

# Persistence pays off



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**by Cyndi Zagieboylo**

In this issue of **Momentum**, you'll read about the remarkable advances that have been made in understanding what causes multiple sclerosis, and in developing new, innovative treatments. This vital and exciting progress has been made possible through our groundbreaking research fundraising campaign, known as NOW (No Opportunity Wasted). Since 2010, we have invested close to \$250 million in MS research—over a quarter of the Society's \$900 million in investments since our founding in 1946.

In this issue, we acknowledge research achievements (see "[The NOW MS Research campaign makes history as it nears its goal](#)"). It's important to celebrate those achievements. At the same time, we must continue to do everything possible so that people affected by MS can live their best lives. Research is just part of the National MS Society's mission. We also invest heavily in programs and services for people living with MS. We're partnering with people as

they live with MS today while we're searching for tomorrow's answers.

We strive to understand the challenges of living with MS and to collaborate with individuals to find solutions that work for them. We describe what is known about MS and its symptoms; identify what we need to learn through research; and connect people with information, resources and each other to move their lives forward.

For many people, pain is an especially challenging symptom of MS. As you'll learn in "[Pain, pain, go away](#)," it's a symptom that affects at least two-thirds of people who live with MS. And there are no treatments that are 100 percent effective for it, or that work for every person. Pain management, just like many other aspects of MS, often requires a trial-and-error approach.

That's one of the reasons we strive to connect people with each other—because some of the best insights come from talking with others and learning what worked (and didn't work) for them. Learning about others' experiences can give you the confidence to try a new strategy yourself. Those connections can also provide vital support when something you try doesn't work. The more we describe our experiences to each other, the more we learn and the more we feel compelled to persevere, to not give up, to keep trying.

It's one of the things we do in research, too. Even if the results from a study aren't what we were hoping for, it's still knowledge. We know more about what doesn't work and can use that information to take a step forward.

The Society is the largest private funder of MS research in the world. We have been described as **the** catalyst for all major advances in MS. The persistence that it takes to find solutions was modeled by our founder, Sylvia Lawry. Her passionate, unrelenting devotion to understand and achieve a world free of MS continues to inspire us today, almost 70 years later. We overcome the disappointment of each failed attempt—and there have been many—and take the next steps to find answers.

Persevering through challenging times—whether in research or in our daily lives—requires the support and collaboration of others. We need to be able to celebrate our successes and express our disappointment and discouragement. The Society can support you in expressing how you really feel about MS and the challenges it presents that you'd like to overcome. Through that, we can achieve more. We don't want scientists and people affected by MS to give up. Drop me a line with your ideas about how the Society can support you in living with MS today.

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Let me know your thoughts. Email me at [cyndi@nmss.org](mailto:cyndi@nmss.org).