

# **“Are You Fine?”**



**“Are you fine?”**

**Has anyone ever said this to you? And after you told them honestly you have MS they say:**

“Well, you don’t look like you have multiple sclerosis!”

What does that even mean?! Are we supposed to look like one of Shrek’s relatives or one of the magical creatures from Harry Potter?

Quite possibly, the person saying it is intending to give you a compliment. Maybe they think you look really great! Or maybe they think you should look a little worse...

They might be confusing MS with another debilitating illness. Or maybe they’re like most people and just speak before they think.

When this happens to me – I blame myself for pretending “I’m fine” for the past 30 years. I have been so busy focusing on not letting a diagnosis of MS get to me or rule my life. I cover up my flubs in my speech, my trips and falls, bathroom incidents, the foot dragging, limping, and the list goes on and on...

Plus, my neurologist told me way back in 1996, that even if I’m **not** leaving the house, to get dressed. That might mean just putting on a clean pair of yoga pants. On days I’m feeling really good, I even put on a little makeup. But that doesn’t mean I won’t feel like taking a

break after I get back home from grocery shopping and running errands.

I've come to realize if we're always shrugging off what we're dealing with, it actually makes life harder when we **do** need help. If we're always saying we're "fine" to avoid going into ALL of the details on what's really happening, it can make life more difficult. After all, we have an invisible illness that fluctuates daily and sometimes hour by hour.

If we judge someone else's lack of tact when speaking, it isn't helpful or healthy for us. We need to give ourselves grace and grace to the other person as well. Most people are so wrapped up in their own lives, thoughts and problems that there isn't any extra room for our problems.

As Louise Hay said, "I cannot change another person, I let others be who they are, and I simply love who I am."

This life is not easy, and I've gone through the gamut since my first symptoms in 1985.

I'd love to link arms with you on your journey; we no longer need to suffer in silence, and I am here for you!