Behavioral Health Unit&quot

Posted by twitem5o3 - 2014/02/19 10:36

Response by on 2/18/2013 10:13:53 AM

Hi there Melody! Very intriguing post!(It always is!)
I was diagnosed in October, 2007 at the ripe-old-age of 37.I had a two-month-old baby and a two & a half year-old toddler, a terrified husband and a breast pump in tow when our family schlepped to the hospital for me to be assessed for acute postpartum mania & hypergraphia.(Hypergraphia is the compulsion to write nonstop - it was very ironic to have that, as I was a freelance writer for the previosu decade and had interviewed such mental health luminaries as Dr. Kay Redfield Jamison and Dr. Martha Manning....)
So, I voluntarily admitted myself to the local "Behavioral Health Unit" (a.k. BHU, my fellow patient friend and I called it "Boo Hoo!) as I knew I was acutely manic.However, I didn't want to accept that reality full-on.I had grown up with a brilliant, Juilliard-trained, Fulbright-award-winning, Los Angeles Philharmonic-violinist Dad who had been diagnosed with bipolar one when he was 18.When I was growing up and witnessed his debilitating depressions and crazy-ass manic outbursts, he assured me that I would never "get" bipolar, or what was then called manic depression.
When I called Dad from Boo Hoo's pay phone in the locked-down ward and told him I was officially diagnosed with bp one, he cried.He felt responsible for my illness.As he was my best friend apart from my husband, I really felt like damagedgoods and like I had let everyone down, most of all, myself,replica tw steel watches, of course.
Ironically, the very first medical professional who suspected I had bp was my amazing, UCLA-trained pediatrician.I visited him with my baby just a few weeks after she was born and I brought him a bunch of rather eclectic gifts.I was energetic and I was talking reallllly fast!
Dr. "S". looked at me closely and said:
"Dyane, you're manic!"
I felt SO humiliated that I burst into sobs.I knew he was right....I also felt like he had called me a dirty word - and I got red-tagged that day for being a "mentally ill mom&quot,replica a lange sohne watches;.
Then the cookies truly began to crumble.
My bp was triggered in the first place by severe sleep deprivation during labor and hormonal shifts.It could happen to anyone - not just a woman with a genetic predisposition to bipolar.Try having someone not sleep for two nights and give birth and you will see what I mean!They probably won't be the most grounded person on the block,omega replica.
So it has been almost six years since that fateful day.Over the past year I unknowingly tapered off my therapeutic dose of lithium as I had started drinking a great deal of water each day over a period of hours,fake rolex. The gallon of water intake/day flushed out this drug to below the therapeutic range in my system.
My pdoc had only been monitoring me with blood tests every six months, so the low lithium level was undetected for some time. I couldn't believe that the massive bipolar depression I had for so long had finally lifted. (I had tried over 15 psych meds and had ECt before this happened, to no long-term avail)
I figured out why my depression was gone, which galvanized my desire to try to live without psych meds.
For the past year I have been using a variety of free and low-cost holistic lifestyle choices to control my symptoms and be stable & happy.I am my "old self" again,fake iwc watches, joyful, productive, and healthy.I also lost 60 pounds over the past year and instead of being almost 200 pounds like I was last February, I am now a steady 120 pounds and I have my energy & strength back.
To top things off, last week I was awarded my first book contract by a wonderful, new women's health publisher.I will be telling my story about why I decided to take the enormous risk to ***try*** living without psych meds, which is going to be a work-in-progress over the next 18 months.
I'm not sure, to tell you the truth, if I will be able to be 100& lithium-free and only time will tell.
I am taking 50 mg/a day of lithium and will taper down to 0mg by the time my 43rd birthday arrives on

March 18th.I am being monitored by my pdoc closely, as well as by my therapist and husband: my "A" Team! I also have been advised by my mentor Dr. Liz Miller (who did the same exact thing I did: taper off lithium super-super-slowly after being diagnosed with bipolar one.She took six months to do it but I gave myself over a year.
I never thought I would get my life back post-diagnosis.It took a long time, like I wrote above.I have newly-diagosed friends who look at me now and they wonder if they can ever be happy again.I tell them "yes" and I'm showing them how to do that as well.I don't believe one pill can fix bipolar.It takes a variety of things that all you fantastic bloggers discuss so well.But my mission now is to help other moms with bipolar disorder explore their options as safely as possible in terms of lifelong treatment, and at age 42 I am finally the best version of myself, bipolar "warts" and all.
Thanks, Melody, for always being a true inspiration!
Dyane))

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Birth of A New Brain: My Ultimately Medication-Free Recovery from
Postpartum Bipolar Disorder with a foreword by Dr. Liz Miller, author of Mood Mapping
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