

Appreciating Myself and All That I Am



I don't know if anyone else experienced this, but after my diagnosis, I felt like half a person. I felt like everyone around me could see that I was "incomplete" because of the way I walked, slurred my speech or lost my ability to write my name. Bouncing back from this initial shock wasn't easy.

Through my journey with MS, I've struggled to accept that I will not be able to do certain things all the time. Sometimes my friends want to go hiking on the weekend and my body just says "No!" There are days where I want to accomplish so many things and I have to face the reality that I'm celebrating the fact that I even got out of bed that day. **This is reality.**

You may wonder what keeps me going or what keeps my spirits so high—having a support system and accepting the things I cannot change have led me to where I am today. I struggle with self-love on the daily, but it does not stop me from trying. Thanks to my loving family's support, and the encouragement from my friends and significant other, I understand that no matter what the challenge is, **I can do it.** Nothing in life is perfect, but that's what makes it beautiful.

For most of my life, I've lived for others; this year, I am taking myself into account for the first time. This Valentine's Day, I am my own Valentine! I'm sending myself all of the mental roses I can to congratulate myself for making it this far. Every single day that I wake up, get out of bed, and smile is something to celebrate. I may have multiple sclerosis, but multiple sclerosis does not have me.

Do yourself a favor this Valentine's Day and love yourself. On your good days, bad days and those in between; you are fighting your silent battle every single day, so take this day to say

"I'm amazing."