

@Momentum



Biking boomer

“[Aging with MS](#)” (Fall 2015) was an excellent article. It was well-written, and I can relate to everything it said. I am 65 years old and I am worried about aging. I plan on riding my exercise bike again to maximize my health and feel better about myself.

Jayne Almonrode, Tennessee

Reserves of resilience

I just finished reading your article on [aging with MS](#). I am 66 years old, and was diagnosed with MS 35 years ago, although I’m quite sure it started long before that. While I agree with all the points Dr. Michelle Ploughman made in the article, I believe that those of us who have lived on the winding path of MS know all of this. We live it every day. I wish you would devote more energy to the issue of “survivor mentality,” or resilience. I know that having resilience allows me to work, volunteer, take poetry classes, and enjoy my family and friends. I have learned to say no when I need to and pace myself without feeling guilty.

Marla Chalnick, PhD, LPC, North Carolina

Let’s hear it! Share your thoughts and comments about this issue’s stories.

- Tag your thoughts on **Twitter** [@MSsociety](#) using #Momentum.
- Like and comment on our page on [Facebook](#).
- Email editor@nmss.org.
- Or send mail to **Momentum** Editor, National MS Society, 900 S. Broadway, Suite 200,

Denver, Colorado, 80209. Letters to the editor must include your name and a way for our staff to contact you. Letters should be no more than 100 words and may be edited.

Realistic but hopeful

After reading "[Aging with MS](#)," I was both devastated and, at the same time, felt that I was finally fully informed for the first time about aging and MS.

I was first diagnosed with relapsing-remitting MS in 1975 at the age of 30. I had numerous exacerbations until about six years ago, when I began taking disease-modifying medication, and the exacerbations became less numerous and finally ceased altogether. I see my neurologist once a year and get an MRI every two years.

Before I read this article, I was on a high. I currently walk four to six days a week. I walk seven-10 miles at an average speed of 3.5 mph. Other than some moderate residual MS deficits, I am in A-1 general overall health.

I was depressed when I read I could have an 80 percent chance of getting the progressive form. But at the same time I am grateful that I now know there still could be some dark days ahead. I plan to live life to the fullest and keep doing what I do for as long as I can. Hopefully I will continue to be in the 20 percent who age with MS without getting the progressive form.

Steven Lovell, Massachusetts

The home zone

I read "[Modeling the future](#)" (Fall 2015) with interest. I learned the hard way that ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessibility requirements do not apply to our own homes. I went to our county offices thinking they would agree to the updates necessary for my home to be accessible. To my surprise and dismay, I was informed by the zoning board that they did not have to do anything because I was not a business. When I see these articles in our magazine, I wonder how many with MS understand it is for businesses.

Mary Kraatz, Michigan

Editor's note: It's true that ADA requirements are for businesses—as well as government buildings and transportation. Because they are open to the general public, they must accommodate people of all levels of ability. Your home is for your private use, so while you're entitled to modify it (if you own it), there's no requirement that you do so or that anyone else approve or fund it. To learn about possible modifications and resources, visit nationalMSSociety.org/adaptations. To learn more about the ADA, visit ADA.gov or call 1-800-514-0301.

Digital bonus: More letters from Momentum readers

Making exercise a priority

As discussed in the Summer 2015 article, "[The home stretch](#)," I believe that exercise is critical for people with MS. I was diagnosed with MS in 1981, and immediately started lifting weights with the intention of making my muscles strong enough to fight the effects of MS. Over the years I have gained 60 pounds, primarily muscle, and at one point I was able to squat over 500 pounds with my legs.

Today at 59, I have added long walks with our dogs and bicycling to the weightlifting. I look and feel much younger than I am, my MS has not progressed, and I attribute both to exercise.

Exercise is a mindset. It must become an important part of your life. I truly believe that anybody can see some benefits to exercise, no matter how small.

Steve Dunn, Ohio

Against the odds

I read "[Aging with MS](#)" (Fall 2015) with some interest. My first symptoms appeared in 1990, and I was finally diagnosed with relapsing-remitting MS in 2001. I'm now 66 and have all of the symptoms described in the article, plus significant heat sensitivity, and worry about the same things in the future, so I could relate. I walk short distances with the aid of a cane. On good days I can get around our home without it. And I feel fortunate to still be upright and mobile after 25 years with MS. I have always had a physically active, healthy lifestyle, which I think has helped put me in the "resilient" group. I'm also beginning to think I'm close to being a statistical anomaly. I had a 30-year career in the fire service, which statistically reduced my lifespan by 10 years; now I read in the article that MS can shorten it another seven. I think I'll keep working to shift the statistics.

Dave Artz, Washington

Peace with progression

The 20 years since my MS diagnosis has brought me into my early 60s. My attitude regarding remitting MS has been that it will not get the best of me. However, two years ago a flare-up led to temporary blindness. MS has continued to cause many of the issues addressed in "[Aging with MS](#)." I thank author Aviva Patz and **Momentum** for the succinct understanding of age and MS progression the piece contained, and the peace of mind it provides to myself and others living with MS.

Mike Pyne, Massachusetts

A profile in courage

The Fall 2015 issue of **Momentum** was fantastic! Kudos to Matt Alderton for his exceptional feature about my friend, [Scott Crawford](#), and his dedication to MS activism in Jackson,

Mississippi. Dr. Crawford is indeed a blessing for those living with MS and other disabilities in our city and community. Thank you for showcasing his unfettered spirit of creativity and courage. We all eagerly await his mini-replica of Jackson displayed during the holidays at the Arts Center of Mississippi. Mr. Alderton's story beautifully captured Dr. Crawford's determination, civic pride and work ethic.

Linda Showah, Mississippi

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Valerie Benko's story about falling ("[Falling with Grace](#)," Spring 2015) was humorous, educational and inspiring. I would love to see more articles like this, which reflect daily challenges that people with MS face, and how they deal with them. Her candid story shared a problem, shared a fear, and finished with her sharing her resolve to get back up and keep going. Kudos, Valerie.

Jinjer LeVan, Texas