

## PE1651/WWWWW

Anonymous submission of 05 February 2018

How I came to be on Zoloft.

In 1999 I was busy with work, trying to save to buy a house and getting my Real Estate license. Everything was going pretty good. Taxes came in and we owed money so this was going to delay my progress of buying a home. I was having some difficulty at work with sexual harassment and other things. But I had a great job with a world-known entertainment company. I started getting pressure headaches and went to the doctor he gave me Ativan. My husband was totally against it, but one night I guess I had an anxiety attack and begged him to let me take it and I did. The next day I had another anxiety attack and took another pill and so on and so on... I didn't understand what was happening to me. This went on for weeks.

I started having guilty feelings and extreme anxiety ( I felt like I was going crazy). My husband even asked me "Did someone at work put something in your drink?" After quitting my job (which is so unlike me) I realized that Ativan was doing something weird to me and flushed them all down the toilet. Little did I know what I was in for. That very night, I could not sleep at all! I had racing thoughts and so I asked my Husband to take me to the ER. He said "they're going to lock you up! I went anyway. I didn't tell them about the Ativan, who would believe me? I'm not sure why? I think I thought they were not going to believe me or something. So, I just told them that I was having flashbacks and whatever. They referred me to a Psychiatrist (fake doctor) and of course he proceeded to tell me that I was "bipolar" which I am not. I think he said that is because they look for words that you say. I.e.; (racing thoughts, trying to reach my goal of buying a house, etc.) He prescribed Depakote, but I took it once and never again. I went from end of May to mid-August with ZERO sleep! I don't know how anyone could go that long on no sleep.

I was so angry and upset about this so-called Bipolar diagnosis, I was looking everywhere on the internet (there wasn't much information back then) for something to tell me that I was having an Adverse Reaction, something to prove it was the drug that did this to me. I even went to a lawyer! Of course, they wouldn't take my case. Anyway, I was doing everything to get through this, I went to support groups and everything. During this time, while always trying to fake it in front of my husband continue to do things like go to the beach or whatever, while praying the whole time.

During this 3-4 months I lost 20-25 lbs. (already very thin), I ended up at 95lb! I was so scared that I was going to die. My husband was adamant about not using antidepressants. I even went to a hospital, but they wouldn't admit me. Around the end of July, I started having extreme Suicidal Ideation. I had a plan and everything. I went to the drugstore and bought some sleeping pills and checked into a motel. I sat there and prayed and prayed. I thought I was ruining everyone's life and everyone would be better off without me. I continued to pray and then I thought, maybe it could get better? So, I checked myself out and moved in with my brother. They were shocked at the amount of weight I had lost.

I moved back home the next day and begged my husband to take me to the doctor. This was in August, the doctor prescribed Zoloft (don't remember the dosage) It

wasn't working, and he proceeded to up it to 200mg. A few weeks later he added Remeron. I successfully weaned off Remeron. At least he was smart enough to tell me to go slowly...

Fast forward to 2008 (after the RE market Crash) I felt that Zoloft was no longer working and tied Effexor for a day or two and added Remeron again (2<sup>nd</sup> time weaning of slowly) This is when I looked in the mirror and the left side of my face was drooping, like I had a stroke or something. The doctor told me to go straight to the Hospital. They did a CT scan and MRI and discovered that I have MS. (who knows if this was triggered by the Effexor)

Fast forward to 2012 -we moved out of state and requested Remeron again but was not informed not to take it too close to the Zoloft and went out that night and couldn't speak or even write. Went to hospital again and found huge lesions in my brain and was diagnosed with Tumefactive MS ( which is a rare form of MS) Maybe this was caused by the Remeron and Zoloft interaction?? I called my doctor and he said " I'm sorry, yes there is an interaction with Zoloft and Remeron if you take it too close together. Anyway, that is most of my history. I have been afraid to ever come off of the Zoloft after what I went through that summer of '99 with the Ativan. If I would have know that I was having withdrawal I probably could have reinstated and tapered from there and never went through any of the hell that I've been through. Sadly, I will never know...

I will probably neve be able to get off of Zoloft since they have kept me on it for almost 20 years- I cant spend the next ten years trying to recover.