

Behind the Smile Transcribed Audio

Semi Cho

"My name is Semi Cho, and I am a voice of hope.

Growing up, I think I found it a bit complicated and a bit hard to navigate. I look quite different compared to, like, the normal human being. So having albinism means that I lack pigment in my hair and my skin. So that just means that I'm just completely white everywhere, and my perception of vision is also quite challenging because a lot of people with albinism will suffer glare because there is no pigment in the eyes.

Family and close people always have my back, but out of society, it's really, like, hard for them, I guess. Because people choose to be ignorant or don't get to know somebody. You know, that's how often, you know, judgment and all of those things happen. I was diagnosed with depression after quite a few setbacks. Those were mainly physical setbacks.

I had an autoimmune disease and that messed with my thyroid for quite a few years and that was really hard to diagnose for a while and then I also broke my leg. Due to a lot of setbacks like that, it really triggered my depression. And I didn't seek help for a long time because I didn't really know what it was called or how to kind of seek help with it.

I've decided to share my story because it's almost kind of like an acceptance for me to actually say and share that, 'I have this too,' out loud instead of just holding it to myself. I- I feel like I've only just clicked that you've got to look for things that fill your cup, beyond your just, like, day to day.

The pursuit of hobbies and creative paths have been a really, yeah, great asset to actually helping my mental health and my depression. Like returning to writing and to do stand-up comedy, those things also fill my cup and, you know, everyone actually needs a creative avenue to kind of let- let things out.

Horses are a big part of my life because they pass no judgement. How you approach a horse is - it's very 'come as you are.' And, you know, they- they don't really know how to talk or, you know, how to heckle somebody or, you know, judge, I guess. So, yeah, they- they're just 'come as you are' sort of animals.

If you're feeling down, you actually still have- have the ability to spread happiness and joy."