

# Our Justice podcast, Reece and Kayleigh

## **SPEAKERS**

Introduction, Speaker 1, Speaker 2, Speaker 3, Reece, Kayleigh.

### **Introduction** 00:00

[Mix of music voices with music in the background]. The Empathy Museum presents, A Mile In My Shoes.

### **Speaker 1** 00:15

Our justice.

### **Speaker 2** 00:16

Our justice.

### **Speaker 3** 00:17

Our justice.

### **Reece** 00:18

Our justice. You're listening to Our Justice, a series of true stories and conversations, co-produced by three young people with experience of the Scottish justice system. I'm Reece. So hey, Kayleigh, thanks for joining me today. We have really similar backgrounds in a lot of different ways. Could you talk a bit about what it was like growing up for you?

### **Kayleigh** 00:43

Well, we had quite a similar upbringing. And I think that has a lot to do with the areas that we grew up in, on a council estate. But aye, growing up, like, it was mostly worrying about money a lot. Like, where is the next paycheck coming fae, where is the next meal coming fae? Like, well, that's my personal experience. I don't know about you, but I'm pretty sure it was kind of the same thing. And dealing with mums that also had like, really bad mental health issues themselves.

### **Reece** 01:12

I'd say my mum kind of has money at a lot of points but also doesn't at points but a lot of the money, it was through, like, not legal avenues. I guess she would do whatever she needed to do to live the lifestyle that she wanted to live. Like, that's actually the kind of opposite of what I want to do now, in a sense, do you get what I mean?

### **Kayleigh** 01:31

Oh, 100%, like, 'cos for me, it was like a pure money struggle. But it wasn't my money struggle, it was my mum's money struggle. But it made me so much more aware, as a younger person, like being in school with my peers and stuff like that, and realising like, oh, wait a minute, youse live kind of differently, fae what I live. And then I think that caused a lot of self hate, a lot of embarrassment. And I

didn't really realise that until I grew up, and I did meet people like you, and we had conversations with people who were on the same exact situation.

**Reece 02:05**

Yeah, like in different ways, but still kind of the same kind of situations, the same themes.

**Kayleigh 02:09**

Aye, it was, like, a struggle for money, there was all the violence, the violence was so predominant, and it wasn't... it was normal. A lot of anger as well.

**Reece 02:17**

Aye, and it's like, as you grew up, you didn't really see how un-normal it was, I guess until you kind of come out of it. And you can reflect back on it. So you're one of my longest friends, and I'd say you've seen me face my, probably hardest moments, as well as some of my best moments like my recovery and stuff. So could you speak a bit about, I guess, your experience of being a friend of someone with a borderline personality disorder diagnosis?

**Kayleigh 02:45**

Aye well, as I said at the beginning, we all had the same kind of upbringing, we all had the same kind of reactions to things, it was dead violent, really bad behaviour like, no' even caring that the law exists. Like to us, the law was just something that we had to stay away from, like try and hide from [avoid]. Aye. So to me, it was so un-normal. I just assumed that you were a wee bit more reactive than us, or you were overreacting about stuff. From you, that's just your whole world, like you don't know any different. But, aye, it wasn't until even told, like, I remember you saying, you were on a bus. And the bus driver, I don't know, he said something to you. You told me that in that moment, you genuinely wanted to hurt him. You wanted to see him be hurt for how he made you feel. And then that's when I realised that's no' right. And then that's obviously when you went to get your diagnosis, and see when you're finally diagnosed, and it will make you feel, 'Oh wait a minute, it's no' that I'm no' normal, I'm, there is something wrong here.

**Reece 03:56**

We feel relieved, because up until that point from probably about age 10, my anger really, like blew up. And I knew that, at my age even, the way that I was reacting was so extreme. But I didn't know why. So I just felt very confused about, I guess who I was as a person as well. I do not remember meeting anyone with Borderline before my diagnosis. So like before, when I would see my behaviour, I could see my behaviour in a lot of different people but I still felt different. So when I got the diagnosis, and I kind of self taught and read into it and was doing therapy, and I seen all this behaviour that I displayed that I really, really, really resonated with. So it made me go 'Oh, like wow', like so there is something that like explains why I've felt this way for so long. Whereas before I didn't have that. So I think it made me worse, didn't you get what I mean, because I just didn't have any explanation. So yeah, I think it did really help me feel a lot more sure of myself.

**Kayleigh 04:57**

Aye and we have like, a falling out or whatever because I'm not gonna lie like, obviously, your diagnosis does get in the way, in certain parts of our friendship. But then, see when we have that cool off period? Like 'cos that's what I dae, I gie you a cool off period where we've had up a big blow up, but I know that it's no' that deep. So I go away for a couple of days and then that gives you time to sort out your brain, it gives me time to sort out what I could have done better, because things that I'll be saying will be triggering you as well. So it takes me my time to realise right, what have I done here, how could I have handled this better, and I know that you're doing the same. And then that's why we always come back. Like, I could be that person that doesn't understand you 'n walks away, 'n obviously that's where BPD comes fae, like a fear of abandonment. And obviously, you do have things that are gonna trigger other people to leave. That's what's a shame about it because there'll be people in your relationship that haven't gave you a chance because they don't understand.

