



The true stories of
CARLA O'REILLY
ELITA PATERSON
TANIA BIRD

Husbands' perspectives
written by

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Preface written by

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THE SMILING MASK

TRUTHS ABOUT POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION AND PARENTHOOD

The Smiling Mask was created, to **educate** and **validate** women and families about the seriousness of postpartum difficulties. Postpartum illness can have a number of forms:

Postpartum depression – women with this condition suffer despondency, tearfulness, and feelings of inadequacy, guilt, anxiety, irritability and fatigue. Physical symptoms include headaches, numbness, chest pain and hyperventilation. 1 in 4 women are affected by PPD and when left untreated, the effects can often lead to neglect of the child, suicide or infanticide.

Post-traumatic stress disorder – which can occur due to a traumatic labour or due to a high risk pregnancy.

Postpartum Anxiety and/or Panic Disorder - though it is not very well known or commonly spoken of, postpartum anxiety and/or panic disorder affects between 4% and 6% of women in the postpartum period. Women may suffer from either of these disorders alone, together, or in conjunction with postpartum depression.

Postpartum obsessive compulsive disorder – which involves the mother having intrusive thoughts of harming the child or a fear of sickness or germs and occurs to 2-3 percent of women.

Postpartum psychosis – this occurs in 1 in 1000 births and involves the mother having delusional thoughts, sleeplessness, or hearing auditory voices, believing in a power outside them commanding them to kill, or harm the child.

THE SMILING MASK includes:

- The Rising – a poem written in honour of the authors' struggles and survival
- The Fairytale of the Perfect Mother
- The true stories of Carla O'Reilly, Elita Paterson, and Tania Bird who suffered from severe postpartum obsessive compulsive disorder, postpartum depression and anxiety/panic disorder and postpartum psychosis, respectively
- The Husbands' Perspectives as told by Peggy Collins, Publisher
- The Great Debate - To have or not to have another Child. There is a reoccurring chance (80%) of postpartum difficulties with each subsequent birth
- Signs and Symptoms of post partum illness
- Ways for Support Systems to help
- Suggestions of things to do when suffering

Women, husbands and communities need to be aware of medical support available, and counselling services.

Women need to know they have the RIGHT TO ASK FOR HELP and DEMAND IT! Postpartum depression is TREATABLE!! PPD is a family affair and it does not discriminate who it affects!

FAMILIES NEED TO KNOW and LISTEN FOR INVITATIONS to HELP a SUICIDAL MOTHER. PEOPLE CONTEMPLATING SUICIDE SEND OUT INVITATIONS by CRYING OUT FOR HELP! http://www.cmha.ca/BINS/content_page.asp?cid=3-101-102

We believe you have two hands: one to help yourself and one to help someone else! Please spread the word: Listen, Learn, and Breathe Empathy!

THANK YOU and WITH HEARTFELT GRATITUDE!

The Smiling Mask Team

With every book sold we are donating \$1.00 equally to all four chosen charities: YMCA/YWCA | Mental Health | Women's Shelters | NICU/Mother&Baby Units.