As a Peer Support Specialist, I’ll be leaning into the superpower that’s carried me through. Patience fueled by immense empathy that is non-judgmental.

My story starts with a childhood marked with the incomparable grief from the passing of my father at nine, innumerable experiences being censored and antagonized as a young queer person, and unrelenting comparisons and expectations for perfection. With no mental health awareness or advocacy up to that point, my first actualized attempt to end my life in college at the cross-section of verbal abuse at home and my first quintessential breakup during my senior year.

Life after that crisis and unsuccessful attempt has been incredibly wide-ranging. Though ten years later I'm overall in a far better place mentally, the storms that come with life’s challenges continue to barge in. The main difference now, is that I recognize them every time. I know the familiar cloud when I look over the horizon. Now that there is an established relationship with what the trials and episodes look like, I am far more skilled at preparing. After such a dense past full of judgment and isolation, I can find the light in almost any scenario to encourage others to know they hold intrinsic and unquantifiable value just by being themselves.