

Real Moms

life guide

Ten years ago happy-go-lucky Sandy Poulin held her daughter in her arms for the very first time and she was overcome with joy.

The elation, however, didn't last.

After just four months as a new mom, Poulin succumbed to postpartum depression [PPD]. "This was so unexpected," she shares of developing the condition which afflicts 10-20 percent of all new moms, according to the National Mental Health Association. "It was a very hellish experience to go through."

Driven to find a greater purpose in her pain, Poulin spent the next nine years following her 12-month battle with PPD, compiling real-life stories from fellow sufferers, which she ultimately turned into the inspirational tome *The Mother-to-Mother Postpartum Depression Support Book*.

"I created the book I wanted to read myself," shares the KRLD sales executive who lives in Dallas with her husband Tim and 10-year-old daughter Rachel. "When you're in that state of mind, you are so full of fear that you'll never recover. You only believe others who've been through this. It's incredibly relieving [to hear others stories]; it gives you hope that you might recover yourself."

With the better part of a year under her belt since the book's debut in March, Poulin says she's feeling better than ever and is in awe of the flood of response. "The book has been really, really well-received in the PPD community, in the support groups. It's used as a way to spur conversations," she shares, adding that the true affirmation comes directly from her readers. "I get e-mails and letters from mothers who say the book has literally saved their lives."



Turning the Page on Postpartum Depression

BY TESSA FALK

With great success as an author (and in constant demand for interviews and talks) who still maintains her full-time job as a sales rep, how does this busy lady fit in her role as mom?

"This has been a challenging, intense year, but moms are great at compartmentalizing. The busier you get, the more you can handle," offers Poulin who adds, "I do have yearnings of being a full-time mom sometimes, but this is what I have to do now. Some full-time moms say they need a break from their kids. For me, being with my daughter, Rachel, that is my break."

But with more demands on mom's time, the question is, how is Rachel handling

mom's jam-packed schedule and newfound success? "She's really proud of me," says Poulin. "She knows PPD is a very serious illness and that I'm working to help other moms. In fact, the other day she said, 'Mommy, if I get postpartum depression I know you'll be there to help me.'"

There is one more underlying benefit to Poulin's book, says the role-modeling mom. "My joy is that Rachel saw the process of me writing and working throughout her life [on this project] and I hope this will inspire her to follow her dreams, as well."

For additional information on PPD and Poulin's book, visit www.postpartumdepression.net. ❖

Inspirations from *Mother-to-Mother Postpartum Depression Support Book*

“Motherhood is a true crucible. You are surviving the heat that melts you and the hammering that bends you into shapes unimaginable. You will never find final form, but you will discover the enduring strength of steel, the breathtaking strength of your own courage and abilities ... the inspiring strength of you.”

— Shelby, new mom