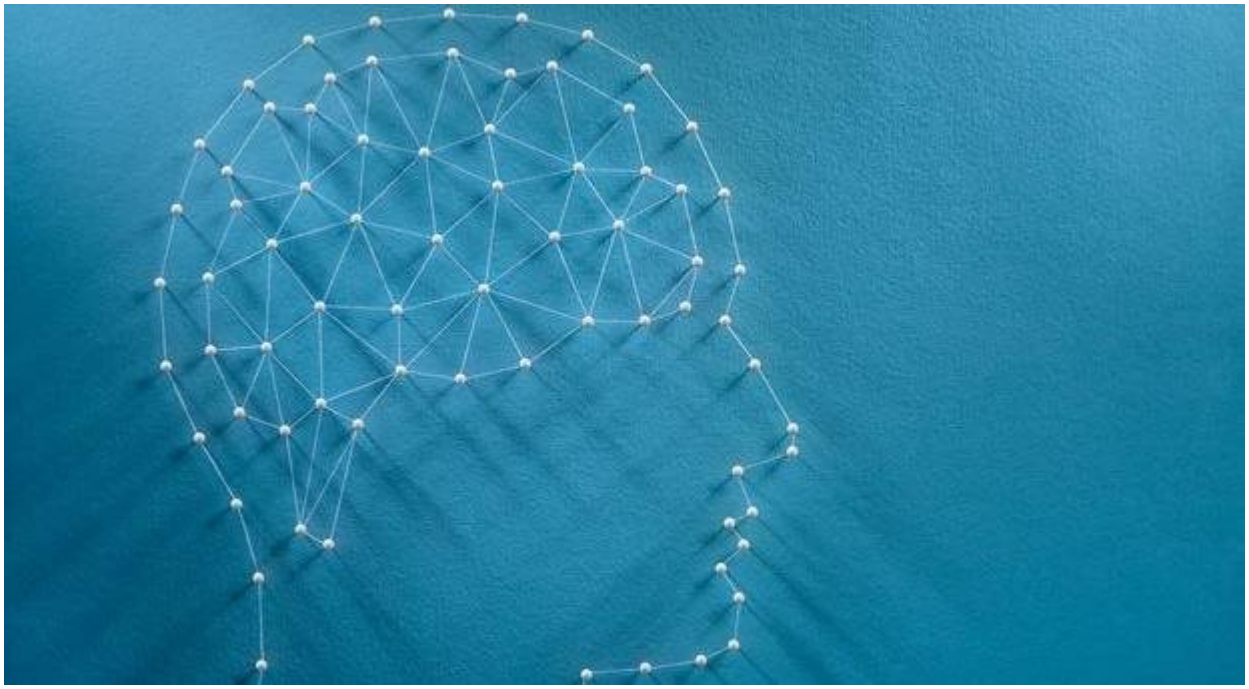
The Bittersweet World of Viewing Your MRI Scans



MRIs are a crucial and taxing part of having MS – as the patient, it is our right to be able to obtain and view our scans once they are complete. But what if viewing them ourselves is not entirely the best idea?

I had a scan done in July 2019 – I received my results from my neurologist over the phone; they weren't pretty. I was curious to know more and to understand better why things were progressing and when this all began to occur. What I got was a document to turn into the hospital to obtain July's scan, but that was it. I had nothing to compare it to, but at least I had a jumping point.

I load the disc on my computer and start scrolling through; I promised myself I wouldn't get bummed over results I already knew, but seeing the results right in front of my eyes… as hard as I tried, I was pretty bummed. Things weren't looking good for me, and visually seeing what's going on in my head hurt more than it helped.

It got me thinking – we have the right to see these scans, but is it worth it? Seeing my condition loud and proud on my computer screen sent me into a rut for a few weeks. I felt helpless, I felt alone, and I felt scared that things were getting worse! But, in the grand scheme of things, I really feel okay. In comparison to where I could be, I'm in tip-top shape and I should be grateful for that as opposed to mortified every day.

Seeing my recent MRI was a really bittersweet feeling. In front of my eyes were the 30 lesions my neurologist had told me about. But nothing was inflamed, and nothing was "angry"

looking, so to speak. I haven’t experienced a real relapse in the 5 years I’ve been diagnosed. Sure, I’ve had multiple symptoms pop up (especially during the heat of summer) from diplopia and more headaches, to a more prominent gait and fatigue that’s kept me on the sofa all day – but nothing that’s kept me down for the count. I can still put my all into my job every day. I can still exercise at least 4 days a week. I can still enjoy experiences with my family and loved ones.

I now know very well where I stand with my MS, but it’s motivated me to do the right thing for my health and **listen** to my body. Resting when I’m tired has become the norm, but boosting other peoples’ morale and hitting the gym are still my Modus Operandi! I’ve changed a bit since seeing that MRI, but it’s impossible to keep me down for long.

No matter what your scans may say to you, you are **strong!** At the end of the day, having MS is the least interesting thing about us because we are resilient, we are powerful, and we are warriors.