Finding Your Own Bipolar Community: Online Support Groups

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Bipolar Support Groups Online

Being bipolar can oftentimes be hard to deal with. Living with a mental illness can sometimes make you feel alone, like no one else can possibly understand you and what you are going through. Wouldn't it feel nice to find a place where you can fit in and have conversations with people who actually understand you or have been in similar situations? It can feel like a weight has been lifted off your chest when you meet like-minded people who relate to you. You can find this through bipolar support groups online.

Our family and friends might try their hardest to understand what it is like to struggle with a mental illness, but unless they have been through it first-hand it can be pretty hard to imagine what it is like when you are always at odds within your own mind.

It is important to find somewhere you can turn to with people you can trust when you feel like you are insanely manic, severely depressed, or everything else in between. Thanks to the internet and social media platforms, it is easier than ever to connect with people who are just like you; other people who have bipolar disorder too. Joining an online bipolar support group can help you more than you may realize.

Benefits of Bipolar Support Groups Online

People with mental health disorders often tend to need additional support in their life, so it is only natural that joining an online support group for people with bipolar disorder can be beneficial for your mental health and mental well-being.

Being surrounded by others who are like you, even in an online setting, can help you to feel less alone when you are struggling. It can help you feel like you are in less anguish just knowing that you are no longer alone because there are others like you; 5.7 million American adults, which is about 2.65% of the population in the U.S., have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. With that being said, you are never alone.

When you join a support group online you can vent and get things off your chest in a safe and private setting. It is always important to get your feelings and emotions out. When we bottle them up, there will eventually come a time when we cannot keep things in anymore and then we explode. Unfortunately, innocent people end up getting their feelings hurt in the process. Always talk about how you are feeling.

In support groups, you can get advice from unbiased people who can relate or have been in a similar situation. You get to meet new people, which can improve your social skills, and you may even be able to make some new friends along the way.

When you are really struggling and you talk about it in the group, people usually offer up lots of advice and encouragement regarding how they cope. You may even be able to pick up some new and useful coping skills that you may not have known about previously. Support groups can offer up hope when you are feeling hopeless,

like you have no one to turn to.

An added bonus to using a bipolar online support group is that you also get to help others just as much as others help you. It can give you a sense of purpose and meaning while making you feel good about yourself and boosting your self-esteem.

How to Find Bipolar Support Groups in the U.S.

One of the easiest ways to find free support groups these days is by going on social media platforms that have the capability to create groups. For example, Facebook has a search section where you can type in “bipolar support groups” or “mental health support groups” and a list comes up showing different groups. Read what they are about, read their rules and see if you think it would be a good fit for you. Make sure they are private and not public so that everything you say will be said in private where no one else but group members can see it.

If social media groups are not for you, you can go to the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance website; they have a “find support” section where you can type in your zip code and it can help you find some support groups for your specific area. Right now, many of these support groups that DBSA offers can be found online.

PsychCentral is another great place to find support for a variety of mental health conditions, including bipolar disorder. It’s a great community that they have created to help offer support to those who need it the most. I have used PsychCentral in the past and found it to be extremely helpful. When I posted questions or little clips of my life, I never felt judged or put down by anyone. Not feeling judged is a good feeling!

If none of the above ways appeal to you, you can also just go to a search engine such as Google and search for "bipolar support groups near me". There are plenty to be found.

Choosing the Right Group for You

Choosing the right support group for you should take some time and thought. You should always read the bio or information about the group and see if it appeals to you and your needs. You should decide if the kind of support group you are looking for has specific meet up times or if they are available all the time. Some people prefer groups that only meet up once or twice a week while other people prefer groups where they can reach someone at all hours of the day or night in case of a crisis or the need to vent.

If you have questions about a specific group, it may even be a good idea to message the person who runs the group if an email address or social media handle is provided, and let them know that you are thinking about joining their group but would like to know more about it first.

Sometimes it takes a lot of trial and error before you find the group where you feel like everything just clicks into place, like you just belong there. Some people fall in love with the first support group they select while other people have to check out a few to find the one that suits them best.

Once accepted into the group, introduce yourself and see what kind of replies you get and get a feel for what kind of environment it is. When choosing a group, you can also do some research and see if you can find any information about the group anywhere online. Research may not be possible for all groups, but it will be worth a shot. You just have to jump in and give the group that you select a chance. Perhaps even a trial period will be effective. If you do not like it, you can leave at any time without an explanation.

My Personal Experience With Online Bipolar Support Groups

I have utilized mental health support groups for many years now and I have created and run a mental health support group on Facebook, because I have found that they are incredibly beneficial. These support groups help me with my loneliness and make me feel like I matter when others say I do not. I love being able to have conversations with people who can relate to me. There is just something so freeing about it. Being understood after years of being misunderstood feels better than any words can express.

If you have never tried an online support group, I highly recommend giving them a try. What have you got to lose?