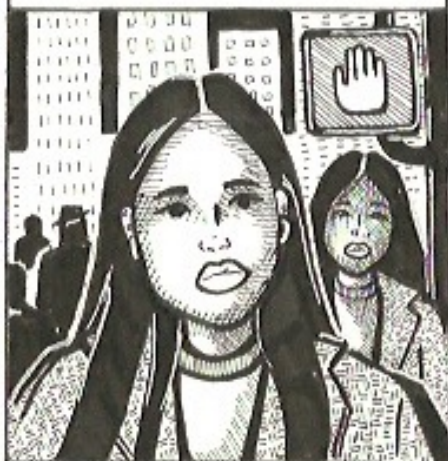


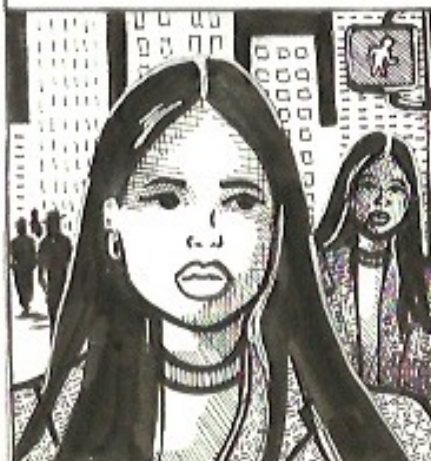
Depression has been the biggest demon in my life.



It has come and gone over the years.



Sometimes it's here for 3 months or 4 years.



I never know how long it will stay or leave.



Everytime it's here it's terrifying and dysregulating



In high school I had suicidal ideation.



I felt like a shadow of myself - dull and unhappy.



Nothing mattered and everything mattered.



It felt like being half asleep or half alive.



When I think back to this time period it



feels like my life didn't really start



Why do I feel like this?

until after I left high school.



I can't pin point why but depression left in my freshman year of



college. I was so happy. I felt like I was in bloom and like I was



just waking up. I was social, loved, loving, and things felt right.



Depression came back to me for short day trips this year though.



Then, it left and came back sophomore year to stay.



I had a mental health breakdown at 19 years.



I went to therapy for the first time which was



a light - a healing and safe experience.



I felt extreme self loathing that caused



me to retreat inside myself to rebuild who



I want to be, who I wanted to be around,



and where my place in the world was.



It felt like my construction
of the world had been

leveled by an
earthquake and only a

few buildings remained.
I had to rebuild myself,

to make sense of
things again.



I decided to take a
gap year to rest and
recuperate afterwards.

I cried more days than
not. I was anxious about
what I was doing with life.

I had no money, didn't
speak to my family, had
a broken heart, and

I had never felt more
alone. It was one of the
most difficult years.



But I got better. Not all at once but I got better.



Hey!

Helping others opened my heart to love and light.



Hi Irvin!

I decided to become a social worker that year.



Depression helped me to find my passion in life.



It was a painful and traumatic process though.

Along the way that year I learned to love the company I kept when alone.



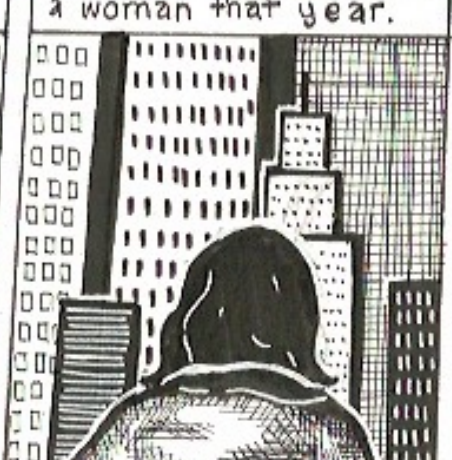
I had spent a lot of time looking for love outside of me when the love I



wanted was within me the whole time. Self love allowed me to re-



build and find my sense of self. I became a woman that year.



These memories feel so far away thinking about it.



I've tried to run away from depression ever since



Run away from sadness or anything "negative".



But I'm not a robot and it's normal to be sad.



It's normal to experience the full spectrum of



emotions - not just happiness, sadness



serves a purpose and I'm still trying to



be comfortable when it visits me.



Depression found me again in Fall of 2020.



I had stopped running but seeing her again



shocked and upset me. It wasn't the same.



This time I was fatigued; simply talking tired me.



Nothing brought joy. I didn't know what to do.



I was anxious and couldn't sleep well.



Nothing I was doing helped. It was dysregulating



I couldn't make sense of what was happening.



I stopped running and fighting. I let myself feel.



Feel the pent up anger, sadness, pain, and loss.



I was mentally and physically run down.



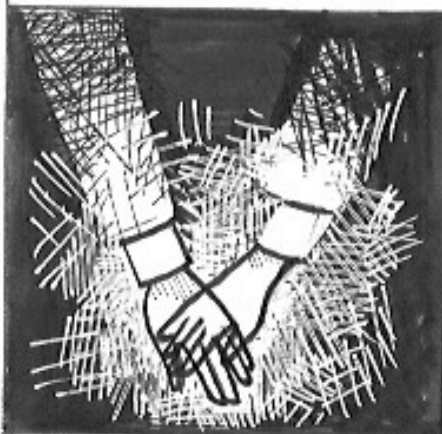
I had to let myself enter a deep rest.



Confronting and sitting with my deepest fear



allowed me to connect with a deeper and more



authentic version of myself that I had



cast aside and hidden from others.



Being honest with the pain I felt helped me to



Find peace with my depression. I received



a formal diagnosis, medication, and began



having honest conversations with others.



Your body is tired because your mind, body, and spirit are in sync now.

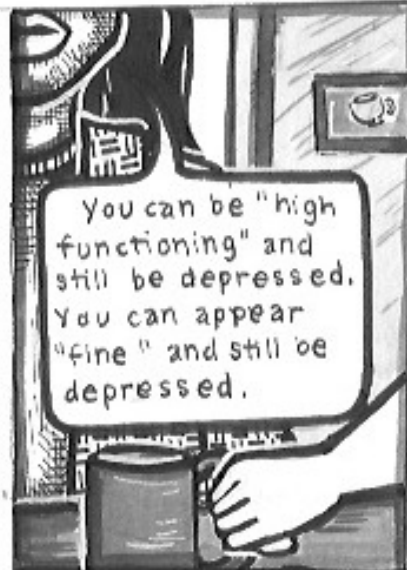


It's okay to take the time you need to rest



Trust that you know how to heal





Now, I feel fine and happy most days. I'm not



sure if it's the time I've given myself to be sad,



and heal, the depression medication,



or therapy. All I know is that I'm relieved.



Depression no longer feels like my worst nightmare come true. It has become

Now, I prioritize my mental health

an indicator I might need to take better care of myself or I need to



It's not a one and done situation that goes away forever

enter a deep rest. It feels like being reborn every time depression



good mental health requires upkeep

exits or enters my life. It's always teaching me something.

Taking care of my mental health is a lifelong journey.

