

# Letters to the editor: Relatable experiences



## **Loss of taste**

I loved reading [“Does this taste weird to you?”](#) (Fall 2021) by Aviva Patz. I’ve had a similar experience and had the same reaction from my doctor. I lost 15 pounds and thought I had cancer. So relieved to know it’s “just” my MS.

Joyce McCall, Washington

## **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](mailto: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.

## **Meaningful and useful articles**

I have been getting **Momentum** for several years now and appreciate the informative articles. I just finished reading the Thrive articles in the Winter 2021-22 issue. [“MS through the ages”](#) was awesome and one of your best. Hearing stories directly from people with MS in their own words of the things that really matter to them and getting the perspectives of

different people of different ages and backgrounds was incredible.

I took a little piece of wisdom, learning or encouragement from each one. Thank you. [“Boost your eye-Q”](#) also enlightened me on the different effects MS has on eyesight, and helped me realize that I have not just double vision, but also rare episodes of nystagmus. I always thought that was just an effect of double vision, but now recognize the difference. Thanks for being a very informative magazine, publishing meaningful and useful articles, and being a light of hope to those with a discouraging disease.

**David Ewens, South Carolina**

### **Focus on pediatric MS**

I am a regular reader of Momentum and was intrigued when I read the article [“MS through the ages”](#) (Winter 2021–22). I was happy that there was finally an article outlining the differences of diagnosis at varying ages. As an adult who was diagnosed with MS as a child, I was disappointed that pediatric onset MS was not represented. This article outlined stories from people diagnosed at (approximately) ages 19, 20, 21, 25, 30, 32 and 56. I appreciate this variety, as I have never read an article with anything like this. It is rare to find pediatric onset MS represented in MS literature. I remember an article covering pediatric MS and was pleasantly surprised ([“Growing up fast,”](#) Fall 2019). I would love to see pediatric onset MS represented more, as the experiences are so different than those diagnosed with MS as an adult. Thank you for all you do with spreading awareness and supporting people with MS.

**Valerie Niemela, Washington**

### **Appreciate the honesty**

Finally, someone I can relate to. After reading nonstop stories about people who run marathons, walk their dog for socialization and smile happily with their mobility devices, Richard M. Cohen ([“Struggling to stay standing,”](#) Winter 2021–22) wrote the words so many people feel for those of us who have fought the good fight and continue to do so. I was diagnosed in 1997 at the age of 26. I graduated from cane to walker and, occasionally, the dreaded wheelchair. I appreciate his honesty and ability to openly write, “I hate them all.” I, too, will struggle to stay standing for as long as I can.

**Annalisa Kaplan, Illinois**

### **Not giving in**

The Fired up article [“Struggling to stay standing”](#) by Richard M. Cohen (Winter 2021–22) brought back many memories of my older brother. He was diagnosed six months after me. I was born on his birthday a year after him. We were like twins, who surfed and skateboarded up until 1998. We were on our way home from a surfing weekend when he said he was having trouble standing up to catch a wave. I told him I was having numb hands and feet. He died from complications in 2010. Like Mr. Cohen, I refused to let this disease take me out, and have been fighting this thief ever since. I’m 72, still walking, exercising, practicing yoga

daily and fighting the ever-present reminder that it is trying to pull me down. Fighting and not giving in to its call is my life now and I feel like I'm finally winning.

**Rick Evans, Virginia**

### **Standing up to well-meaning friends**

Thank you for publishing an article in which a person living with MS stands up to well-meaning friends and family who try to advise them on how to live their life (["Struggling to stay standing"](#) Winter 2021-22). I am 70 years old, have been living with MS for 30 years and became an endurance cyclist at age 50. I had hoped that I'd "beat" MS, and although I still live with it and its unpredictable nature, I have worked hard to challenge myself daily. Friends and family are constantly telling me that I am pushing myself too hard or that I shouldn't be attempting certain challenges. I happily work out seven days a week, have no qualms about riding 60 or 70 miles (often in heat) and am now a great fan of Richard M. Cohen and his attitude of "Why do I do that? Because I can."

**Barb Abrams, Ohio**