

Bipolar... The psychiatric diagnosis sounded like a death sentence to me. All of my career, education, social and family plans seemed to clash at one moment. Would I be able to become self-efficient and productive? Would I be able to improve my financial situation? Would I be able to work at all? What kind of job is the best choice for me? What would be reaction of my friends? Would they abandon me? Would they ever trust me? What I ever have

a life partner? What about my dream to become a parent? What is my baby will be affected as well? What if all my life will be miserable and lonely?...That evening at the psychiatrist's office, I experienced the feelings of hopelessness, self-doubt and panic.

Fortunately, the text message from Long Island support group leader Andrew marked the beginning of a new life for me, successful life with bipolar. For the sake of recovery, I made the commitment to embrace the disease, to learn more about it and to adapt a different strategy of living. Yet bipolar disorder is capricious and should be taken into consideration when making every day choices in every part of my life. Environment, social contacts, family life, employment, financial situation, diet, sleep, exercise can increase or decrease possibility of having manic or depressive episodes. Therefore, my next step to recovery will be tailoring my diet, sleep, free time, career, social life to the needs of my bipolar.

Since environment and diet seem to be the most aggravating factors, I am going to improve the quality of my diet and try to adapt to my environment. To eliminate migraines triggered by excessive noise, I will make a commitment to have ear phones in my bag every day. To avoid mania episodes, I will not have any foods rich in simple carbohydrates in my fridge. In order to keep control of my weight, I will limit amount of food quantity in my fridge and will buy small amounts every day. Hopefully, the first measures will contribute to my recovery and healing.

In my battle with bipolar can be only one winning party and the winner is going to be me. For the sake of my family, friends and coworkers, I am going to conquer the illness. The bipolar disorder will not take control of my career, my family and my educations. Support groups members, doctors, therapists, family, friends, church members will support me in my battle with the disease.

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