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Bipolar Insights: The Brutality of Aloneness

By Marcia Rose

It began at age 5; she was so excited about going to school. Her mom had been preparing her for this big step for months by sharing stories of how kindergarten would be where she could play with other children her age, draw and paint, and be in a place where the days would be filled with learning and fun.

Wearing a new dress and shoes, she held her mother's hand as she walked into her new class. The teacher welcomed her and introduced her to all the other fresh-faced kindergarten students. Suddenly she felt butterflies in her stomach as she hid behind her mom. During class she was placed in a circle with other 5-year-old boys and girls, and so it begins.

Within moments the segregation process takes place as the boys separate from the girls and further grouping continues. Without forethought, each boy or girl begins to engage in their own comfortable space. Our 5 year old is now in the corner with a book, a perfect place to hide.

There are so many scenarios as to why each child reacts as they do, yet in so many cases the outcome is the same. It is not uncommon to move into adulthood and feel separated and alone throughout life. Families often do not speak to each other within the family unit, divorce can break the bonds within a family, even illness and fear can cause separation among people.

Our society tends to look at us as groups of nationality, women, men, children, teens, adults, mothers, fathers, diabetics, even people with cancer to name a few. I often wonder if that begins in kindergarten.

Individuals and families with mental illness believe they are different. They view their illness as shameful, taking on the responsibility that somehow they are at fault — even defective.

Families often hide mental illness; they harbor the same feeling of shame as those who have a mental illness. Separation and segregation take place within the family and then expands to society.

Feeling alone and isolated from everyone else will begin to overwhelm the individual and family as they face their illness in fear of being found out.

The brutality of aloneness influences an individual or family member and holds them back from seeking help from a psychiatrist and prevents them from not sharing their concerns with others. Segregation in any form creates aloneness, a feeling of not belonging, feeling abandoned, unwanted and different.

Come together

It is time we come together and communicate with each other about our troubles, illnesses or fears. Let's not allow our differences to separate us but rather allow us to embrace each other.

At Bipolar Insights Educational Center, it is the mission to be honest, to speak about and share life's struggles. We reach out to each other whether we are of a different nationality, man or woman, teen or child, married or single. We are each so wonderfully made and so wonderfully different that we should be celebrating our individuality. Our differences make us special and unique.

This is what we do at Bipolar Insight. Come and let us celebrate with you.

Stigma is separation; Bipolar Insights is integration.

There is a free Electronic Waste Drop-off Collection Fund Raiser Drive on Saturday, May 9 at Raley's on Placerville Drive in Placerville from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Visit bipolarinsights.com for information and to purchase a 2015 calendar/journal.

Become a fan of Bipolar Insights on [Facebook.com/bipolarinsights](https://www.facebook.com/bipolarinsights).

Bipolar Disorder is what you have, not who you are. All are welcome. Be sure to check the Website for closures.

The co-founder and facilitator of Bipolar Insights, Marcia Rose, can be reached at trust@bipolarinsights.com. Weekly classes start at 7 p.m. on Sundays at Marshall Medical Health Conference Room, 207/208, 681 Main St. in Placerville, and on Mondays, in Room 304 at Green Valley Church, 3500 Missouri Flat Road in Placerville. The fee is \$5 per person.

Check bipolarinsights.com for complete details and further information.