

# Synopsis of “Mommies Cry Too”

## By Carol S. Harcarik

“Mommies Cry Too” is a documented true story of Carolyn Brink’s encounter with depression, it is riveting and a tribute to Personalized Medicine. Carolyn lost her memory following the birth of her child and the memory lost continued until three to four months later. To write this book I needed to interview all family members, friends and her doctors. It is through their accounts, that we understand Carolyn’s sad and sometimes bizarre behavior as she underwent three months of agonizing medical failures. The treatments she received followed the traditional, trial-and-error approach.

Within a few days following the birth, her mother and husband describe how she became engulfed in major PPD. Her mom had to listen to her say she wanted to give her baby up for adoption and that having him was a mistake. They had to listen to her constantly say she wanted to die. Her mother told me that one day she decided to take Carolyn for a walk and while doing so Carolyn said she wished a car would come along hit and kill her and then she would not have to be bothered by anything.

Her parents and husband sought the best medical care available. She went through three different series of antidepressant and anti-anxiety medications. Nothing worked, in fact she was getting worse. When the doctors recommended ECT treatments and indicated strongly that they would be successful, her mother agonized over the decision. She called a doctor at the Mayo Clinic for a second opinion and told him, “I am not sure I can keep her alive through the weekend. I am actually on a suicide watch. We are in a desperate situation.”

Carolyn then suffered through eleven ECT treatments, and after being promised that they would work, she did not appear to have any relief. The weekend following their completion, her husband expressed to me that he had to call Carolyn’s mom and give her the bad news that the ECT treatments had not appeared to work. Carolyn seemed suicidal again and claimed she could not handle the baby. Her mother told me she kept saying to herself, “This is just not possible and cannot be happening.”

By this time she had been hospitalized three times and absolutely nothing had worked, she was in a very deteriorated state and her situation was grave. Carolyn’s father told me he called the Mayo Clinic and begged for help. He said. “No one has been able to help my daughter. We are at the breaking point here. What if we never get her back? What if she does something crazy? Why can’t anyone help her.”

Finally, her parents told me, she was taken to Mayo Clinic and a few months prior to her arrival there a new genetic test had been approved for clinical trials. This test, called cytochrome P450, determines how your body will metabolize antidepressants. It was determined that Carolyn was a slow to intermediate metabolizer and that was why the previous antidepressants she had been taking had not worked. She was not able to tolerate the “normal” dose of medication that she was taking because it was too high a dose and

became toxic in her blood stream making her depression worse. Once she was put on a dose of medication that she could tolerate she began to improve. It was a miracle. She then went through Cognitive Behavior Therapy to help rebuild her cognitive processes and she began to come back.

Carolyn, to this day, has no memory of the birth of her child or the first three to four months of his life. Before all this happened she was a very successful marketing executive. At 28 years of age she and her husband decided to start a family. It all turned into a very tragic story but because of her strong personality, indomitable will, her incredible family, and personalized medicine she survived and recovered.