Hepatitis C Treatment Week 14 of 24

July 23, 2015 By Matt Starr

My recent writing has focused on what we can all do to enhance our vitality and health with hepatitis C, liver disease, and hepatitis C treatments. Lately, I hesitated to write much about my journey with treatments, as I have been tolerating ribavirin and Harvoni well. Talking about the fact that I was doing better than expected, might not be helpful for those who are struggling more than I was.

However, the last few weeks have taken more of a toll on me. I guess I've joined the Ribavirin Side Effect Club. The main side effect I experience is significant fatigue, which reaches into many of the things I love. I've long ago come to terms with changes in my body and physical strength that this decade long battle with hepatitis, liver disease, a transplant, and various treatments have brought me. However, this is an annoying side effect that just takes my remaining strength and casts it aside.

Some of my friends who do not have hepatitis C tell me that they are not the same either. Many are in their 50's now, wanting to write checks the body won't cash. I can relate to this. I know that my age of 58 is a lot different from 40 or 50, but this decade, for me, has been an express lane of body changes and reduced strength. What my buddies from our old endurance and sports days can't understand, is that they live with basic good health. They probably can't fathom the impact of my health struggles on my whole self, and how the current medicine saps my vitality and strength.

Lately, the fatigue affects common activities. Walks are slower, the gardening less vigorous, the sleep longer, the biking only short and flat, the yoga gentler, and travel less adventurous. My mantra of positive attitude and actions affecting healing is tested in new ways, and I can slide into moodiness and self-pity. This is rare, as I use many tools to avoid such a slide, but it still happens. Ribavirin works on a person, regardless of your lifestyle and healing practices. I almost expect these bouts to occur, or at least am not surprised when they appear.

But when they do, I am armed for battle. It helps to talk to an empathetic loved one and being honest about my downward feelings. Or take a short walk in the woods with my dog, or prune tomatoes. Heading into my yoga room for meditation, awareness, and gentle asana, harvesting our healthy vegetables for the day, and more, are all arrows in my healing quiver that can return me to gratefulness and a love for this life, as it presents itself right now.

I'm going to fight against the occasional slide towards being depressed, and not allow it to overwhelm me. I find it amazing how positive action can pivot me away from staring into an abyss. It works for me every time. I bet it will work for you too.

Everything is Possible.

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