

From: Velina Acosta [mailto:VACOSTA8@satx.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, May 07, 2009 11:18 PM
To: EBSA, E-OHPSCA - EBSA
Subject: COMMENT RE: MENTAL HEALTH

I am home on short term disability.

Why? I was a top performing designer. Promoted to train approx 40 other designers. Have a unique ability to save the company into the millions by value engineering. Have letter after letter of what an outstanding employee I was.

All while suffering severe affects of Bi-Polar/Depression/Anxiety and Panic Attacks and currently on medicine for ADHD. Never asked for anything more than don't subject me to inconsistent changes.

I have no idea why I was subjected to endless pressure, changes, confusion. I wrote and conveyed verbally over and over that I was becoming ill. That I didn't understand what was going on. I was humiliated. Why, I believe because I spoke up about not doing the job I had been given, which was to value engineer and train other designers.

I am afraid to leave my house, I have shutdown.

I was a top performing employee, without a single letter of mis-conduct or any verbal warnings. So why am I at home, on the verge of financial ruin, having my two children, my mother, 70, and my grandmother, 92 to support.

I talked with my doctor today. But I didn't tell him what I wanted to, I stopped short of telling him that the only way to have stopped my mental illness was that I not be born, my mother, my grandmother, father, children, sisters, brothers. My son and daughters suffer disability. My side mental, Bi-Polar is predominating in the family as is the cycle of physical and alcohol abuse. My children, son especially has a learning disability as does his father as does his grandfather.

A disturbing thought? No, when you think about my sister, trying to commit suicide 10 or more times last year and my other sister also, at least once I know of, (same father, her mother committed suicide.)

My daughter with four children having two of the three strikes you're out. Bi-Polar but adopted by her paternal aunt and uncle at 10 months old.

But the thought is, "it's all in your mind, you can get over it".

I have been working for over 5 months to develop a program to provide individuals with needed information to program, services, documentation, medical and education aid/funding. I want to help stop the cycle by providing the most important answer to ending this crisis. I know about physical, alcohol abuse, drugs, mental illness, including a learning disability but was given a gift to perform my job and understand enough to save millions. Me, I can help. I can help stop the cycle because I refuse to believe it has to continue. Early intervention, knowledge, access to services is the start and the ending.

Help, what help? Yes I am mentally disabled, can't leave the house but I can and have the complete ability to develop and operate a program as mentioned, including developing workshops to teach life skills. Yes, we have thousands of organizations. Where? Because I haven't found one that focuses on the millions of us that fall between the large gap, someone with blinders built. I'm talking about helping people like me, hard working lower to middle class or anyone with a disability. Why does it have to focus on a "class", of people?

Mental Illness, yes I am getting worse and not better but when you spend everyday wondering what you did wrong to deserve a life no child or adult should suffer and why, I ask why did I lose my job from a billion dollar company that has and had every resource but not once, ever, did they discuss, address or talk about my illness though I suffered panic and anxiety attacks up to three times a week. The stress was such that many couldn't believe I functioned at the level I did everyday.

Mental Illness, judge but before you do, sit with me and I'll tell you detail by detail every time my mother was beat and drunk. Every time I was looked at and judged when I went to a doctor or hospital and they then only focused on my "mental illness." Knew when they took that step backwards.

Sit with me and I'll bet you would find me to be well read, intelligent, organized and a top grade employee. But I was all that when I had a job and felt like I was somebody but now I'm a nobody, non-productive, my mind won't stop and I am reliving hell all over.

Mental Illness.....talk to me.