

June 15, 2025

MISUNDERSTOOD TO MISDIAGNOSED

1. KATHERYN

- A. Little girl with big emotions
- B. I had lots of meltdowns
- C. I would yell and scream and stomp around slamming doors
- D. I lived in a house in ct in the woods with my mom and dad
- E. I was the only child in my house and I was lonely sometimes
- F. I would play pretend with my American girl dolls in my closet and pretend that they had the life I didn't- had people who understood them
- G. I played for hours alone in my closet and I was content and happy
- H. I would listen to sad music with my ipod nano and headphones and walk around the woods for hours by myself after school
- I. It was something about the sad music that made me feel like someone else knew how I felt
 - i. At the time I could not identify what it was
 - ii. Looking back I feel it was "lonely" "wanting a feeling of belonging" "felt misunderstood"
- J. I played lots of sports and the sport that seemed to stick and become my entire identity for the next 12 years was hockey
- K.

2. FELT DIFFERENT

- A. I felt different
- B. I didn't know how to make friends
- C. I remember my mom bringing me to my room a book on "How to start conversations" going into 7th grade
- D. I talk too much about myself and not ask enough about others

- E. I didn't know why it was so easy for other people to make friends but not me.
- F. I liked playing with other kids on the playground, but only when we were doing something athletic/sporty
 - i. I was a good athlete so I felt that –that is how I can make friends
 - ii. I made hockey my whole personality growing up

3. GASLIT

- A. I didn't know / couldn't advocate for myself
- B. How should I know?
- C. I thought the doctors knew best- you are the only one who can fully understand what you are going through
- D. I suppressed my emotions- cried about it to myself when no one was watching
- E. Had the lowest times of my life in my room alone, where no one saw
- F. No one knew how I felt
- G. How could they? I didn't tell them
- H. It was hard to advocate for myself as a child- when the typical response from doctors in the early 2000s-2010s was “the kid is making it up or exaggerating”
- I. I was never taken seriously
- J. The times I felt suicidal as a kid, were seen as “ways to get attention”
- K. I didn't want attention, I wanted a cure/fix/answer.
- L. I bottled up my emotions from an early age and made sure no one, not even my parents could ever see me cry

4. KAT

- A. It is like I never fit in with the kids back home in suffield ct- when I was called Katheryn
- B. Wanted to have an alter ego
- C. Start fresh, new persona
- D. No one new me, so maybe I could fit in if I pretended to be someone else
- E. Fresh start
- F. Hockey team- had instant friends
- G. Fall back on

- H. Too many people
- I. Felt sad/ confused because I have friends all around me how could I feel alone
- J. I felt alone because no one, not even myself at the time understood that I had a pretty good mask on
- K. I went through bullying senior year of high school- they put me on antipsychotics because they said I was making things up (delusions) and seeing things that were not real (hallucinations)
- L. Easy for them to slap it on because I already had a bipolar diagnosis
- M. I want to hug that 18 year old girl so tight and tell her- you are not crazy- LITERALLY NO ONE UNDERSTANDS you
- N. Not even yourself
- O. And that is not your fault
- P. You are trying so hard

5. MISDIAGNOSES AFTER MISDIAGNOSES

- A. Depression; anxiety; bipolar disorder; psychosis
- B. Hypersomnolence disorder, narcolepsy, frontal lobe epilepsy
- C. Just side effects from the meds adding on on top of each other
- D. It was like I was begging them to fix me and by them I mean all the doctors I can't even count on my hands that misdiagnosed me
- E. I was begging for a solution, put all my faith in that answer, and then was let down
- F. Antidepressants, antianxiety, antipsychotics, mood stabilizers, lots of stimulants
- G. Keep getting more prescribed
- H. My senior year of high school is pretty foggy
- I. I fell asleep in class countless times that year
- J. Due to sedation medication
- K. Changed my meds every 2 weeks- not just a dosage- whole medicines
- L. Went from antipsychotic to antidepressant
- M. Stopped meds randomly
- N. A lot of medical malpractice
- O. This was the first time in my life where I felt like an actual zombie

P. But it was legal, they were just trying to find the right meds that worked for me the doctor said, and she said it can take time.

6. QUITTING HOCKEY

- A. Hockey was my whole persona
- B. It was how I had instant friends
- C. Quitting during covid was a hard decision- but ultimately playing hockey was taking a toll on my body and mental health
- D. I wasn't having fun
- E. I was more upset hurting my family and friends' feelings about quitting, then actually leaving the team.
- F. Needed to see who I really was besides hockey
- G. I had no idea where to even start when I quit hockey
- H. I felt like I had NO idea who I was

7. PSYCHOLOGY

- A. I had gone into psychology because I was searching for a cure/answer to something that always crossed my mind- who was I
- B. I wanted to know why I do the things I do and what I can do to help me understand myself more
- C. I deep dove into bipolar disorder because that is what the doctor had said was my diagnosis

8. HYPERFIXATIONS

- A. A huge part of my life has been random hyper fixations
- B. I was fixated on so many RANDOM topics that still draw me till this day
- C. The study of penguins and platypi, the hunger games (I literally thought I was Katniss Everdeen/ asked my parents for a bow with arrows), hockey (was my personality for a while then I ended up doing it just because I didn't want to be known as a quitter), history (specifically WWII era), the diary of anne frank, coloring has been big in my adult life, tarot cards/crystals, thrifting, sewing, american girl dolls, Disney (I was a disney kid), deep into the bible, tiktok shop fame, author era in

2022, along the entire way-psychology and trying to figure out who I was was my biggest obsession.

