



my Lupus journey

Frances Pierce

Hello, my name is Frances Pierce. I am 55 years old, residing in Indianapolis, Indiana, living with lupus and I am proud of it. I have three lovely daughters and three grandchildren. In the story of my life, I can say that I wear the illnesses that I carry, the illnesses don't wear me. For many years, I didn't understand "why me", but then I asked God and thought "why not me?" I had to become the vessel and the testimony to tell somebody just what I was going through. I don't look like what I've been through.

I was diagnosed with lupus in 1995, multiple sclerosis in 1996, and optic neuritis in 1997. I was driving home and suddenly, nothing looked familiar to me, so I had to pull over on Interstate 465. In 1998, I lost vision in my left eye and developed pseudotumor cerebri in 2005. Doctors have tried me on so many different medicines back to back. Now, I'm on Plaquenil, methotrexate injections and steroids. I really don't care for the the side effects --the list goes on and on. So, people ask how I continue in life, putting up with all these illnesses and I have to say, "If I did not know God, I would not know me." Trust me, sometimes I feel like giving up. I'm stressed and depressed. Family members and friends don't care to come around because they didn't understand or would say I was evil. I don't have a male companion because in my experience, men don't really understand lupus, and don't really care to hear about it. The one day that was to be my happiest day became my saddest day. I was married on December 29, 2013 and had a severe lupus flair due to the stress of the day's event. That night, the flair up I had, he had never seen, which led to the words, "I Can't Do This." I guess you know how it ended. YES, he filed for divorce in May 2014.

As hurt as I was, I had to keep in mind that lupus is a thing I have, not who I am. I had to look for the joy and I had to monitor my energy. I had a lot of setbacks, new symptoms in all the diagnosis I had which threw me off track. But what did me in the most, was when my best friend of 30 years at that time, was hit by a drunk driver at 100 miles an hour and I had to nurse him back to health. My health was already failing.

To this day, I must thank my children, the only two best friends that I have, because if I did not have them to help me throughout the day, I couldn't make it. I can't work a 9-5 job. In 2012, my doctors had me get a lap band because of the pseudotumor cerebri, stating that it would help me with a lot of the other health problems that were going on. I got it and more problems came. The lupus fought against it which made me have more stomach surgeries. To this day, I can't really eat. I can't hold anything down. Really, the pains hit so hard, like I'm in labor. Some days, all I can do is lay around and do nothing. Then, I must realize that physically, psychologically, emotionally, spiritually and mentally, it's going to take more than Ryan's Hope for this woman to survive. I cannot abide another deep breath of these lonely days. I have to be here, I have to be there. I ask God to rescue me from this havoc and to please show me just the basics of how to make it through today.

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