

A Warrior's Heart



Being a Veteran with multiple sclerosis can be a frustrating experience. When you have the heart of a warrior, but a body with limitations, it's enough to dishearten even the most tenacious devil dog.

When I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, I was 23 years old and fresh out of the military. Suddenly, I struggled to maintain control of my body and my mind. No amount of pushing through it would make the symptoms go away, and I eventually realized that I needed help and sought support from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

I was surprised to learn that they had an entire specialty clinic just for patients with multiple sclerosis - a place for warriors like me. At the clinic I didn't just see a multiple sclerosis specialist; I saw a whole team of professionals all there to help me. There were physical and occupational therapists, mental health professionals and even people there specifically to help me file VA disability benefits! I was even provided the option to join a support group of other Veterans fighting multiple sclerosis. I couldn't have asked for a better team to help me in my battle.

My journey with MS has already been a rocky one. At one point I was seeing double and at another, I was completely numb from my rib cage down. As a young mother of three boys, I struggled with the thought of all that I had lost already and the thought of what I might lose in the future.

But relapsing-remitting MS taught me something about life. Something beautiful: I no longer

take for granted all of the things that my body enabled me to do. It would take something away from me, but then it would eventually give most of it back. I've always been able to see until I wasn't. Then it was returned, and I was so grateful for it! Grateful for every sweet little moment with my kids that I got to witness. Grateful even for the ability to drive again after the feeling returned to my legs. Grateful also for the Department of Veterans Affairs. Somehow life was all the more precious after the experience.

I don't know what the future holds for me regarding my MS, but I am certain that I will face it with a warrior's heart and a grateful one too.

Editor's Note: Find more resources for Veterans living with MS on the [Society website](#).