

# “Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMAD) 101”

Perinatal mood and anxiety disorders can happen at any time during pregnancy, in the first year postpartum or after weaning from breastfeeding. PMADs are the number 1 complication of childbirth, but these are fully treatable! You are not alone!

## Who can be affected by PMADs?

PMADs can affect moms, as well as dads and even adoptive parents. PMADs affect 1 in 5 moms and 1 in 10 dads. I was one of the 1 in 5 moms who suffered from a PMAD. I had postpartum depression and postpartum anxiety after the births of my 2 daughters.

## Are there risk factors?

As with any illness or disease, there are risk factors. These risk factors make it more likely that someone will have a PMAD, but do not guarantee it. Some risk factors include (but are not limited to): lack of support, major life change (moving away from family, loss of job, death of a loved one etc.), unplanned pregnancy, difficult labor, personal or family history of anxiety, depression or other disorder and previous trauma.

Prior to becoming pregnant with my oldest daughter, I lost my teaching position due to budget cuts. I felt a great sense of loss and didn't know who I was without calling myself a teacher. I also have a personal history of depression and anxiety in my teen and young adult years. My oldest daughter was born following a very unexpected induction and spent a week in the NICU.

## Are PMADs Only Postpartum Depression?

Perinatal mood and anxiety disorders are an “umbrella” term covering a whole spectrum of mood and anxiety disorders. Included are: prenatal/postpartum depression, prenatal/postpartum anxiety, postpartum obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), postpartum post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), postpartum bipolar disorder or postpartum psychosis.

Postpartum Psychosis is very rare and very serious, occurring in 1-2 in 1000 births and requires immediate help. Symptoms include: confusion, delusions, hallucinations, mania, paranoia and symptoms may come and go.

## What are some symptoms of PMADs?

Everyone's experience with PMADs are different, but these are some symptoms to be aware of: crying, anger, appetite or sleep changes, loss of enjoyment in activities, feeling inadequate/worthless/hopeless, anxiety and panic attacks.

With my oldest, I had postpartum depression and I felt tremendous guilt, felt worthless and cried daily. I was convinced that I was the worst wife and mom on the planet. When I had postpartum anxiety I had panic attacks, anxiety and anger. I screamed and threw things when my anxiety was intense, which is very uncharacteristic for me. I absolutely hated feeling this way.

## What are treatment options?

Everyone's treatment plan is different. Treatment may include therapy, support groups, and medication. It is also recommended that you see your primary care doctor for a physical as there could be something physiological going on that is contributing to symptoms.

My treatment plan included therapy and a support group. My support group was amazing and was a major part of why I got through this! I finally felt I wasn't alone and learned to take care of myself. They encouraged us to do something each week that was just for us. I eventually started taking ballroom dance lessons and I still attend years later!

## What are some resources for help and support?

Postpartum Resource Center of New York has a directory, information, a state-wide help line and more.

[www.postpartumny.org](http://www.postpartumny.org)

Helpline - 855-631-0001

Postpartum Support International is full of information, a Helpline, online and telephone support groups and more.

[www.postpartum.net](http://www.postpartum.net)

Helpline - 1-800-944-4773

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

1-800-273-8255

Beyond the Blues: Understanding and Treating Prenatal and Postpartum Depression and Anxiety by Shoshana Bennett and Pec Indman. This book is full of great information and has a chapter for moms, partners, family/friends, professionals and more. Beyond the Blues is a fantastic resource for not only mom, but for her support network as well.

You are not alone. You are not to blame. With help, you will be well.



*Bridget Croteau lives in New York with her husband, Beau, their two children, Natalie and Chloe and labradoodle, Jake. Bridget is serving as Mrs. New York USA Ambassador 2020 to raise awareness for perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs) and to help moms, dads and families feel less alone. She has been volunteering for the Postpartum Resource Center of New York since 2015 serving on the advocacy and fundraising committees and VOICES workgroup.*

*Bridget is the author of Me, Again: How Postpartum Depression and Anxiety Transformed My Life. Her book takes the reader on a journey through her two experiences with PMADs - specifically postpartum depression and anxiety. She shares how she recovered, lessons learned, tips she has learned along the way - for both mom and her family/supporters and resources for support.*

You can follow Bridget and her journey here:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MrsSuffolkCounty2015>

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/mrsnewyorkusaambassador\\_2020/](https://www.instagram.com/mrsnewyorkusaambassador_2020/)

# League of Women Voters announces June Debate

*NY-22 Primary Candidates Claudia Tenney and George Phillips Invited to Debate Vestal, NY*

The League of Women Voters of Broome and Tioga Counties, WSKG Public Media, SUNY-Broome Civic Engagement Center, Binghamton University Center for Civic Engagement have extended formal invitations to Republican candidates Claudia Tenney and George Phillips to a debate for the NY 22nd Congressional District GOP Primary on June 18, 2020, at 8:00 p.m. at WSKG's Vestal studios. The debate will be broadcast live on WSKG-TV and Radio. The deadline for candidate response is May 20, 2020. The League and WSKG continue to work with other community partners in staging this event. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, health precautions will be observed. Therefore, the venue will be closed to the general public.

## COVID-19 Chuckles

You haven't experienced true heartbreak until you've been thinking about leftovers all day and then come home to find that someone ate them.

Some days I amaze myself. Other days, I look for my phone while I'm holding it.

My wife just stopped and said, "You weren't even listening were you?" I thought . . . "That's a pretty weird way to start a conversation."

Middle Age: That time in your life when you finally get your head together and then you body starts to fall apart.

I asked my Grandpa, "After 65 years, you still call Grandma Darling, Beautiful, and Honey. What's the secret?"

He said, "I forgot her name 5 years ago and I'm scared to ask her."

Mister Rogers did not adequately prepare me for the people in my neighborhood.

Did you ever look at all your kids and think . . .

THAT ONE will be dropping me curbside at the nursing home.

THAT ONE will be paying for it.

THAT ONE will visit me the most.

And THAT ONE? He'll be sneaking in the good tequila and twinkies.

You know you're getting old when you can't walk past a bathroom without thinking, "I might as well pee while I'm here."

Unemployment application: Job title-Burglar. Reason for layoff- Everyone is home.

Remember wishing the weekend would last forever? Happy now??

Me: Alexa, what's the weather this weekend?

Alexa: Doesn't matter. You ain't going anywhere.

The cops just left. They said if I was gonna walk about the house naked, I have to do it inside.

Until further notice the days of the week are now called; Thisday, Thatday, Otherday, Someday, Yesterday, Today and Nextday.

When we come out of this and I ask where you want to eat, I do not want to hear, "I don't know." You have 45 days.

Quarantine has turned us all into dogs. We roam the house all day looking for food. We are told "no" if we get too close to strangers. And, we get really excited about car rides.

As we end week 7 of the lockdown, I've been thinking about Osama Bin Laden. He was stuck in his house with three wives for five years. I'm beginning to wonder if he called in those Navy Seals himself.