

# I am a Survivor

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Posted by: sherror on January 06, 2005

I love the theme of this site as I feel like I have been a survivor my whole life. My mother has suffered for yrs from severe depression and anxiety. When I was a child she didn't have to abuse us physically because she could do a lot more harm with her mouth. I am happy to say that as an adult there has been a lot of forgiveness oÂ-n my part and we have a close relationship today. I remember as a child having terrible anxiety attacks, also obsessive tendencies and depression.

When I was 22 (1992) my husband started working the night shift. I started having panic attacks not knowing what they were. I would call my sister and she would talk to me until I the panic subsided. Shortly after that I became sick and my ears were badly clogged up. I was having terrible panic attacks but still didn't know what they were. Finally after a week with almost no sleep and breaking down crying to my mother she rushed me to my doctor's office and he put me oÂ-n Xanax. After I got better the panic went away. Little did I know it was oÂ-nly the beginning.

Years later (1997) when my first child was 2 yrs old, I had what we call my "nervous breakdown". I began to have flashbacks from my childhood more and more. I had terrible nightmares. I had panic attacks so often that it was like they were rolling oÂ-n top of oÂ-ne another without end. I couldn't leave my house; I would have an attack just from oÂ-ne of my family members coming by my house. I felt totally numb and dead inside except for the depression. It was like a huge weight oÂ-n me. I wasn't even living anymore. I was literally just existing. My doctor put me oÂ-n Prozac but it had a bad affect oÂ-n me and made my panic worse.

I began to see a family friend who was a Christian Counselor. He saved my life. He not oÂ-nly was my lifeline, but he helped me forgive and let go of a past full of hurts. He counseled me twice a week for 6 months and never charged me a dime. He passed away a few months ago from cancer but I will never forget what he did for me. It took me about a year to get back oÂ-n my feet from the breakdown, oÂ-nly having occasional panic attacks.

When my second child was about 6 months old (2001) the panic hit hard again. I was in a state of constant panic it seemed. I was in such bad shape that I couldn't care for myself much less a baby. I ended up huddled in a chair and wouldn't move except to go to the bathroom. My husband knowing my history and having spent many a night awake and holding my hand, got me to the doctor quick. He eventually diagnosed me with panic disorder, with depression. He put me oÂ-n an antidepressant and klonopin. Within 3 days I felt immediate relief. I was back to work the next week.

I still have bouts with depression and I have developed phobias because of my panic being so out of control at times. I have fewer attacks now and I can function as a human being again. Though some situations are very hard for me I force myself to do things like ride the occasional elevator or go to a movie I really want to see. I recently went oÂ-n a weekend trip with my mom and sister, without my husband and kids. Even though I was terrified and had some mild panic attacks, I went anyway because I wanted to and I am a survivor. I have been a Christian since I was 19 yrs old. In the bible it says that God causes all things to work together for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purpose. I don't know if I think God gave this disorder to me. But I know that though it would try to destroy me and tear me down, he has taken it and caused it to be something that makes me stronger and more appreciative of what I have and a beacon of hope to others.