

When your best friend goes in for a simple laparoscopic operation to remove what surgeons thought were adhesions, rings you in tears from the hospital and tells you she has endometriosis, you panic and get to her side as quickly as possible.

What is this thing they have just told her she's got that is so bad they had to stitch her back up without doing anything, and book her in for more major surgery?

You go into panic mode thinking you are going to lose the best friend you ever had. I knew I had to be there for her and support her through what turned out to be a very long ten months.

Together we had to find out what this thing was that was eating away at her insides, destroying her from the inside out, physically and emotionally. We started attending support meetings that Endometriosis Waikato held each month – we needed to know everything there was to know.

Brenda is a very strong and positive lady, but as the months went by it was taking its toll. I just had to be there for her when she needed me. I have never had it - it's bloody hard supporting someone, trying to understand what they are really going through, when you haven't experienced it first hand yourself.

I could tell by the way she acted how much pain she was going through, and there was really nothing I could do for her. Watching someone go through intolerable pain is bloody hard – you just wish you could take some of that pain away from her and share the burden of the whole thing. As good friends know, sharing the burden eases the load, but the load of the pain she was going through couldn't be shared so I felt useless not being able to ease the load.

It's not only the physical damage endometriosis does to your body, it is the emotional affects it has on you, something that you don't ever think would affect such a positive person. Brenda has always been such a positive, energetic woman, someone I look up to and am proud to have as my best friend. She is always there to help others, and not the type of person to accept help herself – something that I had to learn to respect, and learn that when she needed me she would call. This I think was one of the hardest things to come to terms with.

It has been a very long ten months, there have been lots and lots of tears, some I just couldn't hide from Brenda, and many more she never saw.

When something as horrible and ugly as endometriosis hits someone you care about, it is surprising what energy you find to carry on with, and support them in every way possible. Supporting Brenda is one of the hardest things I have ever had to do, but I am just very grateful to still have her as my best friend.

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**For more information:**

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