

I have M.E.

ME is short for myalgic encephalomyelitis, which refers to muscle pain induced by inflammatory processes of the brain. It is a chronic illness approximately affecting 17-24 Mio people worldwide. I don't know exactly why I got it, but somewhen around 2015 I got sick, probably with mononucleosis (it was never tested in the acute phase, so I can't be sure) and never recovered.

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My life since then is vastly different- I used to be very active and outgoing, doing a lot of sports, partying, having many social contacts and enjoying life to the fullest. I was always living healthy, eating a balanced diet, not drinking, not smoking, hardly ever sick. Well, it happened nevertheless that I lost the life I've been used to.

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ME didn't only leave me with a very limited amount of energy compared to before but also with severe punishment for not staying within my own limitations – just small thinks, like doing household chores or going for a walk or even experiencing too much sensations can push me over the edge and cause something called post-exertion-malaise, short: PEM. PEM means not only feeling heavily sick for an unknown amount of time but also usually leaves me even more limited than I already was before.

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Catching minor infections usually is followed by even more impaired energy levels, heightened levels of all-over-body-pain and exhaustion for up to 8 weeks. Even tough I'm one of MANY people living with ME there is no cure available and only experimental treatments at best. This leaves those affected by it in a dire situation: Possible therapies or medication that could at least relief symptoms are mostly not covered by insurance, which makes them inaccessible for most. The lack of recognition and awareness both in the medical world and society doesn't make life any better for M.E. sufferers.

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Creating more awareness about this complex condition that is often triggered by viral or bacterial infections is important – especially in the face of a viral pandemic that will increase the number of people having to deal with this. It is of utmost importance to create more awareness about this sickness and its sufferers because right now it is up to those already being limited to use part of their little energy to activism.

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Please at least listen, when a chronically ill person tells their story.

You might need their gathered knowledge and their activism at one point in your life.