2015 - My Year of Living With Hepatitis C

September 3, 2015 By Grace Campbell

"I know this much: that there is objective time, but also subjective time, the kind you wear on the inside of your wrist, next to where the pulse lies. And this personal time, which is the true time, is measured in your relationship to memory."
–Julian Barnes

Hepatitis C has been uppermost in my mind all this year. It's trumped everything else.

I think about hep C, treatment and their impact all the time. I have a significant number of doctors' appointments. I have blood tests at least once a month. I examine those blood test results, going over the with a fine tooth comb. I think about my health, my treatment and oh how I think about a positive outcome. I think about how many tablets I've taken. I think about how many I have left to take. I think about the days I've done already and the days I still have left.

I think about my end of treatment (EOT) blood tests, my four week EOT test, my 12 week EOT test. Because the waiting doesn't end when you've had that last tablet, oh deary me no. You still have 12 weeks more waiting. That takes me through to early December.

When it doesn't sit at the forefront of my consciousness, it sits churning away in the background. I can't escape it. I've never had anything take over my life like this has. Not even pregnancy!

So let's do that maths (we all know how much I love maths): I got the word I was accepted onto a compassionate access program on 7 February this year. I had my appointment to get the drugs on 23rd March. I started on the 24th March. I will finish on the 7th September and my 12 week EOT results should come through around the 10th December.

There's 10 months. Two months shy of an entire year. My Year of Living With Hepatitis C.

Why has it taken my brain hostage?

I think (with the very few brain cells not devoted to thinking about hepatitis C) that it's because this is a monumental battle. This is a life or death battle for me. It is not cerebral. It is at the core of my life. I think it's normal to think about your survival.

A less obsessive person might be able to put it to one side, and sometimes I can. But often the thoughts of my treatment float to the surface unbidden and once there are hard to dismiss.

So I have four more days of treatment. Four more days of thinking about treatment. Then I can switch to thinking about treatment in the past tense. And no doubt I'll find something else to obsess over.

It's how I roll.

Four more days.