Disappearing Act

October 7, 2014 By Nicole Lemelle

"Our life always expresses the result of our dominant thoughts." ~ Soren Kierkegaard

The aggravating thing about multiple sclerosis is the social isolation it begets. As if society has forgotten about me. It's just so hard to fit in when I can't drive, I get tired so fast, and going to the restroom is an adventure.

Sometimes I can feel so alone, especially when I'm surrounded by a group of able-bodied people. This is particularly hard at parties and gatherings. My limitations cause me to feel isolated. Normal conversations turn awkward and most people just smile and wave but fail to engage with me like a "typical" person. I'll sit in the middle of the room and people will walk by me like I'm not even there. So, since I just can't do normal things, it's as if I've just disappeared. Gone missing without a trace.

I think the problem is related to the lack of understanding for what I am going through. It is so misunderstood that most people shy away from spending time with me. They're not sure how to treat me or what questions to ask.

The good part is, I have experienced the total opposite reaction when I come in contact with people who are on a similar path as me. I always seem to have a great time. I find myself talking for hours and usually making some new friends.

Now if only I could figure out how to get the conversation going with the "able-bodied" people I run into.

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