D. I needed to know

E.

9. BRAIN UNDER ATTACK

A. Burn out at work

B. Working giving 110% for every project

C. Eat. Sleep. Work. Repeat

D. I was having so many panic attacks October-November 2024 I needed everything to stop

E. I felt like my brain was going to explode as well as my heart was going to beat out of my chest

F. I told a doctor at the facility I went to to get help about the meds/diagnoses I had

G. She looked as if she almost fell out of her chair with how many meds I was taking

H. She asked me "did someone prescribe you all these" "they prescribed you these for which reasons?"

I. My body was no longer aligned with my head

J. I felt like a literal zombie, again.

10. ENOUGH

A. Needed to figure out what was going on with me

B. Something has ALWAYS felt OFF but no one thought much about it

C. It is my LIFE/ WELL BEING not just a dumb thought

D. It is my whole experience

E. I wanted to see if I could get an autism evaluation

11. "YOU DON'T LOOK AUTISTIC"- DR.

A. Prove him wrong

B. "everyone's a little autistic"

C. He was listening to me but he was NOT hearing me

D. He had his own opinions and thoughts about autism

E.

12. MY OWN EXPERIMENT

A. feeling free from the chemicals

B. It's like my brain could finally breathe

C. I felt like I could see in brighter colors, think clearer, and I felt calm/peace for the first time in over a decade

D. The poison/toxins were leaving my body

E. I could see clearer

13. ACCOMMODATING MYSELF

A. It is okay to be sad when bad things happen,

B. Normal to be frustrated when someone is misunderstanding me

C. I had to re-learn if my reactions/emotions were valid in the context of situations

D. They were

E. I was being led to believe my mind/body would not ever react appropriately according to environmental/contextual situations

F. I was right they were wrong

G. I am reacting very valid with a mind sober from all the poison and chemicals I was fed for 25 years

14. KATHERYN MARY

A. Around the time I went off all the meds

B. I began to like honestly love my real name again

C. I go by Katheryn now

D. It is like when I was a kid, I hated who I was so I needed to push aside my identity and take on a new persona "kat"

E. While Kat went through all these crazy things while trying to understand who she was, I came back to loving who I am just the way I was created

F. I love my name Katheryn Mary

- G. It is like I am ready / I have grown/ I am going to keep going and now I am secure in who I am as a person
- H. I am not insecure or confused or scared
- I. I know who I am
- J. I am misunderstood

15. VALIDATION

- A. Dr I went to said
 - i. I scored high for autism in female adults
- B. Cried in the office, "you mean it?"
- C. I told him I feel like I have been gaslit my whole life into believing I was exaggerating or making things up
- D. I felt misunderstood MY WHOLE LIFE
- E. But this guy looked at me and said I understand you

16. I AM STRONG

- A. I am proud
- B. 2 months left of grad school
- C. Now have made it through elementary school, middle school, catholic high school/ boarding high school, college hockey, bachelor's degree, and almost entire master's degree going undiagnosed/undetected, I would like to say that I think I am pretty strong, and brave.
- D. I made it through such hard times where no one was understanding/ or listening to me
- E. They heard me but I don't think they really HEARD ME
- F. I moved away from those I know such as CT, and RI- the places I have lived
- G. I moved to New Hampshire with my best friend/ boyfriend and dog
- H. We have an incredible life
- I. Here, I create my own identity
- J. No one knows my past
- K. The future is not written yet
- L. There are endless possibilities here
- M. I am safe, healthy, and happy, I know who I am

- N. The trees are so beautiful and green, we live in the woods,
- O. Its very quiet – not too many noises at night
- P. Slower paced life- what I need

17. I AM MISUNDERSTOOD

- A. Unfortunately I did have to wait until I was 25 years old to get my life experience to be validated
- B. I always have been misunderstood
- C. I am grateful for everything that has led me to this realization- but it should not have taken 25 years for this little girl to get the help she needed
- D. I was crying out screaming for help and had no way of communicating that
- E. I had suicidal thoughts ever since the ripe age of 4- just always thinking “what is wrong with me?” and “why can’t somebody fix it?”
- F. I haven’t felt suicidal since I stopped my bipolar meds in beginning of march (my choice) and this is the longest time not feeling suicidal in my entire 25 years of existence.
- G. I am living proof of medical malpractice, misdiagnoses, quick fix solutions with medication.
- H. It doesn’t matter that I “look fine” I’m not, so understand this is a real life person’s experience.
- I. I definitely am and will be for the rest of my life an advocate against medical malpractice.