

The Sadness That Just Won't Go Away...

When you think of starting a family, does it excite you? Do you think about what you will be like as a mom? Have you already started planning every part of how you will raise your children? Happiness, fear, hope, love, and joy again overfill you with your lifelong dreams for your children and your family. If only it was that simple for everyone to feel and think like that. Imagine how much lighter the air would feel. Oh, and then it hits me: the sadness that won't disappear.

Tears stream down my face as I hear the thing I was constantly hearing from multiple different doctors over the years, hoping that throughout the years, they were wrong. I sit with the big man in the house. The fertility specialist went over everything they found. Polycystic Ovary Syndrome, he goes on to say, "Unfortunately, you check all three boxes we look for with this." Numb. I keep thinking to myself, this is it, right? This is the worst it could get, right? This is all we have to fight through. As I take a breath, thinking it's almost time to leave, the doctor goes on and says, "Unfortunately, there is more." I stare at him for what feels like a lifetime, and then all of a sudden, the doctor speaks again, "Diabetes 2". I sit there, not feeling like I have any words because the feeling of "failure" overtakes me. Here comes the mess in my head. The mess that's called trauma.

Survival mode clicks in my brain, and I instantly have thirty thousand questions. What went wrong? What could I have done differently? I keep asking these questions, and the doctor gives me the facts. I keep my face in my hands as much as possible, and I can feel my eyes forming puffiness from the tears; I can feel myself giving up. I finally sit up and close my eyes as he continues to tell me that getting pregnant is going to be a tough battle, and at this point, if I can, it would be a miracle. Doc goes on about his professional opinion, at least from what he can see on the lab results, all the testing, and family history. What the factual information in front of him tells him.

Doc goes on to tell me that some very minor things can change my lifestyle, but there is nothing else he can advise me on as I am already doing it. I am already in weightlift training; I am obsessively being careful of everything I eat and incorporating changes. Lifestyle is usually the number one thing with patients that have to be changed, and if that's not the reason, then what was it? This is where I go into a spiral because of all of this I can control, so why can't this be the main reason they believe I got diabetes?

Doc goes on with the stuff I don't want to hear, your family genetics have heavy-weight women in them. Genetics can play a role in weight gain and how we lose weight. Continues that women with PCOS have a greater chance of getting diabetes. The PCOS finally explained why losing weight was really tough for me and continues to be. I keep reliving the fact that if I had gone to the gyno when I started my menstrual cycle, there's a chance we would have known about the PCOS, and I possibly would've known how to handle my body before I let my trauma take over.

Not thinking about the what-ifs is really difficult to do, and it brings me a great deal of stress that keeps me up at night. Through this whole new chapter my husband & I have had to face, the hardest part is the unknown. The hardest part is knowing that I keep watching everyone around

me have the one thing I crave the most: a family. To have a relationship with my child the way my parents never had with me. I have had to deal with things that I wish no one should have to navigate on their own. One of the cruelest things that has come from this chapter in our lives is the responses that we have received. Some make light comments such as “You’re young. You have time,” and others completely ignore it.

When I think about what a struggle it is for people to have an honest conversation about women’s health, people would rather shy away from it. We are easily able to be there for people who have experienced a miscarriage or a stillbirth. We are often compassionate and usually make it well known we are always here for them. Why is that? Is it because you felt it was a tangible thing you could hold? As myself is going through this emotional roller-coaster of the unknown, I look back and don’t see often where women, men, all kinds of people show this level of compassion for women who might have to say goodbye to the life they planned, the life they pictured, and to the 9 months they will never get to experience, to the life where women might never get to experience what it’s like holding a baby in their life that will look like them and their spouse/partner.

So, lean on the ones who are there for you- anyone and everyone who wants to be there for you. Talk about it, and don’t feel bad about it. Trust people (hard to do, I know), embrace all the little things that all of a sudden make you sad when they shouldn’t, cry, and let it out as many times as you need to. Go to that event, take mental health days, get off social media, spend time with the ones who don’t make you feel less for this, spend quality time with that one person who is also going through this with you-lean on them, let them in because I can tell you they are silently going through it so that they can be strong for you.

Something I want to leave you with is this. You can be sad, devastated, and broken, but the reality is that you are not alone, you aren’t broken, and you won’t be this sad forever. I know this because I feel that way, and it feels as though the world is on my shoulders, and I can’t put it down. I know it’s hard to understand that these awful, sad, big feelings won’t last forever, and one day, you’ll look up and smile with nothing but pure, honest joy on your face, and nothing will be weighing you down. Don’t worry; your light will come back, and you’ll be stronger than ever when it does.

With love,

Lina Grace