

I am fifteen years old and I suffer from depression and anxiety. I was diagnosed at a young age and was unsure of what to do. I did not know what was wrong with me and I didn't know how to relate to others and the questions that they had about why I was acting the way I was. My grades began to slip and I missed a lot of school. I felt completely overwhelmed and alone and I knew that I just did not want to live my teenage years this way.

Louise has taught me a lot. She is so patient, kind and funny. I found her to be so easy to talk to and I found that when I sat with her I was able to open up about my feelings. She told me that it's ok to ask for help. We talk a lot about how getting help will get me to a better mindset and will help me see things in a different way. She has also told me to continue with my work with my psychiatrist and to continue taking my medication. One thing that comes to my mind when Louise and I talk is her reassuring me that life is worth living even in the darkest moments. She reminds me to surround myself with positive people and continue to focus on the positive. We talk about how a diagnosis doesn't define who you are. I am not my diagnosis. For the times I feel completely overwhelmed, Louise has taught me some deep breath exercises and visualizations that help me calm down.

Even though I still suffer from depression and anxiety, I now realize the importance of getting your feelings out in the open. I know that I need to let my support team (my family, friends and medical team) help me when I am in need. Staying in isolation only puts me further into my depression. I want to make something out of my life, so I know that getting to school is vital. I am rarely ashamed of my feelings and have come to the realization that I will overcome this depression and anxiety at some point. I have always thought that when I grow up, that I would like to be able to go and help others and Louise has taught me that everything that I am learning from having these experiences will make me a stronger person and someone who is able to help others because of them.

I know that I can always talk to Louise and she keeps everything confidential. She is very intuitive when it comes to my feelings and I am glad that I have her to keep me going, when I think I no longer can.

Dani