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FEAR

By Marcia Rose

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Fear. A small word that can impact your life beyond anything you have ever known.

I walked into the room. I have been here many times before but this time was different, I could feel it. A very nice, young girl said to me, “You can sit here.”

As I waited I looked around the room. It was spotless, everything in place. I reached for a magazine to read to divert my anticipation. I turned each page, not really reading the words but more so looking at the pictures of all these beautiful actresses. I did not know most of them; I guess this indicated I was getting old. The actresses I knew were now retired.

I could feel my body tremble, it was not visible yet I knew it was there.

“I am sorry it took so long, my name is William I will be performing your root canal this morning,” he said.

The trembling increased as he began to explain the procedure. The more he talked the more panic increased until I grabbed his hand and said with a screech, “Wait.”

I am sure there are many reading this who totally understand my terror of dentist. Then others, who I do not understand at all, are laughing.

The variety of fears are countless — fear of snakes, being closed in and heights, to name a few. I have seen a grown man run in panic at the sight of a spider.

The truth about the word fear is it can protect you as well as create terror. You're probably wondering what this has to do with mental illness. Well let me explain. To so many people, fear is the response when hearing the words "mental illness." They really don't recognize it as fear, but in their mind they are backing off from the conversation or person.

I believe it is time to remove the fear from the words "mental illness." The best way to do that is to begin to acknowledge you do feel uncomfortable around anyone who has a mental illness. That takes courage, as my fear of dentist is the same as your fear of mental illness.

Marcia Rose is the founder and CEO of Bipolar Insights/Mental Health Educational Center. Marcia is the author of "Journey from Bondage to Freedom" – the story reveals her survival, as well as, her friendship with James, a man who has a bipolar disorder.

For information, Marcia can be reached at: trust@bipolarinsights.com. Weekly classes start at 7 p.m. on Mondays, Green Valley Community Church, 3500 Missouri Flat Road in Room 304 in Placerville. \$5 per person. Visit Bipolarinsights.com for details.

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