Infectious Joy

July 21, 2015 By Nicole Lemelle

“Find a place inside where there’s joy, and the joy will burn out the pain.” ~ Joseph Campbell

The further along I travel on this journey with my uninvited guest known as MS, the more my hope tends to transform into fear. I’ve already lost the battle with standing and walking and now I’m consumed with totally losing the use of my hands.

When I was first diagnosed, I declared war against this disease. I was afraid multiple sclerosis might have the power to strip me down and change the essence of who I am. And despite my resistance, I’ve got to admit so far it’s done a pretty good job. It’s changed me. My priorities are different. My thought process doesn’t match those of a normal 40-year-old woman. I had to change the way I see the world and most importantly the way I see myself.

I remember once thinking things would be all right if this normal would just stay the same. I’m learning that may not be the case. Better yet, I have to get ready to fight this on a spiritual level. Because after all, my spirit is the one thing multiple sclerosis can’t steal without my approval.

So now my top priority has to be my well being. I take pride in doing my best to put myself first. I strive to be Nicole, who by the way happens to have multiple sclerosis. And I attempt not to portray myself as just an MS victim.

I no longer have the energy to try and impress people. Meeting the expectations of those around me use to encumber me. I was searching for approval. But now I look to myself for my happiness and health. I find if I’m happy, everyone around me seems to be happy as well. The happiness becomes contagious. It’s like some type of infectious joy. The best part is, I now live for that joy. And that’s not a bad way to live.

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