##

Insights and Sound Bites

Be Compassionate Towards Yourself

Presented by Douglas Walker

Voice 1: You cannot do this alone. You need people who are experiencing the same thing.

Voice 2: Probably the hardest part was just navigating through the emotions of it.

Voice 3: Think if this had happened to a dear friend of yours, how much you would feel for him or her.

Douglas Walker: Hello, and welcome to the Insights and Soundbites Podcast. My name is Douglas Walker. Sometimes it’s easier to hide what you’re feeling, even from yourself. Today we’ll hear from Hannah. Hannah will share with us how she had to give herself permission to grieve in order to reach acceptance.

Hannah: When I was really very new to vision loss, very new to being legally blind, and still pretty stunned by it all, I was invited to contribute to the BBC, the British Broadcasting Corporation. They have a weekly radio program called In Touch, which is for blind and visually impaired people. I was invited to contribute about, of course, cooking, since I was a chef, and cooking and household equipment that worked well if you couldn't see properly.

I was so impressed by the presenters who were all either had low vision or were blind. I was so impressed by their easy, cheerful, friendly manner, but also very determined and firm to get the results that they needed. So that was my first wake-up call.
And of course, it's very hard when you're new to sight loss, you don't feel like easy company at all. You feel like it's such a grieving thing. So really, the first thing you have to do is allow yourself to recognize what a serious thing has happened to you, that this is very difficult to handle, and to be compassionate towards yourself. We tend to be self-critical as humans, and you have to be really…think if this had happened to a dear friend of yours, how much you would feel for him or her, and have that attitude towards yourself and give yourself time to feel all the grief about the loss of really good sight.

Douglas Walker: Be compassionate toward yourself. You know that is such great advice because it really does take time to work through the grieving process. Was there something someone said to you, or something someone did for you early on that made all the difference in the world in helping you adjust to living with vision loss?

We’d love to hear from you. If you’d like to share with us, just leave us a message on our Insights and Soundbites podcast voicemail by calling 847-512-4867. Or you can use your smartphone or computer and email us a recording to podcast@hadley.edu. Again, my name is Douglas Walker, take care and I’ll see you next time.