

Mental Health & ME.

My story is of courage and reflection. Finding happiness in yourself is key. Putting time in caring for myself and being brutally honest worked in my favor. The worst thing I could have done was keep living in denial. Mental illness had always been the dark kept secret for many people. Being suicidal was a way of life for me growing up. From the age of 7 to 18 I thought about death more than not. I felt I had no one to understand how I felt. After being diagnosed at the age of 30, I never made the connection. Traumatic life events cause symptoms of mental illness. That's why bullying and teasing should be addressed in schools to prevent teen suicides and or fatal circumstances. And even in our daily lives, we must be aware of our surroundings and our thoughts are to be watched every second of our day. You can't battle the demons if you can't see them inside your mindset. Cognitively I am a resilient woman and beyond that matters to my well-being. I can get up every morning to make a better world for me to live and thrive in and share with others. That takes self-evaluation daily. I have to make sure that my mind is sound and hopeful. Every day isn't overshadowed with disappointment and dismay, only if I allow it. Cognitive behavior therapy was a prime factor in me getting control over my illness. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a form of psychological treatment that has been demonstrated to be effective for a range of problems including depression, anxiety disorders, alcohol, and drug use problems, marital problems, eating disorders, and severe mental illness. I decided to take back my life and how I think about the blessings I count every day. I take no reasoning of coincidence or luck. There is no major event that takes place that will make me feel safe. I have to get up and look in the mirror at who I am and my purpose. Purpose gives me life and life gives me purpose. Instead of taking everything or anything personal I take it as a lesson. Sometimes we focus on others' faults and lives to where we lose our own. I welcome change and think of how it will positively affect my purpose. I have a mission to change how the world sees people like me. The cause and effect of mental illness range individually. No one person's symptoms and struggles with mental illness are the same. Most importantly is that we as a society start to get involved from a standpoint of no judgment and or blame. I believe that if it touched me it can touch anybody but with education and preventive measures, we can fight it together. The best CBT for me is turning a negative into a positive always. I look at the world and

how I maneuver through it with eyes wide open. No excuses and no denial that life can be whatever I make it. Even with mental illness, I am a winner. A fighter was made from my tragic beginnings and I will never give up or give in. Life is worth living. If you know anyone who may be struggling silently with depression or see symptoms of mental illness please seek help. There are people who like me are willing to listen. SAMHSA's NATIONAL HOTLINE 1-800-662- HELP (4357)

Regina White

President/Founder

Omni Community Alliance

Ambassador, Long Beach

L.A. South Chamber of Commerce