

28 August 2017

**Your support is urgently needed to help mothers and fathers in New Zealand who are suffering from perinatal anxiety and depression**

**\$20 from you will help a mum or dad to know that they're not alone and support is available**

Dear Supporter,

**It's hard to share my story - but I think it's important. And it's a story many other mothers carry.**

When I was about six months pregnant with my second child I woke up one day and I couldn't move. I thought I'd had a stroke. Maybe a brain aneurysm. My husband asked me if I was OK and I burst into tears.



Emily Writes

**“I'm not OK”** I said. It was the beginning of getting my life back.

My husband and I called my midwife together. I was terrified. Telling our midwife I needed help was absolutely the scariest thing I've ever done. I was sure they would take me away or, worse, take my children away.

I'd been imagining pregnancy forever and I'd thought it would be this incredible experience. Instead, I found myself terrified of everything. My heart was always racing. I was always counting every movement my baby made. I'd never heard of *antenatal anxiety or depression*.



Under care, I began to claw my way back to wellness. When my precious baby boy was born I was back to my old self, ready to be the mother I wanted to be and needed to be. My precious baby was a sweet, chubby light - my moon and stars, my world. But slowly, with the lack of sleep pulling me down and health issues with my precious wee one, I began to have intrusive thoughts. I should have recognised what I was going through as *postnatal anxiety and depression* - but I didn't. Maybe I didn't want to see it. I kept coming up with reasons for why I felt the

way that I did. I told myself that, once I'd had more sleep, I'd be OK. Once my child's health stabilised, I'd be OK. Surely I'd know. It wasn't as bad as I'd felt when I was pregnant.

**At a time in my life when I should have been thrilled with my professional and personal success – I had a book deal with a major publishing house – I found myself falling apart.**

And then, suddenly, it was really bad. And I couldn't pretend anymore. That's when I found PADA (Perinatal Anxiety and Depression Aotearoa). Their **resources and support** opened my eyes. I was able to recognise what I was going through. Their work ending the **stigma** around perinatal depression and anxiety made me realise I did not need to feel ashamed.

I began to work on getting better and slowly I found myself again. I found joy in parenting. I began to feel better than ever. Stronger and more sure of myself.

Going through postnatal depression was agony. And I'm so glad that, when I needed help to cope, I had PADA to support me. They made me feel strong enough to do the work I needed to, making sure postnatal depression and anxiety didn't steal my quality of life any more than it had. With their help, I stopped this awful illness from stealing happiness and joy from me and my children. Treatment is difficult – finding what works and what doesn't isn't easy. But with PADA I felt like I had someone who had my back. Someone who believed in me.



I wish I'd sought help sooner. But mostly I'm glad that I could access help and that I did reach out. Going through this pain has made me want to help others. I don't want any mother to go through what I have, but I know mothers do. So I want to make sure they have the support I did. I will always support PADA because they're doing this important work for mothers.

No mother should go through this on their own. And, thanks to PADA, they don't have to.

Please donate to this cause as you'll be ensuring other mothers have the help and support they need. Every mother is precious and we need them all. Your donation ensures they have somewhere to go when they need it. Your donation supports an organisation committed to ending the stigma around perinatal anxiety and depression so that no mother feels ashamed. Your donation helps save lives.

Arohanui  
Emily Writes



# 1. Yes, I will help support Perinatal Anxiety and Depression Aotearoa



- \$20 provides vital information and resources to mums and dads affected by perinatal anxiety and depression so they can get support and recover more quickly.
- \$50 helps us organise events that break down stigma surrounding perinatal anxiety and depression so people don't delay seeking help, potentially saving lives.
- \$75 invests in educating health professionals about perinatal anxiety and depression so their patients get the right treatment and support.
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Your choice  
*Donations over \$5 are tax deductible*



# 3. I will make my gift by

**My enclosed cheque**, payable to the Perinatal Anxiety and Depression Aotearoa

**Please debit my card** -  Visa  Mastercard

Card no:     /     /     /     Expiry   /

Name on card:

Signature

Internet banking: PADA's bank account is Westpac **03-0814-0484075-000**. Please use **DMAug17 last name** as the references so we can send you a receipt.

Donating online: **www.pada.nz**. Please use **DMAug17 last name** as the references.

I would like to receive more information about making a regular donation. Regular gifts are hugely valuable to PADA. They allow us to plan ahead and make sure vulnerable expectant and new parents are able to identify what is happening to them and recover more quickly.

I would like to receive more information about making a bequest to PADA.

*Thank you for generously supporting new mums, dads and their families to recover from perinatal anxiety and depression. Your donation today will have real impact. You will be making a genuine difference.*

# 4. Please check your details are correct or add below

First Name Last name

Street address

Suburb

City, Postcode

Home Phone

Mobile Phone

Email

Please send your donation in the Freepost envelope provided or send to:

PADA

PO Box 13010

Johnsonville

Wellington 6440



*Championing Perinatal Wellbeing in our Communities*

The Perinatal Mental Health Trust New Zealand trading as Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Aotearoa is registered under the Charities Act 2005 reg. No CC46451

**PADA (04) 4616318**

**www.pada.nz**

**office@pada.nz**



*We want to hear from you. Nearly a quarter of women in New Zealand experience some form of mental illness when they are pregnant or have a new baby. We invite you to share some words of hope with mothers and fathers who are going through this right now. We will share some of these notes to celebrate recovery, survival, and supporting each other during the darkest times.*



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I give my permission to PADA to share this on their social media, website and at their Awareness events

*A note from Leigh, PADA Board member*

I am a proud and doting mother and grandmother – I am also a daughter, sister and friend to many women, as I am sure you are too.

When I was growing up, I watched my own mother struggle with mental illness which she viewed as a shameful sign of her failing as a mother. She adamantly refused to ask for any help and she – as well as all her family – suffered along with her. It tainted all of our lives.

I sit on the Board of PADA because I believe that we all need to do more to remove the unfair stigma of mental illness for mums to be, for new mums and for other family members that may be affected at that special time when a new baby arrives.

As an NGO, PADA is reliant on grants and donations to fund our work and this is why we have decided to write to you. Any assistance you can provide us will help us to develop additional resources, commission research and further raise awareness of perinatal anxiety and depression.

If you are able, please make a donation to help us make a difference. I believe every woman and every family is worth it.

Arohanui,  
Leigh Bredenkamp

*Leigh*

