



On Mania

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Themes: Mental Health Mindful

About once a year, I get manic. I don't know why, but it happens.

Seasonal patterns in mood episodes are common in bipolar disorder, often triggered by changes in light exposure, sleep patterns, or stress levels. Research suggests that circadian rhythm disruptions may play a significant role in mood cycling.

I'm not sure if it's a chemical imbalance, or if it's just a part of who I am. But it happens, and it's not fun.

Every year, the trip is different. Sometimes I'm happy, sometimes I'm sad. Sometimes I'm angry, sometimes I'm scared. But every time, I'm manic.

I've tried to figure out what triggers it, but I can't. It just happens. And when it does, I have to ride it out. I have to let it run its course, and hope that I come out the other side in one piece.

I've learned to recognize the signs. The racing thoughts, the sleepless nights, the endless energy.

These are classic symptoms of mania: flight of ideas, decreased need for sleep, and increased goal-directed activity. Early recognition of these prodromal symptoms can be crucial for managing episodes before they become severe.

I know when it's coming, and I know what to expect. But that doesn't make it any easier.

When I'm manic, I feel like I'm on top of the world. I feel like I can do anything, be anything. But at the same time, I feel like I'm losing control. I feel like I'm going to explode, like I'm going to fall apart.

I've tried to fight it, to push it down, to ignore it. But that only makes it worse. It only makes it stronger.

This reflects a mindfulness-based approach to mental health, where accepting rather than fighting difficult experiences can reduce their intensity—a principle central to therapies like ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy) and DBT (Dialectical Behavior Therapy).

So now, I let it happen. I let it wash over me, and I try to stay afloat.

I know that it will pass. I know that it will end. But in the moment, it feels like it will last forever. It feels like I will never be normal again.

But I will. I always do. I always come out the other side, battered and bruised, but alive. And I know that I will again. I know that I will survive.