

PE1651/LLL

Sue Pike submission of 12 January 2018

I was in a situation in my work environment where my manager had micromanaged my work and took away all autonomy, asked for my opinion and then steam rolled over me. I had been a highly effective enterprise business analyst making decisions for the largest bank in Canada for the critical role of business analysts in information technology. I became frustrated, angry and despondent and thoroughly unhappy with what this new manager was doing to deconstruct all the work I had done for 2 years before she joined the company. I was also being harassed by the federal government for filing of corporate income taxes = I had given all my hard copy tax forms to an accountant and was unable to get them back for 18 months of arduous frustration. So I had been pushed emotionally beyond my breaking point. I would dread going to a job I once was delighted to do and was so full of hate and resentment. I went to the doctor for help.

Instead of listening to me and counselling, he wrote me a prescription for 150mg of Effexor. Did it help? It rendered me emotionless and apathetic. So I could go to work and be a zombie. Even my coworkers commented on my lack of affect. I stayed on it for a few weeks but the energy to do anything like even getting out of bed was a chore. So I stopped taking the drug.

I spun into horrific temper tantrums and crying fits that I thought were a full blown depression that I took the meds again with the same flat affect and apathy for life.

I had hives that made my life miserable - never realizing that it was the Effexor side effects and the poisoning that this drug was doing. Instead of my doctor recognizing this, he only upped and upped the dosage.

I was not consuming 300mg and no abatement to the mental duress and physical symptoms. I was spiralling into a living dead person.

Still no recognition that the drug was killing me, they performed ECT and that and Effexor destroyed any hope of ever holding down a job again. I am now on permanent disability. I can read the same book over and over and still don't remember the plot, I watch the same DVDs and still don't know the ending. I have no interest in anything and have basically withdrawn from everything. I am socially isolated and didn't know that Effexor was the cause until I found a Facebook group that documented all the side effects of tis toxin.

I finally have people who understand the purgatory of my life. I am tapering off the drug based on the protocol that the group advises. When I had asked my doctor about stopping the E, I was told that it is like thyroid meds and that I would have to take them for life. I am horrified that the medical community is so naïve as to the torture this pharmaceutical does to people. It is a horrid life that it subjects us to.

if anti-depressants are a trial and error, then it is obvious at least to me that the medical community is totally uninformed and there is no scientific basis for making people take these drugs.

When someone is struggling as I was, there is no way I was able to make informed consent. I therefore submit that I have been abused and assaulted by the medical community and the drug manufacturer.

My husband died after the ECT torture and I have no way of getting back the years of memory that have been wiped out of my brain. I am angry, no, furious that this is what has happened to me, legally.

I would also add that during taking this drug, I was still racked with despair with the termination of a career and cried openly although I was never one who cried and would suppress all emotion. During the withdrawal, I experience physical symptoms including dizziness vertigo nausea vomiting diarrhoea chills and heat surges, muscle aches, restless legs, brain zaps,. Mood symptoms include lethargy, apathy, uncontrolled crying, and irrational attacks of rage. I have withdrawn socially because I hate what I have become and don't want anyone to be subjected to me, I have lost my job and career, I have poor memory, I have no joy in my life and have eliminated everything. I don't have the energy nor inclination for even the most rudimentary things like personal hygiene and cleaning the house - there are weeks' worth of dishes in the sink, I don't cook except heating up instant food or putting lettuce or spinach into a bowl and dousing with olive oil. I do not enjoy eating. I am alone and lonely but can't engage with people. I hate crowds, dread holidays and any occasion that forces me to interact with people. I have no family doctor right now because of how the Canadian healthcare system works = you have to be without a doctor to go on a waiting list and I had moved 2 hours away from my previous doctor. There is nobody in my world who I can confide in because if I try to explain I am met with criticism, judgement and the lack of understanding and sympathy makes me wish I were dying of cancer because then people would realize that it is real suffering. Oh, and the headaches! They are ever present that I don't even think about them but my jaw is locked tight, a stabbing pain like an icepick through the eyes and like my forehead is in a vice. Bending over causes an intense pressure like the worst sinus headache imaginable. I wish doctors had some clue about what these drugs actually did and big pharma wasn't so eager to make profits on the backs of suffering people. When you are as sick as I was, there was no way I was able to make informed consent for the meds nor the ECT. But my life is ruined. I have no career; I live on disability pension and fear I will outlive my meagre savings.