Times of Disruption

I stress equally about a possible recurrence of metastatic cancer and how long I can keep pushing with pain levels that range from 6 to 20.

September 17, 2020 By Megan-Claire Chase

It has been an extraordinary time filled with opportunities I never dared to dream of. My confidence level continues to rise. I've lived more in that past few months than I've lived since moving back to Georgia from Los Angeles 17 years ago.

Even with these fabulous professional and advocacy wins, including a new full-time job that I'll begin August 17th and multiple freelance gigs, there are still feelings of uncertainty. It's not uncertainty about my abilities as a marketing and writing professional, it is an uncertainty of my body.

Chronic pain is not something I would ever wish on someone. It's why my cancer journey takes so many gut-punching twists and turns over rocky terrain. I'm in the body of a mummy from the neck down.

There is never a moment where I am not in pain.

There is never a moment where I forget I'm in pain.

There is never a moment where I don't curse this pain.

As much as I stress about a possible recurrence or metastatic cancer, I stress just as equally about how long I can keep pushing with pain levels that range from 6-20. I remember a telling moment at my 8th and final surgery related to my original breast cancer surgery that I had June 3, 2019 at Northside Cancer Center. While the nurse was prepping me with an IV, she asked what my pain level was at that moment. I told her it was an 8, and she just looked stunned. I was matter of fact and told her about my pain range and that an 8 was tolerable. She just started tearing up and said, "I'm so sorry you're suffering so much." It was honestly the first time any emotion had ever been shown by medical staff and I found it oddly comforting. For once, it wasn't dismissed or even questioned.

My chronic pain is multi-faceted. I wish it were only from fibromyalgia. When you add severe neuropathy in my hands and feet, my senses become overloaded. Then add a herniated disc with a tear near the nerve where I desperately need another epidural steroid injection because the first

one didn’t take, then I almost can’t think because the pain is beyond horrific.

It’s a disrupter of time.

It’s a disrupter of sleep.

It’s a disrupter of peace.

So, when others think my cancer story should be over, I simply say no. It never will be because I am reminded at every moment of every day what my cancer treatments and multiple surgeries did to my body. My body is gone. I don’t know this current body. We will always be strangers and never friends because it hurts me on too many levels. Others might be able to move past it, but I cannot.

Until next time,

Warrior Megsie

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