

It's OK Things Aren't OK



It's that time of year again: The time when lists of people's proud accomplishments scroll past on your social media feed. I don't mind it. This year, in fact, I considered joining in to mention my book deal, which still feels surreal all these months later.

But every time I thought about posting, I remembered this time last year when I was ending the year without reaching my writing goals – and with a disease that had recently progressed. I was adjusting to new multiple sclerosis medication, slammed with side effects and fatigue, and scared for the future.

I leaned on my family and friends for support, and today, I'm thankful to be doing much better. But if I'm going to write a year-end post, I want it to be something that would've been a comfort to myself last year, and to anyone who might be struggling now.

The first thing I want to say is: It's OK if things are not OK right now. There's no rule that every goal has to be achieved and every problem resolved by December 31 – this isn't a television show; it's life. Storylines don't wrap up neatly by New Year's Eve.

If you do measure your accomplishments for the year, give yourself some grace. Just because you didn't reach a specific goal doesn't mean you didn't achieve **anything**. For me, I wanted to run a 5K this year. I didn't reach that goal; however, I did run 1 mile, which for me is a big deal.

Perhaps more importantly, I didn't give up. I'm going to keep trying. I think that fact alone –

that we are still trying, still fighting – is an accomplishment to be very proud of.

Also, just because things aren't OK right now, doesn't mean they never will be. It's hard to see it sometimes, especially with all the uncertainty that comes with MS, but things will get better. For now, though, it's perfectly OK to not be OK.

But it's **also** OK to ask for help if you need someone to talk to – whether that means reaching out to friends or family; contacting your health care **provider**, church community or **support group**; or taking advantage of the National MS Society's numerous **resources**, including **MS Navigators**.

This holiday season, remember to be gentle with yourself. Remember, too, that things will get better. And above all, please remember: You are never alone.