

# Wait and Hope

Category: In Pain

written by Stephanie Richers | October 30, 2017

Today I woke up much like the days before, and this ability to rouse myself from the safety of my bed, I count as my first of small triumphs. I have been waking up like this since I can remember, in a fog of depression, with my first thought always "I'm not sure I can do this again."

I have never not felt the pain that is depression; I have just had moments of success in hiding it. I fight the callous thoughts all day, every day. Some days I win, some days I fail spectacularly.

Pain is subjective, and I am and always have been my own worst enemy. I joke with my husband that I would give my left arm to have his brain for a day. A brain free from intrusive thoughts, from planning the next day, from worrying that I will forget whose birthday is next, from listing all of the things my daughter will need for the next eighteen years, from the nasty voice telling me I will never, ever be good enough.

I have been able to manage my depression for years without anyone in my life knowing, but that changed overnight with the birth of my daughter. My water broke in the elevator at my 40-week appointment. We found out there was meconium in the fluid, and as I was hooked up to the fetal monitor that fire alarm went off in the building. You cannot make this stuff up. I was whisked to the hospital where, as I sobbed, I ripped up my three-page, typed, double-spaced birth plan; all eight copies. The rest is a blur of stark white rooms, fear, breathing tubes, pressure, and not being able to see my daughter for the first eight hours of her life.

It was in this moment that I could no longer hide the depression that had been plaguing me for much of my life. It was in this moment that my secret was exposed.

Two years later and I continue to struggle, yet still I push out of bed daily, my first success of the day, and my hope is that those small victories will amount to a life outside of the depression fog.

I am still waiting. Still hoping.

*Stephanie Richers*  
*Kingston, New York*