

Stigma Silenced [Stories Spoken]: A Mental Health Podcast

Episode Four: How are you sleeping? Sleep Hygiene and Mental Health with Danei Edelen - Transcript

Speakers:

Adam Potter (AP) - He/Him

Bailey Patterson (BP) - She/Her, Host

Danei Edelen (DE) - She/Her, Guest

(Introduction Music)

Adam Potter: Welcome back to Stigma Silenced: Stories Spoken, a mental health podcast. This podcast is produced by the Human Development Institute at the University of Kentucky. This episode's guest, Danei Edelen, shares her experiences with mental health emergencies in adulthood and explores how physical health can influence our mental well being. Please be aware: there will be discussion of hospitalization, psychosis, hallucinations and medication. Take care of your own bodymind, with that in consideration.

Bailey Patterson: I am your host, Bailey Patterson, and without further ado, I hope you enjoy this episode. The views and opinions expressed in this podcast are those of the guest speakers and do not necessarily reflect the views, positions, or opinions of the University of Kentucky, the Human Development Institute, or any related entities.

Danei Edelen: My name is Danei Edelen. That's kind of like "Renee" with a "D," so it's kind of a unique name. I'm a wife, I'm a mother. I live on my little, little piece of heaven, 13 and a half acres out here in Brown County, Ohio, and I also had a psychotic break in my 40's, which is unusual, and so I've been hospitalized five times, and I founded a knowledge NAMI affiliate out here, and then in April, on my birthday, I became the Executive Director for NAMI northern Kentucky. I am a person. I am a silent sufferer. I am the person with the mental illness.

What makes me unique is I'm kind of an outlier, because most people have experienced symptoms during puberty or after, you know, after having a baby, I was... I was not. I had no symptoms growing up. You know, I was always kind of an emotional child, of course, you know, but no symptoms growing up. It was only after I had a toxic work environment, I went five nights without sleep, started hallucinating and went into psychosis in my 40s that all of this happened to me. So as I said, I'm very passionate about helping people so they don't go through what I did.

BP: Absolutely. Do you think that kind of the reactions that people around you had to your psychotic break were different because of the fact that it was something that came on at that point in your life, and not typical onset?

DE: Right. They were not confused. It wasn't puberty. I mean, you know? I mean, I think a lot of parents think, okay, my, my kid isn't sleeping all that well, you know, maybe this is hormones, you know. But if I have one message, is my first psychiatrist said, when it comes to mental illness, it all comes down to sleep. And so there really we, we all need sleep hygiene, and that's really key, you know. I The thing is, I always had the ability to fall asleep, you know. But now that I'm on medication. They don't want me to take naps during the day. But, you know, we all know that we're more bright eyed and bushy tailed and alert if we're, if we're, you know, I remember one time in college, I tried one all nighter, and that was enough. Yeah, I got a C, you know, and, and it was like, no, no, no, I'm not gonna try that again. That, that did absolutely nothing. I mean, in your you know, Dr Brittany Busse, he said that the brain is the most marvelous organ in the universe, as far as we can tell, and, but it's also one of the most fragile. And so that I am just a such a big proponent of sleep, sleep hygiene, and I don't ask people, "How are you doing?" anymore. I ask "how are you sleeping?"

Well, you know, I mean, I think we've all heard of the movies like One Flew Over Cuckoo's Nest and, and we all heard of things like, oh, you know, being crazy, quote, unquote "crazy". I was, you know, what was really fortunate about my situation was because my, my parents came down, and I think it was because of my mother psychologically. I said to her mom, "I don't know what's real and what's not," and she said, "It's time to go to the hospital."

Now, a lot of people, a lot of my friends who have been in psychosis, don't have the ability to so keep one foot in reality like I did, and that's why I know police were involved or anything. I went willingly to the hospital. Very confusing time. I mean, you know, obviously, you know, your first, first hospitalization is like, you know, part of it for me was just getting back to... I hadn't slept for five nights, so they put me on medication. I could sleep. And that was. Great. But then I said, You know what? Now, I just needed to sleep. Can I just go home? And my doctor said, Okay, well, we'll put you on nothing tonight, and we'll see what happens. Well, three o'clock in the morning I started feeling some of the symptoms I did when I was at home. And I'm like, I don't want this to happen, you know? So I'm like, Okay, what is this bipolar thing? So I accepted very early that... about...because I knew they didn't... I wasn't... this the last five days were so bizarre that I... they weren't.. they didn't feel quote, unquote "normal" to me.

BP: All right, kind of after that first experience with psychosis. And as I'm sure you're aware, psychosis is kind of like a loaded term in our world. How... what was the reaction from people around you?

DE: Well, pretty much they treated me like I was walking on eggshells, which was legitimate. I was, I needed to I was... I felt like my life was in 1000 pieces, you know. And it's like I remember we I went up to spend some time with my parents, you know, because give my husband and I had an eight year old

son, so give him a break up with my parents, and my brother in law walked in, and he just looked at me, and I started bawling, you know.

So, I mean, so legitimately so, people don't know it takes a time frame for people to get acclimated, because it really is, you know, your life is in 1000 pieces. You need to relearn a lot of things and... and so you just have to. People have to let you. You know, my husband's father was in the pharmaceutical industry, and he knew all about men, with the exception of the antipsychotics. And so he'd say, like, one day I'd be in bed the whole day. The next day, I'd be running around the house, spouting all the calamity known to man. And he's like, what? I mean, you know, we don't, and it has to do with stigma... we don't talk enough about diseases of the brain, and that's part of what I would want... like to say.

BP: Thank you so much for listening to this episode of Stigma Silenced. If you would like to learn more about our podcast and subscribe for future episodes, please hdi.uky.edu/stigmasilenced. Thank you so much.