

## Kate Simonet Bio

As a senior in high school, Kate had what many would call an "All-American Life." She was varsity captain in three sports, was named the most athletic female in her high school, an academic honors student, was very involved in her local community, and, in seven short months, she would be on her way to a Division II college to pursue her education and compete on the cross country and track team. Despite this "All-American" background, nothing had prepared her for the downward spiral that led to a two, two-weeklong psychiatric hospitalization stays and a suicide attempt before those seven months were up.

Kate says that if she had a better understanding of what mental illnesses looked like and had the correct resources and language to ask for help, things would not have been so difficult for her younger self.

Now, 11 years later, Kate Simonet is an author of her memoir, *Out of the Darkness*, and inspirational speaker regarding the topic of mental health and suicide prevention. She lives with bipolar disorder and has taken many steps to overcome stigma and to live a healthy and successful life. Kate has devoted her time to helping others navigate stigma and mental health hurdles. She works full time at a mental health non profit, Thumbs Up.

She is currently living a life she never thought possible when originally diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Now, it has become her goal to teach people that there is hope in not only managing a mental illness, but in living a successful and happy life regardless of your mental health status. She is here to let you know that you can overcome difficult times too, and it's always possible to turn a dark situation into something light.