

# Living with Depression

I thought they would be better off with somebody else. And I thought that I was never going to get healthy. And I thought I was really alone.

I had nothing. It was really, really hard. I felt like I stepped into a manhole that was uncovered and all of a sudden I was depressed. In the beginning, I really was trying to just power my way through.

There were a lot of days when I thought I would be depressed forever.

Before depression took over my life, I would say I had two small children and we were busy. They had busy hands and busy feet. I was so excited about all things. I mean, I could hardly narrow down my passions.

I began to feel that something had shifted, really, when I was pregnant with our third.

I started to isolate myself from my friends and my family. But then when I went in for a regular OB checkup and she said, I think you might be depressed. And as soon as she said those words, I burst into tears because she had finally put words to something that something wasn't right.

I was scared because I didn't know anybody who had suffered with depression. I didn't know anybody in my circle who talked about depression. And I didn't know what treatment would look like.

When you're really depressed, it is hard to do anything. It is enormously difficult to get out of bed. I went through very minimal personal care. I couldn't make a decision about what to feed people, what to feed myself. I couldn't get excited or angry either. And there was just a lack of interaction with my children.

It was just like I shut down. I could not handle an outing without breaking down into tears. Being so overwhelmed. I remember one time I took two of the children to the zoo and I just lost it. And

I sat in the parking lot and cried and the kids were crying in the car.

And that day I came home and I made a plan to kill myself.

I put the kids down for a nap and I had a giant bottle of pills, and I texted the word "help" to a friend who lived around the corner. And she was over here in 17 seconds and she saved me.

In the beginning, I really just needed to rest my body until the medication and the therapy could help me put one foot in front of the other again.

I had friends who, when I was really depressed and I was not safe to drive, they drove me to therapy. They drove to the pharmacy with me.

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When I felt like I was coming out of the darkest parts and sort of reentering society. It was a little bit nerve wracking at first, but it was also really encouraging thinking there might be hope, there might be, that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

Added talk therapy, added help in the house, added exercise and activity. It really became a more manageable plan with measurable results.

Currently, things that bring me joy are hiking with my family.

I wrote a book called Lessons for a Lifetime.

Writing and being creative gave me free reign of expression with words. It let me play with words and connect my feelings, to the words. That was enormously helpful.

I love being outside. I think I'm solar powered. I love wherever the sun is. That's where I want to be.

I like that my kids can join me in that, that our dog can go with us.

I found Facebook support groups. I found church support groups. I was grateful I had a neighbor I could text, but since then I have more neighbors I can text.

You are not alone. If you feel overwhelmed and isolated, you are not actually alone.

Please, please ask for help. You can contact so many wonderful people who would be more than happy to find all the resources that you need, but don't sit there alone.