Breathing Space

February 2, 2016 By Nicole Lemelle

“The walls we build around us to keep sadness out also keeps out the joy.” ~ Jim Rohn

There is so much anguish in my soul that I can’t seem to think straight. I long for my past, I distress about my present and I am scared of my future. MS stings me with every heartbeat. It’s a physical sensation that courses through my veins. It’s like living in a world that’s on fire. Constantly changing. Unexpected mishaps are the norm. Luckily the physical pain comes and goes but the reality of my sorrowful circumstance is always there.

After every exacerbation, the psychological grief burrows into my consciousness and stays for weeks. It’s those times when I am in so much emotional distress I wish everyone in the world could feel my pain. I become stuck on vengeance even though no one as done me wrong. That’s because the disease makes me angry and that’s a shame. I have a loving heart but because of MS, all of that has changed. The closeness of MS tends to manifest hateful thoughts in my mind. Sucking all the oxygen out of the room. Making the air thin. So much, it’s hard to breathe.

Most times, I don’t know where the MS ends and I begin. I don’t even remember what it feels like to live without symptoms. So I just live in the pain where there is no space between the grief of the disease and the joys in my life. They’ve become so intermingled that even during happy events, I feel a little pain with the pleasure.

And because I don’t complain very much and mostly have a positive attitude, people say I’m brave. But I know the truth. I’m not brave. My silence is not bravery. It’s fear. Fear I will never be who I once was. And even more terrifying, I have a fear of my reality.

When I see my reflection in the mirror, sometimes I turn away. I try to shield my eyes from the truth. That’s when the anxiety takes over. It keeps those evil thoughts burning inside of me as my veins run red hot with fear.

And when I feel that pain, I tend to retreat inside a dream world. I hide inside my mind, in a room, behind closed doors with the drapes drawn. I spend my days on my knees, peaking through a keyhole trying to catch a small view of my old life. Waiting for MS to let loose the hold it has over me.

But even when the curtains are closed, the fear still seems to get inside my head. It’s so

relentless. It stalks me. When I try to hide, it follows me. Circling over me like a buzzard. Waiting for me to fail, so it can mock me. No sympathy, just snickers and judgment. It controls me. It keeps me so afraid, if you stand next to me, you can feel my pulse beating. You can hear my heart pounding and screaming for help. And if you look closely, you can see it in my eyes. My eyes show my anguish. That’s where the truth is. Where nothing can hide. And even as my sanity hangs on the fringe, I know I must stay strong while facing that hard truth every day.

You have to know, I hate thinking this way. It’s just that MS is always there. It’s so real. If only I could get some space, just a little breathing space.

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