

Janna

The Best Of Me

Getting Pregnant, with my first little girl was easy; I got pregnant so quick I could not believe it. I had the most wonderful experience being pregnant with her. My hair was glowing my face was rosy; I was able to exercise right up until her birth and only gained 23 pounds.

Carsen came into this world flawless and was absolutely beautiful. I felt that connection right off and was enamoured by her. She was everything, she was my little mini me.

Eighteen months later we decided to try again. We knew we wanted one more whether it be a boy or girl. We couldn't care less as long as she/he was healthy. I was never thinking about Postpartum; it never crossed my mind. I just knew it was going to be just as easy as the first, no doubt.

Wow, was I wrong.

Started trying in December of 2007 and every month without fail I got my period up until June 2008. So me being a worrier thought the worst and went to my OBGYN.

She suggested I try fertility pills. So I tracked my cycle and tried it and I thought it had worked the first month but did not and I got my period again... By the middle of August I was exhausted from worrying and not being pregnant.

It was not until my mother told me "Janna you are so blessed, you had a wonderful pregnancy and you have a healthy daughter maybe that is what God intended for you." It hit me and I just let it go and gave it to GOD. If I was never meant to have another child I was happy and blessed.

Then in November my period was late, but I was not even thinking about it; so on a whim I took a pregnancy test and It was positive. We were elated.

This was the beginning of my descent...

The next month I was upset because we were living in this little town home with no room. I spoke with my husband and we decided to put our home on the market in the worst economy since the 80's.

I stressed myself out so much, because we could not sell our home yet we had to keep it so clean all the time and my poor sweet daughter could not play with her toys like she wanted because mommy was so scared she would run into the walls and make a mark.

We spent so much money on staging and getting the place fixed up to sell. We were still in new construction and competing with builder prices and being the smallest town home in the neighbourhood was hell.....

I would go to bed crying myself to sleep calling my mom and brother all the time... I did not realize how much stress I was putting on myself or my baby until I put myself into preterm labour.

I was in the hospital for six days in June of 2009.....

My husband was another story.

We had been having problems since January of 09. I was dishonest with him on something and finally came clean and he was just being a jerk to me about going into pre term labour; saying I did it on purpose so he could not go to Bonnaroo (it's a hippy thing). He went four days without speaking to me.

On top of everything else, I was gaining so much weight with her, I put on 50 pounds with her and began hating myself.....daily I would look in the mirror and want to puke from the sight of my reflection.....

I could not be on my feet for very long so I had to lie in the bed and watch hours of crap on TV I was miserable and she was kicking me up in my rib cage so I was in pain as well..... I wanted her OUT OF ME.....and during all of this we were having several showings on our home...

I look back now and think *why* didn't we take this stupid thing off the market... Nevertheless, I was on a mission; I wanted out of that place.

After sitting for 45 days I was angry at my home; I was finding things to dislike about it everyday... I wanted out of that place and it was about to get worse.

Finally on July 16th Marley was born, healthy but had two birthmarks at the time both on her leg... It bothered me but not too much then.

Came home from the hospital and was on a high; however she cried all the time and we knew she cried way more than our first born. At first it was ok..... tried to breast feed plus take care of a 3 year old..... some women can; **I cannot**.....I

was not made to be super mom..... We barely slept, I was up every 2-3 hours pumping and feeding, and during the day Marley would not take naps and she cried incessantly.....

Finally in August the doctors told us she had Colic. I pumped until September of 09 and finally let my boobs dry up.....very painful and hard to do...

Still during all of this I was showing the house and handling a colicky baby and 3 year old... I would sit at home with Marley and stare at the walls because I was too afraid to go anywhere because she had this horrible cry that would not stop.

I was embarrassed by her for crying and she had developed two strawberries; one on top of her head and one on her forehead for all to see... I could not stand them, did not take pictures of her. I was worried people were staring at it and also I was irritated when people would ask me what it was and say " I hope it goes away.... "

I hated it... Then I decided I wanted to start losing the 50 pounds I had put on while I was pregnant so I had a brilliant idea of starting on Phentermine and also cutting my Zoloft in half because I felt I did not need it.....

Realizing I just gave birth less than 2 months prior... BIG MISTAKE...

At that point I knew something was different with me emotionally. I was yelling at the pharmacists and crying for no reason, trying to compare myself to all the moms who looked great right after giving birth, and hating myself and my body...

By the end of September we finally got an offer on our house... crappy offer, but we accepted and it was SOLD; funny thing was that I was not happy about it...

I knew I was going further down emotionally... I started to not want to be around Marley as much... Her strawberry on her forehead was getting bigger and I hated it and did not like the way she looked... how horrible for a mother to have those feelings.

On top of all this, she did not stop crying she cried all of July, August, September and October... it was painful and draining... I did not feel close to her at all and

was regretting even having another baby at that time.

