



Recovery International

“Recovery International Testimonial - Emily”

Accessibility Video Transcript

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The following is a transcript of the audio from a Recovery International testimonial. This transcript is provided to improve accessibility for visitors who are deaf, hard of hearing, or prefer reading the content.

I was born an anxious person and ever since childhood I had fears. I did not talk to strangers until I was about 16. I started having panic attacks when I was about 11 years old and things just got progressively worse throughout my teenage years. The only way that I knew how to deal with it was by avoiding all situations that caused me to be afraid. I was afraid to go over to friends' houses to stay overnight. I was afraid to travel. And later on, to drive. Even simple things like going to the movies, if there was any kind of bad weather outside or even a cloudy day would set me off and I would have panic attacks.

What brought me to a head when I decided to seek out help was I was supposed to go off to college, and I was having debilitating fears and was considering dropping out of college. And I was more embarrassed to drop out of college than to get help. So that was kind of my rock bottom that made me seek out Recovery. My dad had been a member of Recovery for years and years, but I was thought “oh those people are weird or there's something wrong with those people and I'm not like them.” When I went to my first recovery meeting, I realized that these people are average people just like me - they have fears. Some of them have symptoms that I don't have but most of them had pretty similar experiences to what I had. I got a lot of insight that first evening - that you don't have to avoid every situation. You don't have to live with panic attacks or these debilitating ones.

I've been a member for about twelve years now. I've been a leader for about two years now. And basically, I find that with Recovery there's nothing that I can't do. I graduated summa laude from college with double honors major. I have a master's degree. I've traveled internationally. I got married. So basically, I live a very full and happy life because of what Recovery's been able to do for me.



I am self-led not symptom-led, which is one of our slogans and even though I still have symptoms and I still get panic attacks and still get anxious and get worked up about different things, I know how to handle it and I know how to use the tools. And if I do have trouble, I have a support network of people who are in Recovery that I can call up and get help from or different spots from. So instead of avoiding everything, there's pretty much nothing that I won't give a try.

Recovery isn't just for people who have anxiety or depression or OCD, it really is a way of thinking about life and dealing with kind of the trivialities of everyday life. I have some family members who have come to Recovery for anger issues, who have come to Recovery because they are very stressed. I'm a high school teacher and so I don't tell my students I'm giving them mental health techniques, but we talk about "have the courage to make mistakes" - is this a triviality or is this a realistic situation? Is it worth getting worked up over? Can we express ourselves with culture? Can we express our feelings but suppress our temper when we talk to one another? So even though my students don't necessarily have nervous symptoms, it's a way of thinking and a way of talking to other people, interacting with other people, that is healthy and productive, as opposed to letting your temper or feelings control your life.

Accessibility Note

This transcript is intended to accompany the audio recording so that all visitors have access to the same information in a text format.