



Diagnoses

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When you're pregnant you repeat the same cliché over and over. I don't care if it's a boy or girl, I just want a healthy baby. A cliché, but a true one. Luckily my first son was born healthy. Son number two encountered some problems on the way into the world. Thankfully they were managed and we got to take him home. At first all appeared fine. After a few years some symptoms began to emerge. He looked like the poster child for ADHD. Still we managed to handle his issues and the arrival of his little brother. At five he began to make strange faces and noises. It didn't concern us too much. After all what little boy doesn't do that? Only when the noises and movements started to disrupt his schooling did I realize I needed to do more for him. After countless trips to his school, I finally scheduled the first of what would become an entire round of doctor's appointments and tests. I think I knew from the first time he started winking at people what was wrong. Tests and visits confirmed my fears. A few other diagnoses were added later. A whole new world was introduced to us by just a few words. Tourette's Syndrome, ADHD, OCD, mood disorder and an anxiety disorder are our best guesses for now, the doctors explained. Welcome to a whole new existence. I cried that day for the son that I lost. The perfect one a parent sees in their mind. I let myself have that day of mourning and then it was time to get to work. Mourning would not help my son. That day I became my son's fiercest advocate and have never stopped. Today I let myself cry thinking of the endless struggles and obstacles we have overcome together. By grace now I can look at him grown, whole and most importantly, a successful adult. He's an EMT, soon to be college graduate and ready to become a mental health advocate. I didn't need to mourn it turns out. I just had to work harder than I ever had to before and never ever take no for an answer. The day I gave up the notion of what I expected my children to be and instead saw them for who they were was the beginning. I was on my road to the frustrating, nerve-wracking, stressful, glorious, beautiful journey called motherhood.