

The Darkness Was Thick and Suffocating

The racist treatment of Black lawmakers in Tennessee—and my own experiences in cancerland—pushed me into a deep depression.

April 11, 2023 By [Megan-Claire Chase](#)

There are levels of depression that often creep up on you. On Friday, April 7, the darkness was thick and suffocating. It has taken years to learn the signs and triggers of my depression. Even though I know them, I often don't fully see that I'm in the midst of a depressive spell until 1-2 weeks later.

Aside from unrestful sleeping, a big sign is that my apartment has become unorganized and messy. On the "good days," everything is in its place. It's homey, Zen, and full of my personality. I feel it takes longer to recognize the signs of depression when living alone. Before I knew it, clothes and shoes were everywhere. Dishes and mail are piling up, nonperishable items are still in the grocery bags and not put away, and my creative space and workspace are messy.

A tweet from @warriormegsie

I had been feeling surface-level depression but could still find motivation and joy until Thursday evening. What happened on Thursday? Unless you live under a rock, then you know about the two Black Democratic legislators, Justin Jones and Justin Pearson, who were expelled from the Tennessee state legislature but not the white woman legislator who protested gun violence along with them. While I wasn't surprised, another part of my soul cracked. Then I began to wonder what's the point of existing. What happened in TN Thursday was FULL ON RACISM displayed by the good 'ole white boys on camera who dared to demean them for "lack of decorum," especially after a known child molester was never expelled. Their white hoods came in the form of a microphone this time.

That triggering moment pushed me into a deeper depression. It doesn't matter what we do. Black people will never be good enough, respected, or valued. Our lives don't matter, and we are reminded of that daily. Then I took my thoughts a step further and how this fully applies to cancerland, too. The number of times I've received a comment in private FB cancer groups or openly on social media that "not everything is about race" or "race doesn't belong in the cancer space." Yes, I have literally been told this by those of the mayo complexion.

When I woke up yesterday, I couldn't move. I just sat in the darkness thinking, how am I supposed

to go to work, concentrate, and act like nothing is wrong? How do I deal with all the white staff who, more than likely, aren't even bothered or triggered by what happened in TN? I had an anxiety attack which ended with a full-on migraine. I'd forgotten how painful and debilitating migraines are, and I could barely move for most of the day. I took a sick day. No lights. No sounds. No phone or laptop for hours and hours.

I promised myself last year that I would always put my mental health first after an absolutely devastating work experience in 2021. I set healthy work boundaries where I do not respond to anything when taking a sick or vacation day. I did get highly annoyed that a colleague texted me a work question that was not urgent. Boundaries, people!!!

I emailed my cutie therapist to see if he had time for an emergency virtual session. He made the time. I barely moved all day. The veil of depression was suffocating me and manifesting in the form of a migraine that lasted until around 1am this morning. When I get this way, I can't function. I'm upset and disappointed that I had to miss a Prince tribute concert with a friend last night. I'd been looking forward to it for about two weeks! I had to put my mental health first.

No amount of antidepressants can heal the cracks in my soul caused by the never-ending barrage of racist rhetoric from TFG and GQP. I can no longer compartmentalize the amount of hate directed toward the Black community for speaking up, demanding to be heard, respected, valued, and then criticized when we succeed.

I have so much more to say, but I will end here for now.

Until next time,

Warrior Megsie

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