

Impact Story

We need to be exposed to people who believe in us

Hope begins with knowing there is somewhere we can get help. A safe place for us that is calm, quiet, without judgment, well ventilated, and where expectations are minimal.

A place that is safe from the intrusions of the outside world.

Do not overwhelm us with too much structure. We need encouragement, guidelines, and direction.

We need to be exposed to people who believe in us, people with lived experience who will cheer us on and celebrate all the baby steps.

Encourage group conversations where everyone who wants to share can share. We need to hear that we are not alone.

Language and tone are crucial. Words can become weapons. We need to be very mindful of what we say and how we say it.

We need to be kinder to ourselves.

To give ourselves permission to forgive, to let go, to move on.

We need to learn what boundaries are and then set them and enforce them.

We need to be taught that we are not defined by our illness.

We are tender, not broken.

Teach us self-care and show us how to look after ourselves.

Teach us to set small goals with reasonable expectations.

We need to be taught how to play — puzzles, art, walking, writing.

We need to be taught how to love ourselves.

Cathie Dean, person with lived experience

