

Motherhood is one of the most sacred journeys you will experience in your lifetime. It marks a new chapter fulfilled with emotions, spiritual lessons, experiences, and hopes and dreams we have for our children. After struggling to get pregnant, I was blessed with my twin daughters, Ariana and Briana. Life was busy but it was amazing to watch my daughters grow. At the age of 7, my daughter Ariana suffered a Traumatic Brain Injury, which changed our lives forever.

At the hospital, I spent many nights on my knees crying and praying. I worried about Briana seeing her sister in a vegetative state. I worried about the physical, emotional, and cognitive changes Ariana would have to face. When Ariana was stable enough to be transferred to Children's Specialized Hospital, I had no idea what to expect on this new journey. During the rehabilitation process, I knew my husband and I needed to be fully involved and committed towards Ariana's recovery.

When I was able to take her home, Ariana continued with a full-time outpatient schedule. I was so busy driving her to appointments and trying to fit in Briana's extracurricular activities into our daily lives. I began to struggle with balancing my motherly instincts of nurturing and protecting my daughters and my own personal space and coping mechanisms. I started to network with other parents of special needs children and I began to realize that I needed to take a little bit of time for myself. I needed to identify what helped me to decompress which was doing something I enjoyed or just resting.

Help can come in many different ways. It could be a family or friend that gives you a little break, a support group that you can share similar feelings with or a hobby that just takes your mind off of your daily routine. In my case, I knew I needed to be mindful of my own health so that I can be present in my daughter's lives. Throughout our journey, we had our highs and lows but I learned to use my support team (family, friends, therapists, professional team). Without them, I couldn't do it alone. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Look for support groups with similar diagnoses. Create your "go to team."



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