

## When it's Over



**There's this dress in the back of my closet.**

**And boy, I used to rock that thing. It was perfect for any occasion. It hugged every curve, it made heads turn, and it made me feel so confident and strong.**

At least, it did a long time ago.

And now? That dress I once loved and wore to death is now outdated. The zipper is broken, the color is faded, and it no longer fits as well as it once did.

But how did we get here? I laundered this dress according to the suggested washing instructions, many times being more cautious than necessary. I repaired the zipper myself a few times, and I've invested money to have this dress tailored to fit properly (and I've kept all the receipts!).

Despite the attempts I made into making this garment last, it just...

**It just doesn't make me feel good about myself anymore.**

But it did at one time, and I haven't been able to bring myself to toss it into the "donate" pile yet. Instead, I continue to make excuses for it while it remains, hanging in my closet, a ghost, a constant reminder of the good times I once had while wearing it, but something that no longer brings me joy.

## **It no longer brings me joy.**

Look, a waning relationship is no surprise or shock to people with MS. Whether it's a friendship, a marriage, or a courtship, a diminishment of interest can be inevitable, and we learn pretty quickly who is truly "in it" for the long haul. And this learning curve is especially accelerated and apparent during times of extreme distress and suffering.

A close friend recently said to me: "Friendship is bruises, scraped knees and broken bones. If that's too much for someone, that person is not a friend."

Relationships take work and communication from all parties involved and the moment one person makes the decision to tap out, the relationship is dead.

Having an illness can cause a rift for a multitude of reasons. Perhaps it's a matter of "out of sight, out of mind," or maybe it's the lack of the ability — or, worse, an absence of desire — to relate. These are excuses. Most people don't intend to be toxic, but the truth is, if you are truly important enough to someone, they **will** make the effort to understand what you are going through, to ask what they can do to be of assistance, even if it's not convenient (**especially** if it's not convenient). They will, at the very least, make the effort to simply **be present**... because you **are** worth it.

You are worth the effort, and you are deserving of love.

Surround yourself with people who recognize that. Know when to let go and walk away and stop making excuses for the people who cannot, do not, will not.

So now what?

Go find that sassy dress that will help you feel good again. Who knows? It may even already be in your wardrobe.