

# Mountain Democrat

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## We are all Originals

By Marcia Rose

I find it amazing that we so often view ourselves based on the perceptions of other people. We are inundated with commercials proclaiming what we should wear, what shampoo we should use and how to remove the puffy bags under our eyes. This is not limited just to women. Men also style their hair and choose their clothing based on what is popular in a given year. Parents purchase name brand diapers and our children's clothing is frequently more stylish than some adults' clothes.

Why do all of us have a driving force to fit in, to not be different or unusual?

I understand why we want to look younger, wear stylish clothing and even try some miracle cream to take away the bags under our eyes. I get it. However, something that gets lost in our culture's attempt to help everyone "fit in" is the fact that no two individuals are the same. At some point we must realize that we are original and we are not meant to be like everyone else. We think and feel differently from others. Our bodies respond to what we eat and drink differently from others. The same is true for exercise.

I could go on and on naming differences we have---in creativity, in our responses to happiness and sadness and even how we deal with illnesses. Perhaps it is time to embrace the differences in us. While we celebrate how very original we are, we must also accept and acknowledge the gifts, as well as the challenges, that come from being uniquely us.

When someone hears a diagnosis of cancer, the response is very different from a diagnosis of mental illness. Misconceptions of each illness have evolved through the years. At one time a diagnosis of cancer meant you would not survive. Now with education, new medications and treatment, patients have a future. Mental illness and its treatment have also evolved. Not so long ago an individual with a mental illness was put into a psychiatric hospital with no hope and only

two drugs available for treatment. Today with dedicated people, research, education and medications an individual with mental illness can live a normal, productive life.

With each illness, the seed to grow and become the person you are is planted. Diseases, illnesses, hardships are a part of life. It is part of your journey. Embrace all of what makes you who you are; do not dismiss the relevance of your journey. You will meet others, share your experiences and rejoice in your success. Remember you are original; there is only one of you. Don't belittle any part of who you are, even an illness has a purpose and can enhance your life.

Come and visit Bipolar Insights/Mental Health Educational Center, we celebrate you.

The founder and CEO of Bipolar Insights/Mental Health Educational Center, Marcia Rose, has completed her new book "Journey From Bondage to Freedom": This story reveals Marcia's survival as well as her friendship with James, a man who has Bipolar Disorder.

For information, Marcia can be reached at: [trust@bipolarinsights.com](mailto:trust@bipolarinsights.com). Weekly classes start at 7 p.m., on Mondays at Green Valley Church, 3500 Missouri Flat Road in Room 304 in Placerville. Class is \$5 per person. Check [bipolarinsights.com](http://bipolarinsights.com) for complete details.

2017 Journal is now available and can be purchased at [bipolarinsights.com](http://bipolarinsights.com). Become a fan of Bipolar Insights on [Facebook.com/bipolarinsights](https://www.facebook.com/bipolarinsights).

Bipolar Disorder/Mental Health is what you have, not who you are. All are welcome. Make sure to check our web site for closures.