

## Misfortune is a Blessing

“Sometimes misfortune is a blessing in disguise.” I can always remember my confusion when I first heard this old saying. The saying was from a weird story that good luck and bad luck might come together. But I thought “good” and “bad” were so stubbornly different that one cannot lead to the other one.

Before my first spring break in America, I finished a film project with a graduate student who needed an assistant. She was a friend of a friend, we were in the same major, and she also came from mainland China. After we finished recording, I traveled to Chicago for spring break. I was very tired after being busy with her graduate program for several months, it took all my free time to help her. Helping others is nothing related to my own luck, but my luck changed after it.

After finished the project, I started taking a break, but then for a week, I found it was hard to wake up. I shared a moment on Wechat. I received comments from friends and a girl who came to the U.S. at the same time as me, she texted me individually, we talked about my sleeping problem, she suggested that I see a doctor if this kept happening to me. It was the first time I realized that sleeping problems could be considered a disease.

It lasted for over 12 days, I counted days since my WeChat friend texted me that day. Even if I slept for 12 hours, I still feel tired. Every day since I woke up, a new bad day started. So, I went to a doctor trying to figure it out. I made an appointment with our health center in college.

I stepped into the health center, walked straight to the helping machine to swipe my student ID to get my number and half dozen stickers with my name and birthday on them. Then I found a sofa to sit on waiting for a nurse to call my name. I was still tired at that time, watching everyone in the lobby slowly leaving with a nurse, one by one till there was just me. It made me a little nervous, so I started checking my phone like if I did not check it two thousand times there might be something wrong.

Finally, a nurse called my name. I stood up from the sofa and walked to her. The nurse measured my height and weight as usual at the entrance of the office and then led me in. We walked past the nurses' station, everyone looked normal as before, but I knew I might get a piece of unnormal news here before I left here.

I sat down on a checking chair, the nurse checked my temperature and my blood pressure, asking about the usage of any medicine, and any allergies to medications, and my answer were always no as usual. Then she told me the doctor would come soon and left me in the office alone. I was sitting there, trying to look through the window. I remember there were small parking lots and woods behind the health center, but I failed. The window was very high, I could not see anything even if I stood up. I wanted to escape, but I knew I should be here.

A mid-age lady stepped into the room. She asked me some after our talk, I realized that I needed medical treatment immediately. And the beginning of my medical treatment was also the beginning of my huge change which shaped me into who I am nowadays.

I started my depression medical treatment in March 2018, it was late March, but still snowing outside. That was the first time I saw snow in March, I never experience such cold weather in my hometown.

Mental health problems can enrich life experience somehow, challenge people, and rebuild one's personality. I was emotionally a child when I first went abroad even though I was already an adult. Like almost every only child at home, I owned too much, I expected too much, and I owed too much. Too much attention, too many resources, and too much caring. I was more like a child than my parents at my age, studying abroad helped me grow up, but it was slow when compared with the mental health treatment. It was very suddenly like God told me, "you cannot live as before, you will become a real adult emotionally." This time, I needed to face the disease by myself and in English.

I must work extra hard to help control my emotion. That's a very sad part of mental health problems before people get their treatment of mental health problems. It means I need to suffer more than people usually afford to grow up.

Depression can lead to loss of motivation and memory, so I start learning how to make everything visible. I start having many forms on the wall along everywhere I used to stay at home and in the car. Due to the symptom of depression, my memory started decreasing. Sometimes I even forgot to set time to have food and led to a stomachache, my brain even did not realize why I felt like that! Those forms work with clocks that rang every hour remind me whether I need to have food or water, take medicine, and finish my academic works. Fortunately, even my brain did not remember things, but my muscles didn't forget, so I could act and drive like a normal person.

I started to learn how to accept my depressed mood every single day, usually; people call it emotion management. But it is painful to hide my true feelings to pretend I am good and normal in front of people. The most horrible part of mental health is beyond feeling not well but losing one's mind. People can be out of control by some factors like hallucinations. Some sufferers are bothered by hallucinations which makes them act very differently from normal situations because the hallucinations can be very close to things that happened every day or sometimes very different from reality. I once saw a big black squirrel running past my professor. I knew it was not true because the window next to my professor cannot be opened. No entrance for the squirrel at all. I started being super claim, not surprising by anything not expected no matter what's happening in front of me. But in another way, this attitude can be called numbness sometimes. It is a very sad tag that I do not want this on me.

Knowing how to control "me" has been a long path for both depression medical treatment and life class. And one hardest part to learn and accept about depression is it might go with me throughout my entire life. It is the same way that people need to learn and accept that nothing can be perfect, for the most time it will not develop as people expect. It could be considered as good luck to grow up faster than my actual age, but the duration is painful which always gives people thought about bad luck.

The treatment is somehow the same as what people learn from life. I get depression without doing anything wrong, it was bad luck at that time for all the painfulness I suffered. But learning how to control the disease from my doctor led me to a more mature personality. So I finally, believe that misfortune is an actual blessing.