Be Normal

Doctors say an exacerbation is hard to predict.

September 27, 2021 By Nicole Lemelle

“I think we kind of talk ourselves into the negative sometimes.” ~ Betty White

Some nights I can’t sleep. So, I take another melatonin. Shut my eyes. Count some sheep. And listen to the television, playing Golden Girl reruns, with the volume low.

But tonight, nothing is working. Because something’s not right. I’m not right.

Doctors say an exacerbation is hard to predict. Hard to tell when it is happening. But I swear I know. I know when something is wrong. I can recognize it. I can feel it.

If I held my breath every time I had that feeling, I would die twenty times over.

It usually strikes quick. Effecting some important part of my body or just giving me a slight tingle down my spine. Driving me crazy. Blurring my eyesight. Making me so confused I lose track of everything that happened an hour earlier.

In the past, I would try and hide. Pull the curtains. Cover my face. Unplug the phone. But there was no escape. Somehow it would suck all the air out of the room. So much that it made it hard to catch my breath.

But now, whenever I think it is happening, I close my eyes, think positive thoughts and just keep saying to myself, “Be normal. Be normal.”

When I’m at a party.

“Be normal. Be normal.”

When I’m shopping at the mall.

“Be normal. Be normal.”

When I’m trying to sleep.

“Be normal. Be normal.”

It can be hard. The worst feeling in the world. Basically, waiting for the chaos to start.

But that repetitive mantra keeps me calm. It slows everything down.

So tonight, I’m here again. In this familiar circumstance. Eyes sealed closed as I begin my silent chant. Bracing for a random attack. Attempting to be normal. While happily being distracted as I try to figure out what Blanche is talking about when she says, “I’m going to the lanai."

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