Mariah Carey Reveals She's in Treatment for Bipolar Disorder

The R&B diva lived in denial and kept her struggle with the mental illness hidden for years—until now.

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Mariah Carey's music career has spanned almost three decades, but the singer recently revealed that behind closed doors she's been living with bipolar II disorder for 17 years, reports PEOPLE.

According to the National Institutes of Mental Health, bipolar II disorder is defined by a pattern of depressive episodes and hypomania, a milder form of the extreme elation and hyperactivity experienced by those with bipolar I disorder.

Carey, who was diagnosed in 2001 after being hospitalized for a physical and mental breakdown, initially found it difficult to accept her condition.

"Until recently I lived in denial and isolation and in constant fear someone would expose me," Carey said in an exclusive interview with PEOPLE. "It was too heavy a burden to carry and I simply couldn't do that anymore."

This is why Carey sought and is currently receiving treatment that includes therapy and prescription medications. She said that she has also surrounded herself with positive people and returned to songwriting and making music.

"I'm just in a really good place, where I'm comfortable discussing my struggles with bipolar II disorder," Carey said. "I'm hopeful we can get to a place where the stigma is lifted from people going through anything alone. It can be incredibly isolating. It does not have to define you and I refuse to allow it to define me or control me."

The entertainer is currently working on her new album, which will be released sometime this year.

Click here to learn more about bipolar disorder.

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