

# Which Type of MSer Are You?

WHICH MSER ARE YOU?



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When we're newly diagnosed with MS, it is common to go through something like "the five stages of grief." It is important to note these stages are fluid. You may stay in one or two of them for longer than others. Other people may visit these states for a shorter or longer time than you do... or never leave a stage. There is no right or wrong way to feel during this time, and it is crucial to recognize if things are getting too much for you.

In this blog, we will explore - with some humor! - the different personas we could adopt after we get a diagnosis.

## 1. The Deny-er



Very common in the beginning. The shock of a diagnosis can be a lot to take in. Sometimes, it's so overwhelming, we deny it's even happening. We'll tell ourselves things like, "I'm fine there is nothing wrong with me!" Covering up all those feelings of uncertainty and trying to carry on as "normal." We do this because we are full to the brim with uncertainty, confusion, fear and numbness.

## 2. **The Angry One**



It's common to often turn our attention to feelings of anger. We may point this anger at ourselves for not taking better care of our bodies or even direct the anger toward another higher power for giving us this challenge to face. Feelings of anger may be directed toward our bodies because we feel let down.

### 3. The Information Binger



We can feel so uncertain, helpless and out of control, so finding information on all aspects of MS is critical to us. We think the more we know, the better prepared we are. Occasionally, this turns into information binging insanity. Does MS come with a Ph.D.? It should. Truth is, this search for knowledge helps us to better understand what is going on in our bodies and brings a sense of calm relief, we are in control. But sometimes, it can be overwhelming...

### 4. The Advocate



MS is here to stay (for now!), so let's show MS who the real boss is. "MS won't hold me back from running marathons or hiking 50 miles!" This is a common phase to enter. We start to think about others and finding those people who are experiencing the same situation. We can't be the only ones going through this, right? Finding answers in

communities brings us comfort. It's not the end and we're not alone. We share our stories with others and find belonging. We do this to try to find some meaning for what's happening.

## 5. **The Acceptor**



We explore our options, find empowerment, build our sense of security and our self-esteem. Discovering the newer version of ourselves. For some people, they may have always known something was wrong which they couldn't explain. They've spent years going through the other stages mentioned having no idea why they were going through these stages. Reaching a diagnosis for them may come as a relief. They finally have an understanding and a reason. They can move on.

There is no "right way" to go through a diagnosis and the speed at which we go through these personas can differ from person to person. They are not set in stone. It's important to not compare your MS to another. We all experience things differently.