The New Normal - Hepatitis C

April 16, 2015 By Grace Campbell

“Normal is how you perceive normal, not what others tell you is normal.”
- Sean Thomas

In the throes of Hepatitis C treatment, this is something I’ve been pondering for a few days. What is “normal”? Can “normal” change or is it an immutable truth? Are any two “normals” the same?

I’ve been using the word “normal” a lot lately.
“I feel normal!”
“I don’t feel quite normal”

I’ve been using it as a definition for how well I feel. But I started to think …
Is what I’m experiencing “The New Normal”?

Don’t get me wrong, I know there are some lines in the sand that define normal test results. I know there is a clinical “normal”. But they have a range. Does how we are feeling have the same range?

Today for example, I feel that I have more energy. Sadly, I had enough energy to do some housework. <heavy sigh> Do I have as much energy as “normal”? Well, I don’t have as much energy as I did a few months ago and I’m very conscious of not pushing myself too far or too fast. But compared with a week ago, I feel great.

So is this now my “New Normal”?

Perhaps we need to allow ourselves a range of normality, especially while we go through this treatment journey. And more importantly, perhaps we need to stop defining “normal” as what we were.

Because *what we were* is different for everyone. Heck, it’s different for US at various stages of the treatment process. Before I started treatment, I felt normal. I did normal things. I got up, I exercised in the morning. I went to work 5 days a week. I came home. I tried to avoid cooking dinner wherever possible. I slept. I did normal weekend things. I went out for dinner, I went to the movies. I met with friends. I enjoyed my Saturday morning treat of breakfast and the Sydney Morning Herald at my favourite cafe.

For other people, normal might have been an inability to work, or to go out, or to enjoy certain activities. Perhaps some people managed far more than me.

That I can’t do some of those things right now doesn’t mean I’m not in a good place. It doesn’t mean I’m

more sick than I was. It might mean that I am saving my energy. It might mean that right here, right now, I am engaging in the fight of my life. And that’s my New Normal.

Perhaps we all need to cherish our New Normals. Often they’re a sign that something monumental is happening within us.

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http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/blog/the-new-normal