An oral history project dedicated to documenting the life of the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory. The story is one of thousands recorded in over 1,500 videotaped interviews conducted to date. While we have done our utmost to authenticate these stories, they reflect the listener’s recollection and interpretation of the Rebbe’s words.
had written to the Rebbe about my situation, and the Rebbe
had given the answer to Rabbi Klein, but I hadn’t yet received
the message.)

About two years later, I had another episode and again stayed
in a hospital for a while, and then went back to yeshivah. A
year passed, and again I had an episode. After I recovered
somewhat, I wrote to the Rebbe that I had been very nervous,
and I requested his advice and blessing. The Rebbe’s secretary
responded, telling me that the Rebbe had advised me to do
four things: 1) hesech hadosa meihanal — to take my mind
off the fact that I had been nervous; 2) to check my tzitzit
to make sure that the garment was kosher; 3) to check my tefillin
to make sure they were kosher; and 4) to study the “Gate of
Trust” in the Duties of the Heart by the 11th century sage, Rabbi
Bahya Ibn Paquda.

I followed all these instructions. I checked my tzitzit and,
even though I didn’t find any problem with them, I bought
new ones just to be sure. I had my tefillin checked and, when
an issue was found, I had it rectified. I also stopped focusing
so much on how nervous I was. Instead, I began to study
the “Gate of Trust,” which explains how one can live a life of
total faith in G-d, free of worry. I recall feeling a tremendous
sense of comfort and assurance when I did so. I learned that
G-d controls every facet and detail of life, so when we trust
in Him, we can deal with others calmly and with confidence.
I felt like someone who had been parched in a desert and
who was suddenly given a drink of cold refreshing water. My
insecurities and worries just melted away. All of a sudden, I
felt that I could navigate life and relationships in a secure and
worry-free way.

Soon after this, I left the yeshivah and went home. I started
to work in the family business, but I didn’t adjust well to it. I
was still feeling the after-effects of the last psychotic episode,
and I was depressed (which may have been part of the bipolar
condition). I started to see a new doctor, who arranged for me
to join a support group, but I hated it so I just stayed at home.
That is when my mother called the Rebbe’s office, asking if
the Rebbe could write a letter to me. The reply was that first I
should write a letter to the Rebbe.

So I did, describing my situation. The Rebbe wrote back,
“Surely you are following the doctor’s instructions in their
entirety.” He also encouraged me to participate in the various
mitzvah campaigns which he had launched.

I went to my doctor, and I told him what the Rebbe had said,
and that now I was obligated to do what he would tell me to
do. The doctor saw that I would now obey his instructions,
but he was not comfortable with suddenly having so much
influence over me. I told him that although I understood why
he didn’t like the position that he was put in, I needed to follow
his instructions.

He conceded, and after we discussed how much I hated the
support group, he said that, if I preferred, I could go back to
work instead. So I forced myself to start working again, which
greatly improved my wellbeing. I even ended up finding my
niche in the company and I was successful.

What also helped was participating in the Rebbe’s mitzvah
campaigns. It made me very happy to help others, and it
boosted my self-esteem tremendously. Even today, I find
that when I run out of things to do for others, I start feeling
depressed, so I immediately begin thinking about ways that I
can help people.

Looking back, I can say that, thank G-d, my life has been very
productive and happy. I got married and started a family. And I
would just like to share this positive outcome with others who
may be in the same situation as I once was.