

You Can Always Do Something



As I stood in the granite halls of the Maine State House near the end of my two terms as a representative, I felt an immense sense of pride and gratitude for my experience in public office. After serving as city clerk in my hometown for 40 years, two terms in the city council and two terms as Mayor, I knew some doors were closing, but also knew my journey in public service wouldn't end here.

In my life, I have the honor of meeting people who have opened my eyes to new perspectives I never thought possible. They have each left a mark on my journey with MS and have shaped me to keep fighting for what's right.

My story with MS began at an early age. My first cousin was diagnosed with MS, along with several extended cousins. Then my daughter was diagnosed at 24 years old, and not too long after, I myself heard the life-altering words that I have MS.

My daughter is an inspiration to me. Though seven years ago she passed from a brain tumor, I will always be in awe of the way she juggled work, family and the challenges that came with living with MS. The way she just kept going. Her courageous spirit lives within me, as I have spent my life moving forward to create meaningful change in the MS movement.



Me and my wife at the Society's national Public Policy Conference.

I went into my term as state representative wanting to help the over 3,000 people in Maine living with MS and to support any piece of legislation for those living with a chronic disease. I was inspired by the way I could help others. In helping others, I realized the greatest joy came in how I was able to keep up the momentum and make real change.

I'm a strong believer that you can always do something to help yourself. And by extension, you can also do something to help others. I do what I need to do to keep going. I may get tired, but I can rest or take a nap. I may not be able to walk more than a mile, but my cane and wheelchair ensure my body can keep up with my work and mind. I'm committed to a positive attitude that far surpasses whatever challenges MS puts in my way. Being involved in public service has been my way of keeping my mind and body moving forward.

I'm not stopping here. I'm currently working as an MS activist serving on the Government Relations Committee to ensure our elected officials support policies and issues that help families affected by MS. I don't know what the future holds for me, but I know I have a lot more passion left in me than to leave the world of public service.

My suggestion to all with disabilities is to find what you can do comfortably and do it. Find a way to move forward despite whatever obstacle it may be—whether it's MS, another disease or disability—and do something to help yourself and others around you.

Editor's Note: Join Archie as an activist [here!](#)