



Applying Einstein's Wisdom to Hepatitis C

April 26, 2013 By [Lucinda K. Porter RN](#)

An illness, such as hepatitis C is a call to action. Our bodies are designed to heal, to feel better, to live, and to savor life. The problem with hepatitis C is that it sometimes takes too much effort to initiate the steps that set us on the path to health. It can be overwhelming to think about hepatitis C, let alone act on it. So where does one begin? To answer this question, I look to Einstein.

Take a break from thinking about hepatitis C and how you feel. When trying to solve a difficult problem, Einstein would garden. Digging in dirt diverted his attention to something pleasurable and creative. By resting one part of his brain and activating another, solutions to Einstein's problems often emerged. He said, "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

Living with hepatitis C does not mean we have to devote all of our waking life to thinking about our misery. If you focus your attention on something pleasurable, you can step off the hamster wheel of rumination, and perhaps get a reprieve from your suffering.

Do something for someone else. Last week I was feeling low. Hepatitis C treatment was causing some side effects that were interfering with my work. I was feeling unproductive and frustrated. Then I learned that a friend was having open-heart surgery with a long, painful convalescence. I called to offer my support and wish her well. Connecting with someone who had more serious problems than I did lifted my spirits. Einstein said, "A person starts to live when he can live outside himself."

Live in the present. If I were inclined to think about the potential consequences of hepatitis C, I could work myself into a tizzy. The "what if" list is long. I could get cancer, die, infect someone else, be exhausted my entire life, need a liver transplant, and so on. Asking "what if" is like paying rent on a house I don't occupy. It wastes energy and brain space. It squander a precious life. Einstein said, "I never think of the future. It comes soon enough."

Appreciate life. Einstein said, "There are two ways to live: you can live as if nothing is a miracle; you can live as if everything is a miracle." May you discover that life, even with hepatitis C, is a miracle. Living as if everything is a miracle is the ultimate call to action.

