

# I got the elephant off my back!

By Sarah ElSadre, MD

Quin and his mother share a very special bond. It is evident to anyone who spends more than a few minutes with the two. His battle with depression lasted long enough to span about a quarter of his short 20 years. But even more prominent than his depression was his OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder), a condition that greedily snatched control of his young life.

His mother recalls that he was only five when he had a conversation with her about what he wanted to be when he grew up. His answer was strange and she didn't understand. Quin didn't want to be a police officer so he wouldn't get shot. He didn't want to be a lawyer because he didn't want to put anyone in jail. Didn't want to be a fire

fighter because it was too dangerous! Quin never rode a bike on his own because he was concerned about injuries and still remembers one day when his dad insisted that he give it a try and offered to follow him all the way. Quin made it but was nervously checking for his dad every turn of the wheel along the way. His OCD became so severe that he had to skip the first year of the Honor College program he was accepted into because he wasn't able to turn in assignments on time, being overly focused on accuracy and perfection. For a student with a normal range IQ, that would have been fine, but for a student like Quin with an above average IQ, he perceived this set back as total failure. For Quin, failure was not in his dictionary; he strove for perfection in everything, including his grades.

Isolating himself at home, Quin began to slip into depression. He describes it as, "feeling like drowning in a sea of

people." He would not go out with friends and would spend all day at home, mostly in bed. During this rough time, his mother, who was Quin's best friend and advocate, would suffer in silence, trying everything she could to help him but with little progress. For Quin's mom, it was a battle she had to fight with him and she was determined to help her son find his way out of this dilemma.

So she started to research his illness and read more about it, looking for clues to help her son, finding answers in textbooks and online. Quin's mother played a huge role in his recovery.

About this same time, Quin started seeing Dr. Ahmed, board certified adult and child psychiatrist, who in turn, recommended TMS (transcranial-magnetic stimulation of the brain). Quin started TMS right away with great enthusiasm and hope to improve.

In as little as four weeks, he began noticing an improvement. He woke up one day feeling so good that he decided to shave, dress and go out. He had high hopes that this innovative treatment would work for him and it actually did. "From the beginning, I was not too skeptical; I trust Dr. Ahmed and know that he has always given me the best options," said Quin. "He is very compassionate and listens to everything I have to say."

During the treatment, Quin was also seeing Tom Winterfeld at The PsyClinic. Tom was conducting therapy sessions with Quin. "He taught me a lot of things that helped me through my treatment," said Quin. "I am not going to be a victim to my fears anymore and I am very thankful to him."

In time, Quin's life dramatically improved. He became happy, outgoing and was able to rid himself of all the fears that had plagued him for as long as he could remember. He even drove

up to Dallas on his own for the first time. He enjoyed a night out with friends. Quin has started planning for college and is looking forward to resuming his studies.

Quin's mother has been watching her son's changes closely not only with a mother's eye but with a mother's heart as well. She watched him steadily improve and celebrated his progress day after day. She could not be happier that her son is finally standing on his own, full of energy and optimism. This wonderful transformation could not have been accomplished without the love and support of a wonderful mother. "Thanks for believing in me and for never quitting," Quin said to his mom.

When I asked Quin to name his story, he suggested, "I got the elephant off my back!" referring to his depression. It seems like Quin's depression was a heavy burden he carried for so long but finally was able to release. ■

**Dr. Elsadre** holds a Medical Bachelor and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB) from Cairo Medical School, Egypt. She is the Director of clinical services and of one of the largest and most successful practices in South east Texas, The PsyClinic. Leads a team of more than 20 mental health providers and supporting staff. Created several new successful mental health programs such as the "You are beautiful" program. Started TRANS-CRANIAL MAGNETIC STIMULATION program -TMS certified- at the PsyClinic and performed on more than 60 patients by now.