I felt lost and lonely... My husband told me I was a horrible mother and that I couldn't care less about both our children; I felt like I was being kicked while down for the count, my own husband was against me. He could not understand the pain inside of me. I wanted to get in my car and drive to somewhere till the road ended and never turn back... I was scared to be left alone with both kids, I started having horrible, painful thoughts in my head, I knew they were wrong but they wouldn't stop.

I was having continuous anxiety attacks, my primary doctor upped my dose of Zoloft and my therapist was nice but I don't think she got the pain I was in.

Friends and Family started to notice that I was crying from the drop of a hat and just staring off into space for no reason... I could not sleep ... Thank God I had Ambien at the time because I would have been committed and not voluntarily... And to top it all off I was the maid of honour for my best friend's wedding in October... I was running on empty...

Oct 24th 2009, My best friend got married, I looked like an overweight smurf...it was horrific. I did not smile or even try to help my best friend get ready, I could not concentrate, I knew I was at the top of the hill and after that wedding I fell and fell hard.

Driving home from the wedding I had my first anxiety attack... I felt like my skin was turning inside out. Thoughts encompassed me. I was actually on the verge of insanity (at least I thought)... what the hell was wrong with me?

I walked in the door and my husband was like "What is wrong with you?" I tore my 300.00 bridesmaid dress off and threw it in the trash..... I could not sit down, I was sweating, I was crying, I was shaking. I was confused; I didn't know what was going on with me. My husband was just sitting there watching me pace back and forth with this disgusted look on his face. That night I took an Ambien, I fell asleep but at 1.00am I woke up in a sheer panic... I could not sleep; my heart was beating out of my chest... Fears of my children were surfacing all around... I walked up and down the stairs, Marley started crying and I started to hate her for that... why does she always need something!!!!!! It was consuming me.

I was irritated all the time, I had no patience what so ever; feared everything. Feared something bad would happen; what if I dropped her, what if I got in a wreck and she was in the car, what if I lost control? It was the scariest feeling in the world. Where did it come from?

What came and took all my confidence away from me and made me so frightened of being alone with my children or not being fit enough to be their mom, of feeling extreme guilt because I felt as if I would never ever get out of this box I was shoved into.

I was in sheer panic, I felt ashamed for feeling this way, I felt alone and afraid because my husband was not understanding at all. I had no one, absolutely no one who understood and that was the scariest thing.

I finally worked up the courage to call my mother in law and all I said was "I can't do it, something is wrong with me, I need help." It was the hardest thing I have ever done. I had to openly admit that I was incapable of being a mom.

I was having such bad anxiety that I could not do anything, and the more the anxiety the worse my derealization got. The derealization is another story in itself. I could not go anywhere or be seen by anyone other than family members. It was debilitating. My sister in law came over to help me for the rest of the week.

My husband was still very much a cause of my anxiety because of his lack of concern or compassion. I could not go to work; I could not function... It took everything I had to get up; not because I was not getting enough sleep but because I was so scared and my anxiety was through the roof.

I tried to find help by searching the internet and seeing what was out there and it scared the hell out of me... The internet can be more of an enemy than a friend... Time was actually standing still.

I felt like I was finally feeling a little better and getting stronger but knew deep down I was still scared to be alone with the children, not because I would hurt them but because I felt as if I was incompetent as a mother and I would never be able to be a great mom and raise them like I saw other people do.

I was seeing a therapist but she did not have children and did not truly understand how I felt... I felt lost and alone in this big city...

I woke up each morning welcomed with fear and anxiety. My mom who was 6

hours away could only do so much over the phone... I was getting worse and worse...

I did not feel this medication was helping me. The anxiety was getting to be too much and I was falling into a depression...

I felt ashamed; I prayed to GOD every two seconds to help me through the minute, the hour, the day, and the week, "Please Lord let me get through this... I will not be able to live anymore if I have to continue to feel and think this way....."

I have never in my life thought about suicide, but I was thinking that if I cannot escape this than why even exist... I could just take a bottle of my sleeping pills and make all this pain go away... My daughters would be better off without me, everyone would be better off... PPD/A had gotten the Best of ME..

Of course looking back now I know that was selfish and horrible, but when you are at such a low point in your life; let's just say I understand.

Your mind is the most powerful thing and it can play such horrible tricks on you.

December 3rd I was admitted to hospital for Postpartum Anxiety.

I have actually for the first time in my life reached the absolute bottom. No light exists, I felt like a pariah...I don't belong here but I had no other place to go. I need help and I am getting help. I requested to stay longer so I could attend every group therapy session and all the classes. If I was here than I was going to give it all I got, no matter how hard it is...

I got a postpartum support group started in Nashville with 5 other women. Met an incredible therapist who was completely trained in PPD/A. She recommended me to the best Psychiatrist in the world who actually suffered thru PPOCD herself- Dr Amanda Sparks. Those two ppl saved me.

I have made a recovery.

I still have my moments of anxiety, and I lost my confidence during all of this... I used to be able to do anything and now some things just scare me... but with the help of the best psychiatrist in the world and my wonderful therapist I am a million times better than I was back in December of 2009.

My PPD started in September-October 2009 and it took me until Feb-March 2010 to start feeling like myself again...