Dear Anonymous

Your situation cannot be that bad.

December 7, 2020 By Nicole Lemelle

“Humans aren’t as good as we should be in our capacity to empathize with feelings and thoughts of others.” ~ Neil deGrasse Tyson

Someone anonymously sent me a social media message the other day.

He said, “I read an article about your life with multiple sclerosis. And I really liked the piece. You are a strong person. But all your whining distracted from the uplifting aspect of your story. Everyone in the world has struggles and your situation can’t be that bad.”

I wrote back.

Dear Anonymous,

My circumstances can be that bad. Not all the time. But when it is bad, it can be crippling bad.

I know you wish I would just shut up. You hope I would just stop talking. You want me to disappear and endure in silence. But when I speak. When I tell my story. I feel better. And those who can relate feel better.

I understand it can be very uncomfortable to hear the truth pertaining to living with a chronic debilitating disease. No one wants to hear about the struggle.

That is why I don’t tell many people how I feel. I’m just so afraid the truth will turn people off or appear as constant complaining.

And when I do say something, I find myself apologizing for making everyone uncomfortable.

So, I try to stick to happy subjects. People are more receptive to the triumphs. Someone is always telling me about the latest famous name who has been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Pointing out how that person conquered every MS obstacle. Every magazine showing how great that person is doing. Despite MS.

I really don’t know how much a disease like multiple sclerosis affects your life. So, I guess I shouldn’t be upset when you don’t identify with most of what I am going through.

I just wish you would think about how extremely hard it is for some people to perform simple task. Spewing your baseless judgments about the daily obstacles I face does not help. Your statement sounds like a dismissal of all my pain-filled encounters.

You have the right to believe my experiences or not. Just please don't tell me, "It can't be that bad."

Because you don't know how bad MS can get for me.

Have a nice day,

Nicole Lemelle & Everyone Living With Multiple Sclerosis

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