Hepatitis C Treatment: Together, Staying Strong

September 25, 2015 By Matt Starr

This has not been the path that I expected or predicted; intensity is up, aligned with fading strength. New challenges bring stress at home, but compared to many with hep C meds on board and liver disease, the expected side effects were quite tolerable for the first four months. When the walls began to crumble, though, they fell hard and fast. I was suddenly dealing with full-fledged anemia, and noticed fuzziness in my thought processes.

To show this difference, at the beginning of my treatment for hepatitis C, my gastroenterologist warned me that my swimming laps was short lived. “Might as well cancel that gym membership.” As a stubborn ex-endurance guy, I couldn’t accept that.

I decided right away to continue at the gym, and put in a mile a few days a week. I still go, but the swims are much shorter. And, I did tolerate moderate exercise well: swimming, hiking, heavy gardening, and more. That is, until recently, because now I’m just too darn tired now to get much done.

Walks about do it. Oh, but the forest is still green and alive, I breathe in soothing evergreen air, and as part of the life in the woods, I am grateful and calmed. So what if it’s not a 10K race? I’m alive, living to be part of the wonder all around me. I appreciate it, and it helps me be as well as I can be right now.

As I go through these last two weeks, I am working to keep away the little gremlins that try to influence me. One particular gremlin wants to think through all of the possibilities. “What happens with our liver after hep C is knocked out? What if the virus relapses? How much of my body and strength will I reclaim?” This overanalyzing, self-doubting gremlin is a part of me. It is more subtle than the bigger feelings many of have, like fear, isolation, loss of control. It thinks it’s after my best interests, but it’s been with me so long that it’s as if I have matured and it has not. I must keep it away, not let it influence me.

Overcoming this particularly obsessive “what if” means that I need to be in the now evergreen breath, and be glad for what I currently still have. And I must tell my self-doubting, worrying gremlin that I cannot know what the future holds, but I can do all that I know to bring a higher chance of health beyond hep C and live in the now, which still has a lot going for it.

That’s the challenge for us all; to live for now and live in the best way, doing and enjoying what we can to enhance our overall health.

Believe in life, love and yourself.

Anything is Possible.

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