

Have You Ever Received Advice You Weren't Looking For?



Ever had a day where you felt almost “normal,” like you were capable of doing anything, and decided to run an errand or have lunch with a friend?

And then maybe an acquaintance, or even a stranger, asked what was wrong with you because you weren't walking “normal?”

You could feel all of the air leaving, like your balloon had just been popped. You just wanted to have a good day and feel like the conqueror you know you are.

Why can't people keep their comments to themselves?

Doesn't anyone remember on “Bambi” when Thumper said, “If you can't say somethin' nice, don't say nothin' at all?”

We are taught to be kind and polite because we know most people are just trying to be helpful, but it's often at the expense of minimizing our own lived experiences.

Sometimes we feel the need to explain everything that's wrong in order to validate our illness. But that isn't how it's supposed to be, and this is dangerous because everyone is tired, forgets their words, trips and falls sometimes.

Sometimes simply saying “I've had better days,” and moving on unless we're inside our

trusted support circle is a good option.

We are often given suggestions on different healing modalities, methods and treatments because it worked for so and so's friend or relative...

If everyone would realize there is never one quick fix to anything. The other side of the coin is most people really don't understand what multiple sclerosis is or what it does to us. I think it's lumped in with the other hard-to-pronounce life limiting illnesses.

When I was first diagnosed over 30 years ago, I felt the need to justify why I was walking and tripping the way it looked on the outside. There have been several occasions when others assumed I had spent the entire day having cocktails or illegal drugs.

You can tell from the tone of their voice, "am I right?" It happens all the time. Even at my son's high school graduation this past May. I had been sitting on the bleachers for 2 hours and did a fancy side-step-double step combo walking out. A complete stranger watched me and asked sarcastically if I was going to make it. I just laughed and kept going.

Now, I just laugh at the comments and keep going because I know I'm not the one with the problem, they are. If they really want to know what MS is, they can Google it when they get home. I no longer take other people's opinions seriously because what they think of me is none of my business.

It's our choice in responding. We can either give a flip answer, laugh and keep going or just ignore them

If everyone would simply stay in their own lane, keep their judgements and comments to themselves, the world would be a much simpler, happier place!