

Coping With Adrenal Fatigue, Depression & Anxiety Naturally & Without Breaking The Bank

by Tracey Rose

**** I am not a medical practitioner and this information is not to be used as a diagnosis or treatment. I am just sharing a personal experience in the hopes that other mother's who suffer from these debilitating conditions can relate and get help themselves. My treatment is working for me, but that doesn't mean it's right for you or that you should copy me. Please consult your health care professional for advice.*

Some of you may or may not know, but over the past 3 years I have struggled with adrenal fatigue, depression and anxiety.

All my life, I had always been a very positive person and a bit of a social butterfly, so even admitting that I was struggling at first was very uncomfortable for me.

Growing up had mostly been fun, so when it wasn't, I didn't cope very well at all.

My conditions were triggered by several things including:

Domestic violence

My marriage breakdown

Struggling to cope as a single mother

And ... managing my daughter's health

At first it was REALLY bad.

I hardly slept, I ate myself into a food-coma and was scared for my own safety.

I was in a constant state of stress, which is REALLY bad for your emotional and physical health.

On top of that I was completely overwhelmed at dealing with my daughter's health.

She has cystic fibrosis, which is a genetic condition that affects mainly the lungs, pancreas, liver and intestine plus coeliac disease, which is an autoimmune disease.

I cried A LOT.

I was so tired I wanted to cry even more.

I was so overwhelmed it was almost unbearable.

One day I wished I could have a car crash and go to hospital, so just I could have a break.

I thought I was going crazy.

That thought scared me so much and I knew I needed help.

My psychologist diagnosed me with depression and anxiety.

The next few years were HARD.

They were hard on me and also my mum who came to live with the kids and I - she is my Angel.

But it wasn't as quick recovery as I had hoped.

In fact, I became very frustrated with my lack of recovery.

I expected to just spring back and move on with life.

Instead I moved forward in life ... but it was SLOW.

Sometimes I tripped, stumbled, took a few steps back, re-grouped, tried new things, but just vowed to keep moving, now matter how small my steps.

I just kept trying things until I eventually found what works for me.

Today, I find myself happier than I've been in a long time.

It's like a big black cloud has lifted.

But if it comes back, then that's OK, I have strategies and coping mechanisms to deal with it.

Is everything perfect now?

No, but that's life.

However, when I come across challenges or I'm feeling overwhelmed I recognise the signs of stress and take a step back to just do things that are important right now.

I'm very aware of how much I can cope with.

I am just one person.

I am not wonder woman.

And ... as much as I would like to get a thousand things done in a single day, it's just not realistic.

However, I can now see a HUGE difference as to what I can cope with compared to a few years ago.

So, how I did I recover?

I did not use anti-depressants.

**NOTE: I have nothing against anyone who uses anti-depressants and I will use them if I ever feel the need for my situation. I believe they are useful and a necessary part of some people's treatment.

Why didn't I want to use anti-depressants? ... I just felt that I had the support and resources to find natural alternatives.

But it wasn't easy to figure it all out.

I used a psychologist who was a big supporter of wellness through, diet, exercise and meditation.

This was great, but I found I was sooooo stressed and "wired" that I just couldn't force myself to do any of these for very long.

I knew I was supposed to exercise, but I was tired, tired, tired ALL the time.

I tried hypnotherapy (which I love) and that helped with anxiety and food cravings for a while, but then I couldn't afford to keep going

I started doing CrossFit at my friend's gym and even though I thought I would have I loved it ... I hated it.

Not because there was anything wrong with it at all ... but it made me exhausted beyond belief. More than I thought was healthy for me.

I also tried health drinks and shakes to lose weight and get my energy back, but that was also expensive and later I realised these approaches weren't healthy at all.

THEN ... I went to see this old Chinese acupuncturist.

He said "You have no energy at all!"

"No shit, Sherlock" I thought.

But following our first session I finally felt like someone understood me.

