Hadley

It’s Not My Whole Life

Presented by Douglas Walker

**Douglas:** Hello, and welcome to the Insights and Sound Bites podcast, where people facing vision loss share insights about what has helped them cope and adjust.

**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.

**Douglas:** My name is Douglas Walker. Today we’ll hear from Alice. Alice will share with us how she made the mistake of allowing her vision loss to define who she was.

**Alice:** Hello. My name's Alice I'm from Myanmar, formerly known as Burma. I wasn’t born as a blind person, but I lost my eyesight due to glaucoma when I was a teenager. So, for about four or five years after my vision loss, I was spiraling into two extremes self-pity and denial.

From time to time, I just hid in my own shell and I kept myself away from other people. I wallowed in self-pity and I just kept repeating the words, Why me? Why me? Why did this happen to me?

But sometimes I fell into the trap of denial. I denied the fact that I can no longer see. I tried too hard in everything to act like a sighted person. And I was too proud to ask for help from other people. So, you may guess what happened to me? I just ended up in misery.

But a miracle happened one day when I was at university. My then boyfriend said, Alice like it or not, blindness is a part of your life. But you must also understand that it's not your whole life.

It was really an aha moment for me. Like it or not, I must accept that blindness is a part of my life. I cannot remove it from my life. But it's not my whole life or it's not the end of the world.

I still have many other senses, and I still can do many other things. Maybe in different ways that worked. Blindness is a part of your life, not your whole life.

So, unfortunately, I broke up with that boyfriend, but his words still has a special place in my heart. Blindness is a part of your life, not your whole life.

**Douglas**: Was there something that someone said to you or something that happened along the way 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 & Sound Bites voicemail by calling, 847-512-4867. Or, you can use your smartphone or computer and email us a recording to [podcast@Hadley.edu](mailto:podcast@Hadley.edu). Again, my name is Douglas Walker. Take care and I’ll see you next time.