

Never Say Never



You know the saying, “never say never?” Well, I continually remind myself of this since my diagnosis 13 years ago. First it was, “I will never marry someone in the military or shorter than me.” And then I did both. I have told myself multiple times, “I will never do a marathon,” and I have done Challenge Walk MS (50 miles in 3 days!) twice and recently ran in a marathon relay.

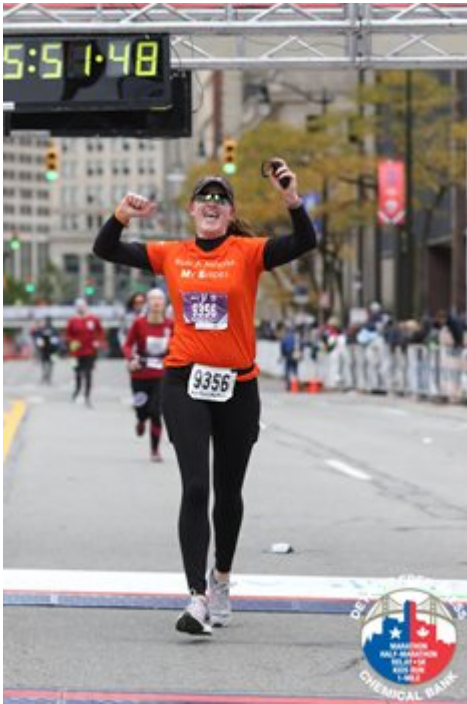
It’s so easy to say no to things, especially if the challenge seems too daunting because there is a fear that MS may prevent you from accomplishing something. This fear, in turn, overshadows the possibility that you really can do it.

I have found so much empowerment and victory when I face my fears and take on challenges that seem to be counter intuitive to what someone with MS “should be able to do.” Accomplishing these challenges may not exactly look pretty or the way I initially intended, but that is the humbling thing about MS. We have to redefine what success and victory looks like, even if it is as simple as cooking dinner and doing laundry in the same day.

We each have our own giants in life to fight and on October 22, 2018, mine was the 4.3 miles I was going to run for the Detroit Free Press Marathon Relay. I had known about this race for almost a year, and although 4.3 is nothing to some people, it was a big deal to me. I have always hated running and with my legs being affected the most by MS, my fear was, “can my legs handle running for 40+ minutes straight?!” Obviously, training was going to be key if I wanted to run the entire 4.3 miles, but to be honest, there were days when 1.5 miles was extremely difficult.

Marathon training proved to be so much more than just running in a race. Living with MS is like

running a marathon—you have to learn to listen to your body and pace yourself and just keep moving. Some days you feel strong and filled with energy, and other days you are lethargic and getting around the house feels like a workout. At the end of the day, we have to keep moving and refuse to let MS stop us!



After months of training race day finally arrived! I was going to run the final leg of the race, which meant I could say that I not only ran in a marathon, but I finished a marathon.

Another great aspect of this event was that I was not running alone! In fact, I was part of a larger team called “Run a Myelin My shoes,” a group of over 50 runners impacted by MS. Twenty-two of those runners lived with MS and among the rest of the crowd was my sweet husband. We each ran various distances, but all for the same purpose: to raise awareness about MS and to show that MS does not stop us!

Crossing the finish line was an emotional moment for me. Not only did I feel strong and successfully ran all 4.3 miles, I felt such a sense of victory and strength (not to mention relief!) knowing that MS doesn’t have to stop me from moving and trying things I never thought I could or would do! Know that when I participate in events like this relay marathon, Walk MS, Challenge Walk MS and Climb to the Top NYC, I do it on behalf of all you who live and are impacted with this disease! Together we are stronger and one day we will see this world free of MS! Here’s to overcoming obstacles and never saying never.