

Twisted: Frequently Asked Questions

Why did you decide to write about your tornado experience?

When we were hit, it was something I'd never gone through before, and never been exposed to in any way before. Nowhere I've lived before my 6 years here in MN have had tornadoes, and I've never watched someone go through it.

We were completely blind sided, and had NO idea what to do. I wanted to read about others who had gone through it, to gain some sort of insight on what to expect, what we should be doing, etc... but couldn't find anything. No books, no tornado recovery blogs. It was frustrating - so I thought it would be a good idea to put out such a resource for others.

Also, we went through SO many bizarre, amazing, horrible, hilarious, and awful experiences through the whole ordeal, I HAD to write it!

What kind of damage did your house suffer in the tornado?

Two trees shot through the side of our house, into our bedroom. Our giant 100+ year old black walnut was completely uprooted, and fell on the house. That tree destroyed our large deck, our porch, and destroyed half of our roof. A lot of the roof damage was directly over our kitchen - the ceiling caved in - and the entire kitchen had to be gutted and re-done. The roof was lifted up off the walls, and dropped back down, slightly off from where it was. All of our windows needed to be replaced, we needed major stucco repair, and the whole exterior needed to be repainted. The garage stucco needed major repairs and a new roof.

What was the financial situation with your tornado damage?

Because our house was an unoccupied foreclosure when we purchased it (3 months before the tornado!), we were very limited in the insurance we were able to get. As a result, we were very much under insured for the damages. We received a full payout on our policy - \$90,000. Between the house, the car - which had a tree land on it, 6 weeks of cheap hotel stay, etc.. our tornado expenses came to around \$150,000. Fun fact: We had only paid \$45,000 for the house in the first place... so damage was more than 3x the purchase price!

How did you make up the difference between insurance and repair cost?

We had a LOT of help from friends, as well as the extended geek community - both physical and some financial. We had to DIY a lot of the repairs, which meant several crash courses on renovation techniques online! Even with all of this, we anticipate to be paying off the rest over the next 5 years.

Where are you at with tornado recovery?

As of June 2012, we're "close but far away". All of the major repairs are done, but what's left is completely up to us. We have to build the shelving and doors in our kitchen, stain all of that, and do some landscaping work. As we've never built cabinets before - and we both work - it's going slowly now. We pick away at the repairs on evenings and weekends, and anticipate another 5-6 months of repairs.

Why did you write about Aspergers?

Both my husband and I are "Aspies". As we're in our early 30s, we've had a lot of time to understand it, how to adjust to things outside of our comfort zone, etc.

The thing is, the tornado threw a HUGE wrench into that. I can honestly say that tornadoes are easily the least aspie-friendly experience I've ever had, between the noise overstimulation, the complete disruption to our routines at the time, the lack of routine going forward, etc.

We find that people have some weird ideas about Aspergers, and wanted to give an honest, detailed account from the perspective of adults with Aspergers.