

What I Wasn't Told



When I was diagnosed with MS, I was told a lot of things about how I should treat my condition from a medical standpoint—I was told what MS is. I researched MS and realized that my life was going to change.

But there were a lot of things that I wasn't told. They weren't intentionally hidden from me; because I honestly don't think these things are relevant from a medical standpoint. How MS would change me over the following 13 years couldn't have been anticipated by a doctor or internet story.

I wasn't told that I would be on an emotional rollercoaster that would be out of control. I felt worthless and like my life as I knew it was over. I wasn't told that I would be in unimaginable pain for days at a time. I wasn't told that I would have night's that I would cry because of the pain. I wasn't told that my ribs would feel broken every day and night for 13 years.

I was told that it is a progressive disease, and we will just have to see how it goes. I wasn't told that I would lose close friends because of MS. I wasn't told that I would want to give up.

I had to learn these things by experiencing them.

I was told to be careful on the internet, and I always consult with my neurologist before I jump off the deep end. There are people that are waiting to take advantage of you and take your money, knowing full well that the things they are trying to sell have not been proven to work. I have learned so much, and I have met some great people in MS groups, but the scammers are out there in the shadows.

I wasn't told how strong that I would have to be.

But I also found out that I am much stronger than I ever could have imagined. My doctors told me the medical facts, but the rest was up to me. I am a different person now, and I am a better person for going through everything that I have been through. No one could have told me what I would experience, and they could not have predicted how I would respond to my situation.

So, I can tell you this. You are stronger than you know. You will be challenged and maybe even broken, but it's up to you to decide how to react when things come up. A neurologist that I met at a speaking engagement summed it best for me like this. He told me that people with MS adapt to difficult situations better than anyone else he knows. We have no choice and eventually, adapting is second nature to us. The things we adapt to would break most healthy people. However, we don't know any different. We just adapt simply to keep living and keep moving forward.

MS sucks and that's a fact. We as individuals can keep going but our methods are all different. You have to choose to be positive. You have to reinvent ways to do some things or use assistance. You have to adapt. I continue to adapt every day. I wasn't told that one day you would be reading this either.