding and compassion for those who suffer from mental illness can help them to find the appropriate treatment for their particular condition. Please do your best to educate yourself. There are so many remarkable organizations around the world with the latest up-to-date literature on mental illnesses and their proper treatment methods. Of course, their mental illness is not your fault: but you can be an active part of the solution within your home, community and for the entire world.

In my many years as a speaker, I hear this from the members of my audience: "I have been diagnosed with [fill in the blank], but my parents/family does not believe it is real." They are confused and torn between a diagnosis and the opinions of those who matter the most. Wouldn't you want to help in such a desperate situation? The good news is, you can.

Here are some additional resources to begin your education on mental health:

<https://www.afsp.org/>

<http://www.internationalbipolarfoundation.org/ibpf-educational-videos>

<http://www.save.org/>

KEVIN HINES IS A REMINDER THAT EVERY LIFE IS A GIFT....

Kevin has reached international audiences with his story of an unlikely survival and will to live. When Kevin was 19-years old and recently diagnosed with bipolar disorder, he attempted to take his own life by jumping from the Golden Gate Bridge. He is one of thirty-three to survive the fall and he is also the only survivor who is actively spreading the message of living mentally healthy around the country and the globe.

Since, Kevin has become an award-winning international speaker, author, and mental health advocate. In 2012, he was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award for his outstanding work as a suicide prevention advocate and speaker. He has also been recognized by SAMSHA as a Voice Awards Fellow and Award Winner, an Achievement Winner by Veterans Affairs, and he has received a Three Star Marine Generals Medal Award in addition to his numerous accolades.

Kevin's will to live and stay mentally well has inspired hundreds of thousands of people worldwide. His compelling story has touched diverse audiences on university campuses, organizations, corporations, clergy, military, clinicians, the medical community, community organizations, and international conferences. *Cracked... Not Broken: Surviving and Thriving After a Suicide Attempt* is his first book and will be released on July 16, 2013.