Turning My Migraine Life into Purpose

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Thank you for being here.... You may have taken the hardest step already

Role Call

- Episodic Migraine
- Chronic Migraine
- Cluster Headache
- Other Headache Disorder
- Caregiver
- Healthcare Professional
- Been to a Miles for Migraine Event Before
My Story

Timeline

- 1st migraine attack at age 5
  - Mom and both grandmothers lived with migraine
- Increase in middle school with hormones
- First neurologist in high school and college
  - Not a good personality fit and not good medication
  - Why funding and support of fellows in M4M is important
- Adult- Intervention specialist turned Chronic
- Had 2 children
- Started My Migraine Life blog in 2014
Grieving Process

- Shock
  - How can I be so young and otherwise healthy while I’m suffering?
- Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Testing
  - Seeking realistic solutions
  - Medication
  - Therapies etc.
- Acceptance
  - Advocacy!!!!!
Acceptance

Advocacy

• My Migraine Life blog
  • Writing as an outlet. Telling my story makes me feel less alone
  • Advocacy is a privilege
  • Sharing what works for me allows others to think about what could help them.
    • NOT EVERYONE IS THE SAME BUT CAN LEARN FROM OTHERS' JOURNEYS
    • Share information on products, medications, ways to get involved.

Social- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
  • Find a platform that works for you
  • Find groups that work for you
  • Connect
Acceptance

- Fundraising for Miles for Migraine
  - Cleveland, Phoenix and Cincinnati walk/run/relax
  - Patient perspective, largest team, largest fundraiser, advocate award
    - Nervous public speaking but impact was big!
    - Talked about it at work/school, Email

Follow Other Bloggers
- Migraine Diva
- AchySmile
- Migraine Warrior
- The Dizzy Cook
Advocacy is for Everybody

• There is room in this community for everyone

• Don’t Forget to Advocate for Yourself
  • I can’t be a good mom, teacher or advocate if I’m doing the best for myself

• We all have something to contribute to advocacy (Your delivery system may be different than mine
  • Writing letters to your representatives
  • Contacting Reps through social media
  • Participating in events like Headache on the Hill and The Headache & Migraine Policy Forum
  • Miles for Migraine virtual and in person events
  • Retreat Migraine
  • Participating in Migraine Awareness Month (June)
  • Migraine World Summit
  • As simple as wearing a shirt
  • Talking to a friend
Advocacy also is....

Advocacy is for Everybody

- Telling your story though Advocacy Stories

- Find an organization that fits your mission
  - American Migraine Foundation
  - National Headache Foundation
  - US Pain INVisible Project
  - Migraine Again
  - Migraine.com
  - Shades for Migraine
  - Association of Migraine Disorders
  - National Headache Foundation
Final Thoughts

What I have gained through advocacy

• Migraine takes a lot away…but the migraine community gives back!

• Advocacy allows me to take back power

• Migraine doesn’t define me….but how I’m making a change does!

• Thank you for coming and please follow and connect online
  • My Migraine Life
  • Facebook, Twitter, Instagram

• Healthline “Meet Me at the Races”