

My Support



Taxes.

They are a part of our everyday life, from the dollar cup of coffee to the chasm that separates our salary and our take home money in our paychecks. After finding out I had MS, the last thing I needed to hear was that I had to pay another tax. However, this one was different.

When I got my diagnosis, my neurologist provided a perfect analogy that has guided me and my wife over the past eight months.

He compared MS to a tax that your body has to pay. Sometimes the taxes are high, while other times it's low. Regardless, you need to always make sure you have a way to pay this tax. In our case, that currency is rest. The more rest I have, the more I'll be able to cope and survive with the inevitable symptoms that will tax both my physical and mental health.

I am lucky to be a father and teacher. While I genuinely love these vocations, they each offer a unique challenge to a "restful" life. Between the 2 and 5-year-old at home and the one hundred ninth graders at work, I am consistently being pushed and pulled in many directions without many moments to sit down and catch my breath. Over time, these responsibilities quickly run me into the ground, setting off "mini" flare ups of my MS, with headaches, fatigue and the irritability that comes with both.

Fortunately, I am also lucky enough to be a husband.

I met my wife, Kate, 12 years ago, and since that time we have experienced the sweetest of joys and the harshest of sorrows. Through it all, she has been an amazing support as we navigated through waters that have no doubt damaged, if not broken, many relationships. So it hasn't been a surprise that since my diagnosis, she has propped our family on her back and carried us all.



I sit here in a quiet house, typing this blog because she took the boys out. First the park, then the mall, then off for some lunch. From doing these trips, I know just how difficult they can be. In and out of car seats, skinned knees from a playground fall or just two brothers acting like brothers; these trips are draining to say the least. But each and every weekend, my wife makes sure that she does these things.

She does them for me. She does them so I can rest in order to feel as good as I can when I battle this disease each and every day. She does them because she loves me.

While I deal with MS on a first-hand basis, she might have an even greater task: dealing and helping a loved one who has MS. My symptoms lead me to be short with her and our children, physically exhausted or mentally strained from a combination of everything. Through everything, she is there for me, unwavering in her love and just as importantly, her understanding of what I'm going through.

Love and partnership are incredibly powerful tools that help us find happiness in an often times challenging world. I have never been able to think about a life without Kate, but the struggles that are now in my life because of MS make these thoughts an impossibility. Her love, partnership and support are keeping me going more than any medicine could. I hope that everyone is as fortunate as I am to have a person like her in their life.