



Video: Maissa's Story

MUSIC

TITLE

I hope one day...

Jihad Dib

Studies show that people living with a mental illness are far more likely to be victims of violent crimes than the perpetrators but that doesn't seem to stop some in society blaming them for almost every violent act reported.

MAISSA

I live with a mental illness.

I have a diagnosis of bipolar disorder.

One day, like today I feel good

but the next day is just getting out of bed is a challenge.

In general I don't hide it.

but there are things that happen daily that really do get on my nerves.

ACTOR 1

You're just tired.

ACTOR 2

It's not that serious.

ACTOR 3

Tomorrow is another day, just live your life.

MAISSA

I know they mean well but it's just not helpful.

NADA

Not taking someones mental illness seriously and suggesting that perhaps a good sleep or a herbal tea may help it disappear, is really only adding to their anxiety about their mental health.

MAISSA

but worse than the helpful suggestions are the stupid comments.

ACTOR 4

You're just being weird;

ACTOR 5

Have you tried meditation?

MARY

Offering platitudes can be unhelpful. Compassion and acceptance however are extremely valuable.

MAISSA

Some comments however affect me deeply....

ACTOR 8

You're crazy

ACTOR 9

You're insane

MAISSA

These words have bothered me since I was a teen
I hear them almost daily.

NADA

"Crazy" marks people as dangerous, unpredictable and incapable of rational behavior.

MAISSA

But the comment that really gets to me is...

ACTOR 10

You need to pull yourself together and snap out of it.

MAISSA

Is that really helpful advice?.....

MAISSA

Mental illness is something that takes time, treatment
and acceptance to manage.

A mental illness develops in the brain, making it very complex.

It's not something that we can "snap out of".

Although, believe me I wish I could.

LAYLA

People should not be defined by their illness. Someone with a broken leg is not a broken leg; they are more than their illness.

MAISSA

Believe it or not I am capable of having a conversation about a whole lot of things.

Don't think of me as a mental illness, think of me as a person.

MUSIC