



# Complex Child E-Magazine

www.ComplexChild.com

## Stigmatize Me: Why I'm Now Taking Antidepressants by C.

How many times have family and friends spoken the words, "Don't forget to take care of you." Um, can you keep the platitude? Especially when what would really help would be hands-on help (have you hauled a wheelchair and walker around lately?) and money (this complex medical stuff is really expensive).

Four years post-diagnosis for my son, it turn out that maybe the platitude was something to heed. As in, I finally reached a breaking point. I didn't really think I had one. But then I watched my fragile-boned sweet boy flip face first in his wheelchair onto the tennis court. That. Was. It.

### **The Trigger**

The sweet boy has to be able to live life, and playing tennis is a part of that. I get that. But seeing the fall and going through all the terrible things that a fall like that could do, as in permanent and irreparable facial injury among many other possible broken bones, was one of those moments when it just hits you. Geez, I still can't shake it, even though he appears fine for now.

I lied when his doctor asked a week later during a miscellaneous checkup. "You okay?" was the question, and, "Oh, yeah, of course," my answer.

I wasn't. I just couldn't reel in the constant worry. It's made worse most likely because we're looking at a big bone surgery in just a few weeks. This is big surgery number three. The first surgery was kind of a blur. The second, all I can remember thinking is that I just wanted to take my sweet boy home, no incisions, no shiny surgical tools, no pain, no surgery. It was a bad feeling. Clearly, we made it through after many weeks, but it was very hard. I dread number three.

### **Medication**

The worry was bad, so bad, that for the first time ever in my life I started researching medications for me to take. I decided on one and made an appointment with my family

practice doctor. I told the nurse that I was there to talk about medication x, and she looked a little uncomfortable.

The doctor came in. I explained my situation, fatigue and worry. "Maybe it's the thyroid. Let's try that first." I could tell that was the end of the discussion. I don't know this doctor very well since I rarely visit doctors for me and just didn't feel like getting all weepy.

"Dude, I know mental health, as in my people are crazy, gifted in crazy," is what I really wanted to say. I doubt there is a mental health medication that someone in my family hasn't tried. I'm the mental health hold out, the teetotaler.

So what does a resourceful mama like me do? I made an appointment with a nurse practitioner at my ob-gyn's office for the next day. This meant that I had to drive over an hour to a nearby town.

I was lucky enough to get a parking space. I crowded into an elevator packed with pregnant women. By the time the nurse came in, I had about had it with frustration; I just wanted a prescription for an antidepressant/anxiety medication. So I cried explaining the whole complex sick kid surgery fragile bones deal.

And then I cried some more when the nurse practitioner came in. She couldn't scratch out a prescription fast enough. I could tell she held back in chiding me for "neglecting" this matter (stress) for over four years.

### **Feeling Better**

We meet again in about a month, and I am relieved to say that I already feel a million times better. My son still has a complex, scary health condition and the medication gives me a headache here and there. But the crying, the daily exhausting worry and tears, is not happening so much.

Honestly, I should have done this years ago, perhaps. So instead of thinking about breaking points and broken bones, I am thinking that when I check back in with my family practice doctor in a few weeks it could be a tiny bit awkward. I can handle awkward, no worries.

And now when my sister says: "Do for you, you deserve some happy," my reply is, "I agree, working on it."