# “I have measured out my life with coffee spoons...”

May 29, 2018 By Grace Campbell

I have the liver enzymes of a healthy person. It’s true. My ALT is 12, my AST a sweet 21. If you didn’t look at my ultrasound report and my platelet count you’d swear I was completely normal. The sonographer said from the outside I look great!

I know these things because last week marked my six-monthly check up. Last time I went to Sydney for a check up the alarm bells went off in the ultrasound room because they thought they saw something bad. A subsequent MRI showed everything to be okay, but there was a moment of heightened reality when everyone’s heart rates were elevated.

This time it was very calm. The sonographer was relaxed, I didn’t pass out and my specialist didn’t laugh at my strange questions. Well not to my face.

I’ve realised that while TS Eliot may have measured Prufrock’s life with coffee spoons, I measure out mine with six monthly increments. I don’t think about my liver any time within those six months. I don’t think about getting sick. I don’t think about being a person with a chronic condition (I mean - end stage liver disease. Which happy camper came up with that name?).

I work, I exercise, I eat, I sleep and I enjoy life. I appreciate everything that is in front of me. I appreciate my dawn walks with the dog. I appreciate the frosts that are starting to rime the hills around my home. I appreciate every conversation and joke I have with my students at school. I even appreciate mixing it with the swim squad every morning and having my butt handed to me on a plate by 12 year olds.

I certainly appreciate coffee.

Then comes my six month reckoning. For a couple of days my condition swims to the forefront of my mind. Then I get the email with my results. I’m lucky, my specialist realises that there are few things as time sensitive as test results and sends them through very quickly. I read through them, noting the good news (did I mention I have the liver enzymes of a healthy person?) and I put them in the drawer with all the other test results.

And life goes on.

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