

Chronicle of a Depressed & Anxious Person (Fictitious)

(taken from personal experience and that of clients and friends, all personal details, times and events have been anonymized)

- Born as daughter of a “normal” middle class family
- Age 12 - suicidal thoughts (sleeping tablets). Didn’t get them, though
- Age 13 - started to read books on psychology, felt lonely, no one really to talk to. I thought I needed a partner to get “love” from him instead of parents, answered first contact ad from future husband, shortly after saw him for the first time,
- First kiss. “fell in love instantaneously”
- Future husband asked me to marry him. I said yes
- Age 14: official engagement (on wedding day of my parents)
- Ages 14/15: wrote short fables and little stories – sad, despair, loneliness, inferiority, failure, read Carl Rogers: “On becoming a person”. Identified my problems quite correctly – quite the same as they are (were?) today.
- Age 16: got pregnant by future husband, had first child
- Age 17: depressed again. Negative self-help group experience. Wish to be dead. I can’t stand life any longer. But I don’t dare to kill myself. analyzed: what’s important in a man for me. Realized relationship problems with future husband – letter to him – never mailed. Dependency, lack of trust, jealousy, lack of freedom to change, to grow, aggressive outbreaks
- Age 18: separated from future husband for 8 months. Trying to become self-sufficient but failed. Negative experience with student counselor..
- Married husband after separation failed. At least he would provide for the children.
- Age 19: 2nd child – 3 months after her birth I Wanted to hang myself. Didn’t do only because of the children.
- Age 20: Helped husband with work issues (that he should have done himself)
- Age 21: severe depression (no concrete suicide intentions because of children, but no interest in anything, couldn’t feel happiness at all, overwhelmed, apathy, inability to get things done.
- Neglected the children emotionally – abused them, shouted, hit them sometimes, locked them in their rooms. Felt very guilty about that.
- Age 23: same as age 21
- Husband started working out of the home office (I was his assistant)
- 26: Finally finished my own education, worked for 6 years while his parents had the kids, felt quite good being away from it all, very good at work, successful, got

- promoted, but felt guilty about not having time for children. Worked overtime and weekends, even night shifts. Full of Energy until age 33.
- Age 33: First stroke hits. Spent 4 weeks at hospital, 4 weeks at rehab, 4 weeks at home, then tried to join the workforce part time...Felt very hopeful. Thought I'd get healthy again.
 - Age 34: Second stroke with short-time paralysis (got very scared, though), couldn't work, had to go on disability. Tried back and forth to start working again, but couldn't.
 - Finally separated from husband. Kids stay with me, supported only by disability and child support.
 - Age 35: So apathic and depressed that I only lied around at home on the sofa. Then continuing worsening until
 - Age 36: ended up in the mental hospital after a serious suicide attempt. Panic attacks, anxiety, depression...
 - Was put on 3 different psychiatric medications which made me tired, listless and feel indifferent as well as killed all my creativity and initiative.
 - Got out of mental hospital, took therapy, that didn't help. Tried private therapy, but couldn't afford it for long. Didn't do any good either.
 - New relationship, hopefully better than the last...
 - Continued struggling with anxiety and depression. On 9 medications, 5 of them for my mental health. Read some books, but too tired to follow through. Gained weight. Went to self-help groups. Took online courses.
 - Tried to get a job again. Worked at a coffee shop for a while, but was too stressful.
 - Felt like I am a victim of mental illness. Life is hopeless and I am confined to life-long disability and unhappiness. But I have not enough energy to take my own life and my husband helped me somewhat through it.
 - Got more and more desperate. Repeated stays in a mental hospital for suicidal depression.
 - Tried to start my own business from home, but not successful at that, either.
 - Being supported by husband and disability payments.
 - Struggling to find another thing or modality that may help...