He disagreed with what other professionals, friends and family were advising
He said I could take the anti-depressants to help now, but that I would pay with my health later.

And ... he also said I should stop all this crazy exercising because I had no energy left and it would just make me sick.

He confirmed that I had adrenal fatigue and that I had to start taking care of myself.

I was told to start with sloooooow walks.

He then prescribed a mountain of Chinese herbs too.

I mean A LOT.

After a while I couldn't afford to keep up with the recommended doses and my prescription for Lexapro (anti-depressant) in my bag was starting to look more and more attractive.

Why couldn't I just walk to the chemist, pay \$24 and take half a tablet a day?

It would make my mum happy and everyone would understand.

But I just had this nagging feeling in my head and heart that there was another, easier way. I just hadn't found it yet.

My journalist background hounded me and so I dived head first into seeking out others who treated their health naturally without breaking the bank.

I found a book called "The Mood Cure" which I consider one of the most influential and crucial books in my recovery to health.

With the "go ahead" from my GP, I now treat myself with a couple of different natural supplements and vitamins.

My Dr basically said, "OK, try this if you want then come back to me in 2 months. I'll give you my opinion on whether I think it's working or a load of rubbish."

I went back to him and he was pleased with my progress.

He said, "Just keep doing what you're doing."

The book, The Mood Cure helps you work out what supplements and doses are right for you, but you should do this with the guidance of a Dr or trained natural therapist.

So now I have a new approach to my health. I feel pretty great about my recovery and it's also not breaking the bank.

This is what I use/do:

L-tyrosine, which is an essential amino acid. When taken in the morning it increases my mood, motivation and energy levels. I found it from a seller on eBay, but you may want to check your own trusted source.

I also use 5-HTP, which helps calm anxiety, control appetite, relieves insomnia and improves mood.

Walking - I now walk about 4-5 times a week. I love getting out in the sun and even when I'm feeling tired or don't have much time, I just have a 20-30min stroll - as long as I'm outside it's my magical natural mood lifter. Just check out the view I see each day!

Ask for help - I also am so lucky to have my mum around to help, but I have to communicate when I'm feeling stressed or need a break.

Only nurturing and positive people around me please - I don't mean you can't have negativity around you at all - that would be asking you to live in a bubble. But I do surround myself with people who I enjoy being around. I greatly limit my time with anyone who is emotionally/physically draining.

Relaxation/Meditation - I take Epsom salt baths regularly. I use lavender to help me sleep and I "try" to limit my late night TV/computer access. I'm still working on that one, because I use to use it as company a lot when I was home alone with the kids.

Books/Journal - I'm now working on reading and writing in my journal at night. Even if it's just 5 minutes, if done regularly I find I am soooo much calmer the next day and happy even if I'm woken early by the kids.

Eat more whole foods - when I was very depressed, I ate sooooo much crap. Chocolate, lollies and cookies galore! I was on an emotional eating binge for 6 months straight at one stage. Even though I still indulge in some choccy, it's not crazy out of control binge-ing, it's just the "time of the month" cravings most women get

Mentorship/Community - I have a team of people around my family that I tap into for support. I have specialists at the Children's Hospital, which include social workers for emotional support. I also have business mentors plus family/friends who care about us and are there for us when we need to talk. I didn't always use my support networks - in fact I isolated myself in the beginning because essentially I was scared and tired. Now, I'm not sure what I would do without these people

Throughout this journey, I realise even though we often preach about supporting mothers and families, everyone is so busy with their own lives and some people can slip through the cracks. So if you know someone who is not doing great, just call them on the phone to check in with them once in a while. I had a few friends that did this regularly and they probably don't even realise how much their thoughts and love meant to me.

I also learned most people have a heart and truly love to help each other. You just have to have the courage to ASK FOR HELP.

I know how hard this can be too, because our big fat egos can get in the way

But if you're struggling, then just remember this is just a season in your life. Ask and accept the help now ... and who knows, perhaps you'll be the one helping someone just like you one day