Life With MS Is Not Simple

I've been living with MS long enough to know what works best for me, but people still constantly offer me advice.

February 11, 2020 By Nicole Lemelle

"I don't like to give advice. I like to give people information because everyone's life is different, and everyone's journey is different." ~ Dolly Parton

All the decisions I make in my battle to live a normal life are not always successful. Sometimes my choices don't work out. But I've been living with multiple sclerosis long enough to know what works best for me in my case.

Despite my many years of experience, people constantly give me advice. I receive dozens of healthy living suggestions from friends, acquaintances and strangers. Multiple emails, text messages, and social media comments litter my in-box. The variety of statements range from helpful to annoying.

Here are a few.

"Maybe if you exercise more, the MS would subside. I had cancer. Then I started working out four times a week and now I'm in remission."

"Sleep is the key. If you go to sleep earlier, you will not be so tired during the day."

"Doctors are crooks! Why do they have you on so much medicine? Since I was diagnosed with MS, I have never taken any prescription drugs or listen to any doctor. And I have not been sick in three years."

"I can relate to what you are going through. My coworker's friend's brother has multiple sclerosis. He stopped eating carbs and is doing great. Maybe you should try that."

I'm sure most of these recommendations are coming from a good place. People are just trying to help. But sometimes it's just not that simple.

With MS, there are some common indicators like fatigue and brain fog. Almost everyone living with this ailment has some experience with these symptoms. But the effect and severity fluctuate in each person.

Unfortunately, I am one of those people who has been significantly affected by MS. So, nothing is simple. There are no easy answers. There are no skipping doctor's appointments. There are no changing diets after reading an article. I have to follow a detailed plan just to have enough strength to make it through the day.

In the past, when I got unsolicited guidance I would get upset. Reading and hearing the comments made me feel like I was contributing to the advancement of the disease. It made me so angry. So disappointed I wanted to smash something.

That was then.

Today, not much upsets me. I guess I've become less uptight after answering questions and receiving advice for 20 years.

I realize, when viewing my situation from a distance, everyone has all the answers. But life, especially life with multiple sclerosis, isn't that simple.

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