

Characters-

Bethany: A woman who seems to be in her late thirties with a kind demeanor.

Olivia: A younger woman in her early twenties, timid but sweet

Mike: A man in his early thirties, out-spoken and confident

Christina: A woman in her late twenties, kind and spunky

Adrien: A man in his early twenties, humorous and truthful

Angel: A man in his late thirties, kind but seems exhausted all the time

(Six people sit in a dimly lit room, in a circle made of chairs that each person sits in. This is a resource group.)

Bethany: Well, I'll go first. Let's all share our name, our mental health conditions, and why we're here. My name is Bethany and I have Audhd, which is a mixture of Adhd and Autism. I'm the one who started this mental health group because I wanted to be able to have a safe place to share my own experiences, as well as give others a place to share their experiences.

Olivia: *(nervously, averting her gaze to the group)* Um... My name is Olivia and I have anxiety. I just wanted to work on being able to talk openly with others.

Mike: Hey, I'm Mike. I have schizophrenia and I'm here to share with people who can try to understand me.

Christina: I'm Christina, you can call me Chris or Chrissy. I have bipolar disorder and I'm here to find accountability buddies to manage my emotions.

Adrien: My name is Adrien, well technically that's our vessel's name. I have multi-personality disorder or DID and, much like Christina, I'm here to find people to help me manage my personalities.

Angel: Hi, I'm Angel and I have depression, that's all I know of anyway. I just wanted to find people who can help me... take care of myself, I guess.

Bethany: That's great, everyone! It's nice to meet you all! Now let's all share our triggers just so that we can learn how to best accommodate each other, then we'll take turns sharing things about

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ourselves. Again, I'll go first. My triggers are usually bright lights, a lot of noise, small talk (*chuckles*), um when my routine is changed, when I forget to eat and stuff, and also just having to mask for too long. I know that's a lot but you don't have to do as much as me so uh... if it takes you a bit to think, that's fine. whoever wants can go next.

Mike: Hey there again, guys. My triggers are basically just when I have big life changes, it can make me worse and... talking about those things can also trigger it. I can't really control when it comes and goes, though.

Christina: That's funny, those are pretty much my triggers too. Changes in my life or even just in seasons. But otherwise, I usually don't expect it.

Adrien: Yeah, I feel like big changes are just a general trigger, because... well, me too.

Bethany: I agree. Changes in life are just a big trigger for a lot of people with or without mental health issues, I think.

Angel: Yeah, yeah, um... like for me it can be seasonal but my biggest trigger was that my wife divorced me and my mom died, all in one year... so ever since then it has been... bad.

Bethany: Oh... Angel... I'm so sorry.

Angel: (*he sighs and shakes his head*) No, no, it's fine. That's why I'm here.

(*There's a bit of an awkward silence before Bethany speaks up again*)

Bethany: Well, how about we get started on sharing a bit about ourselves, on that note. We only have about thirty minutes to talk. So, um... (*she rolls her ring between her fingers*) I noticed that you didn't share your triggers, Olivia, so you can go ahead and share your triggers then start us off on our conversation.

Olivia: Oh, um, sorry. I just got a bit nervous-

Bethany: Oh, no, no! It's alright! Take all the time you need. Go ahead.

Olivia: Well, my triggers are also small talk, um if I'm really stressed or tired, and just social situations in general.

Bethany: Okay, thank you all for sharing. Now could you share our first just... discussion, Olivia?

Olivia: Oh, okay... what do I say?

Bethany: Oh just anything. Like maybe just anything that you came here to share, that you had in mind.

Olivia: Okay, well, I did want to share my experience with panic attacks. I remember, when it first happened, I was only-

(The lights dim until they go out as the actors continue to improv talking in the circle. When the lights come back on, they are in different spots of the circle, talking and laughing together as if they're known each other for a long time. Everyone is there except for Olivia.)

Mike: Okay, so the other day, I just had that feeling like someone was watching me in the shower again so, I did what Chrissy told me helps her when she's having mood swings and it helped again!

Christina: That's great! I'm glad it helped!

Bethany: I'm so glad we have this group, it seems like we've all actually been able to help each other and be there for each other. I'm so glad we started this.

Angel: It's all thanks to you, Beth.

(everyone agrees and cheers for Bethany and the group)

Bethany: Oh thank you guys! Does anyone know where Olivia is, by the way?

Adrien: Oh, she texted me yesterday and told me that she was having a bad panic attack and couldn't come today or it would be too much for her.

Bethany: That's too bad. I hope she's alright.

(The lights dim until they turn off once again. Once they turn back on, Olivia is still not there, and now Mike is gone too.)

Bethany: Could Mike and Olivia not come again today?

Christina: Yeah, I checked the group chat and Mike texted. We still haven't heard back from Olivia since that day, though.

Bethany: *(sighs)* I hope they're both okay. We haven't seen Olivia in weeks and Mike has missed a bit too.

Angel: I can understand... Life gets to us sometimes. And it's even worse for those of us with mental issues.

Bethany: It's just... I hope they don't quit. We need everyone here to support each other.

(Once again, the lights dim until they go out. This time, when the lights go back up, the scene is in Bethany's home. She is just coming into her front door. We can see her red drapes and a couch. She's breathing heavily, stimming a lot, and falls onto the couch. She rocks back and forth rapidly.)

Bethany: There is so much... too much... *(She starts to breathe more heavily, covering her face with her hands until she pulls out her phone)* I need to... call someone. Who can I call? My kids are all busy. My parents and siblings are at work...

(She begins to panic even more, trying to do breathing exercises, until she sees the mental health group chat on her phone. She pauses before she clicks the call button. One of the lights spans to the side of the stage where Mike has picked up the phone.)

Angel: Hey, Beth, what's up..? Oh, Beth, you're having a breakdown. Okay, I'll try to see if I can get a hold of the others. I'll be right over.

(Angel begins to call the others and the lights turn off with him still calling. Once the lights are back on, it shows everyone coming into Bethany's front door. Everyone, including Olivia. Bethany is still having a breakdown on the couch. They all surround her and sit on the couch around her.)

Angel: Okay, so what do you need, Beth?

Bethany: I-I don't know. I just... I can't think.

Olivia: Well, when I'm having panic attacks, it helps if I take my mind off of it. Maybe it will help you too.

Christina: Is there anything that I can get for you?

Bethany: *(she tries to catch her breath and whispers)* Can you get me tea and um... I have this stuffed animal on my bed, that helps me.

Mike: I'll get it.

Adrien: I'll help with the tea.

(Adrien, Mike, and Christina all get up while Olivia and Angel help regulate Bethany on the couch. The lights turn out again and pull up on the circle once again, everyone there.)

Bethany: I wanted to thank you all again for helping me the other day. This whole group has been so important to me. I hope it is for you too. If I've learned anything from starting this group, it's that you need people around you who understand you and can be there for you. Because we all need people to turn to in our times of need.