When My Will Is Weak

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It does not matter how slow you go so long as you do not stop. -Confucius

MS is like a thief in the night, stealing the fortitude of its victims. It especially takes advantage of those who have given up or can't muster the strength to fight anymore.

For me, everyday is a battle with MS. My struggle is not only a movement in opposition to a debilitating disease but also a fight for a fulfilling quality of life. I use every available tool and possible weapon in my personal war against MS. Medicine, food, exercise, and spiritual guidance all play an important role. Most of the time this arsenal is very effective and shields my body from the impinging effects of the disease. But every now and then I am sucker punched with a new symptom that knocks me for a loop. When that happens I try to gather my thoughts and seek counsel from my life advisors, which include family, friends, doctors and my spouse. When my decision-making skills are weakened by sudden medicinal changes these people are able to recognize that I am at my most vulnerable and provide much needed support.

New symptoms steer me towards worse case scenarios and distract me from solutions. I become despondent, believing that my latest flare-up will take over my life. Whenever I am in this situation, MS becomes my personal devil. It spits fire at my soul, burning away pieces of my spirit. First, my confidence and ambitions are damaged. Then my faith and hope are tested until my essence is destroyed to the point that my former self is no longer living. I become a different person who struggles to establish a new purpose. Flashbacks to the individual I used to be haunts my contemporary identity and grow to be the foundation of depression. Malevolent thoughts rage an internal battle that deliberately attempts to control my existence. Suddenly my inward struggles become just as stark as the outward ones.

Every outing is a circus where I am the sideshow freak on display for everyone's amusement. My life reflects a car wreck that is highlighted by twisted metal and broken parts. As people pass they look and discretely stare, hoping to get a glimpse of my damaged remains. My mind goes a thousand miles an hour, with only the most awful circumstances passing through every few minutes. My entire being is pushed to the edge where I start to conceive alternatives to continuing in my living hell.

At this point I am usually at the end of my rope. Without intervention I am apt to make horrible and regrettable decisions. I have been known to change medicines, begin fad diets and try to isolate myself from the outside world. My support group has been my savior in this situation by not allowing me to become out of touch. I am blessed to have such a compassionate collection of people in my life. They don't pity me they help me. They stand strong for me when I cannot. They fight for me when my will is weak.

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