**Reece 06:00**

Yeah, I'm a really, really, really protective person, like one of my biggest, I guess, things I've started to realise is that the most time I'm likely to probably fight has been in situations where somebody's came for somebody I care about. And I've tried to warn them or try to defuse it and try to like split up the situation. And then like that, that for me's a trigger. I think that that comes from kind of my upbringing and how much I guess my mother probably relied on me from such a young age, and how much I guess she was kind of going through different abuse situations with different men, because of kind of her self esteem and mental health issues, that I grew up knowing that she was getting, I guess, gaslit a lot and all these different things were happening and I would be, like, arguing and fighting all these kind of men. So I think, like, probably that part of me having to be so protective, from such a young age, for such a long time, has probably stuck with me now. But it's such a trigger that when somebody I really deeply care about, somebody's going to hurt them, it's like I just can't help it. I've got better at it; there's some weeks when I feel that I can handle anything. And I handle things so well. And then there's some weeks when I just feel that go back like five steps.

**Kayleigh 07:10**

Honestly, aye, I was gonna say, because you brought up your mum there, like, see how when she had a lawyer in mental health issues. And obviously, the system failed her. See when her anniversary comes up like how do you feel? Do you feel let down by the system?

**Reece 07:27**

Yeah, my mum was kind of let down by the system. But I'm not gonna lie and say she didn't bring some of it on herself. Although she was mentally ill, there's also a part where I have an understanding for everything that she went through and all the things that happened to her which was much, much worse than what happened to me or what I've been through. So I understand how much I can feel off the scale at times. And I've been through nowhere near what she has, so I can't even imagine what it would be like to be in her head every day. At her anniversary that's what I think about a lot.

**Kayleigh 08:03**

And me and you, like, we could have went the exact same way as what our mums did. Because the reason that they are or were the way that they are is because of their mental health issues that weren't

dealt wi', that people would not listen to you. We could of totally went the exact same route, not getting diagnosed, like, no understanding what mental health is. And then eventually, our children ending up the same. That's probably my main goal in life, is to completely not be that, and make sure that my weans and my kids are all right.

**Reece 08:39**

Yeah, 100% agree. What's your opinion on the relationship between mental health conditions and the criminal justice system?

**Kayleigh 08:47**

If you think about it, like, the biggest trending thing on YouTube right now is murder mystery and true crime. Like, where is the, 'Oh, this guy saved a random baby fae a burning building'? Like, they're the stories that I want to hear. I want to hear like triumphs and humanity being better, but we're constantly glamorising, like, serial killers. Like, see, you done a TED Talk like, we grew up in a council estate and you're one of my best pals, like, see how seeing you dae that, to me that was absolutely amazing. But people always bring up the things that you've done that are wrang. And I think that's why you constantly dae tell people your story, because you're wanting to no' be seen as that bad person, like, you're trying your hardest to get the help and go to therapy.

**Reece 09:33**

I do think I do sometimes big up myself a bit I'm not going to lie, but I also do agree with your point that I do think sometimes people just want to jump onto my kind of past or jump onto that kind of bad behaviour and I do think I buy into it sometimes but my reactions [break in sound]

**Kayleigh 09:47**

Aye, that's because obviously we've been pure trained to be like that. People want to get the gossipy part, they want to get why you're like that.

**Reece 09:53**

Do you think the prison system, do you think it doesn't help people, and what changes would you like to see, I guess, in the criminal justice system?

**Kayleigh 10:01**

I 100% believe in rehabilitation. Actually knowing people that have been to prison, these people constantly reoffend for a reason. Like, like, if they were to just go through some of these paths, give them the diagnosis that they need, give them the help that they need.

**Reece 10:18**

And give them the opportunities to find out what their skills are, and give them the opportunities to thrive.

**Kayleigh 10:24**

100%. They're saying that they don't have the money to rehabilitate people, but they have got money to buy a new yacht. They have the money to go and have parties behind the public's back when we're all stuck indoors. Like, there is funding there.

**Reece 10:39**

What I like about Scotland, and our kind of criminal justice system that's changing, is that they've brought in, like, if your kind of conviction leads to like a 12 month or less sentence, then you can't be put in prison. What I think about that is, well, you put someone in prison for, say, two months, or three months, and they've had a really good life and a really good job. And you shove them in prison for three months, and they've lost their job and everything. And then they come out three months later. And they go out to try and get a job. And they've been in prison. So therefore everybody shuts the door on them, they're in a position where they have no option. What is that person going to do? They're going to do whatever they need to do in order to survive. But I do think like, in something from doing criminal justice as part of my kind of social work degree, and one of the discussions that I used to love talking about was restorative justice. And I don't get why the UK doesn't really likely use it that much. So restorative justice is where basically it's, I committed a crime, and I've caused that person, like some sort of, I guess, trauma in some way. They would get an opportunity if they wanted, to face me, and ask me whatever questions they needed to ask. So the reason they do it is they say that it actually helps take the power back to the victim. The way we deal with it, with the court system, we kind of take everything away from the victim. And the kind of Court deals with it, which keeps the fear in it, so restorative justice it's so like, effective like, victims, it really helps with their kind of PTSD symptoms, and it also helps the perpetrator because they also then have to face what they've done, which then also helps them to not want to kind of do that, again. I think what they should be doing is like, restorative justice type things and then also putting in the support, like therapy, or medication or whatever support is needed in order to not make those decisions and go down that kind of route.

**Kayleigh 12:28**

But I think it does just start wi' a conversation. Like, it starts wi' 'Why have you committed this crime?' Like, what was your upbringing like? Everybody has the same type of story. It's no' the same very specifically, but it all comes fae trauma. And if that inner child trauma is dealt wi' on some level, it's easier for adults to be able to have the tools to deal with everyday life.

**Reece 12:52**

So that's another thing like, say somebody's committed a few different crimes like fights here or there, or drug dealing or something that like, very low level and they're in a situation where their home life's all over the place I guess and their kind of school life and everything.