Hepatitis C: R & R

May 6, 2015 By Grace Campbell

I'd just like to report back on my first mid-week day off.

If you've been reading along, you'll no doubt remember my ridiculous compulsion to keep pushing myself long past the point I really should during my treatment for Hepatitis C. I decided after a few meltdowns to take an extra day a week off on sick leave. So now I'm currently working 3 days a week and having 2 days off.

Does this make me feel like a bit of a sook? Yes. Do I feel that perhaps if I tried harder, did things differently, was tougher, I might be able to work more? Sure.

But I don't want to have my days and weeks marked by meltdowns, so I am accepting my new reality with as much grace as I can muster. I love the days off, I just wish I didn't need them.

Today was marked by a list of things to do, which let's face it, is perhaps not the best way to start a relaxing day at home. But the list of things consisted of: make bed, do washing, fold clothes, ring hospital, light fire ... I did get adventurous with "mow lawn" and "mop floors" but it's worth noting that only one of those things was completed. And it was not the floor. In my defence in preparation for the lawn, I decided not to walk this morning, so that was my daily exercise. I did add "wash dog" but that was more aqua therapy than work - we both ended up drenched.

At the end of the day I felt human and happy. I felt I'd achieved something and I'm actually feeling okay about heading back to work tomorrow.

I'm not sure whether the lightening of my mood has been caused by getting my work load under control, adding an extra day to my sick leave, my good blood test results or that maybe, just maybe I'm adjusting to the Viekira Pak treatment.

Whatever the reason, I'll take what's offered.

So what are the lessons in this for others?

Don't be like me would be the primary one. Don't be that person who pushes and pushes and pushes themselves, asking for just that bit more.

Ask yourself what your priorities are right now while you are fighting this fight. Are they about work and more work? Or are they focused on your needs.

Listen to the messages your body is sending. Although I willingly admit to being a control freak, I'm

normally a pretty nice person. I never judge anyone as harshly as I judge myself. So when I found myself being quite difficult at work, I knew that was a sign to cut back.

Listen to the people who care about you. They know you really well and they can see you with clear eyes. Hear them. If they say you are looking tired, believe them. They aren't saying it to upset you, they want to help you.

Look after yourself, be your own best advocate. No one will fight for your health outcomes like you will. No one has the same degree of investment. Stand up for yourself.

And finally, be kind. To yourself, at first if that's all you can manage. Kindness flows like honey into the smallest crevices and makes everything that little bit sweeter. Soon you'll find it easier to be kind to everyone.

(And look at this fabulous print by Emily McDowell, who does the most hilarious cards and stuff. This is the person I want to be.)

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http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/blog/hepatitis-c-r-r