



Myasthenia Express

Myasthenia Gravis Manitoba Inc. October 2008

Vol. 1 No.26

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Myasthenia Gravis Manitoba Inc. Winnipeg, Manitoba

Our next meeting will be held on November 20, 2008 at the St. Boniface Hospital in rooms AG 001 & 002 in the basement south entrance, at 7.00 P.M.

The following are the confirmed dates for our meetings for 2009.

January 23, 2009, March 19, 2009 and May 21, 2009.

Our bake sale will be held on January 24, 2009 at Garden City Mall.

The Myasthenia Gravis Coalition of Canada and Muscular Dystrophy of Canada invites all members to join in on a National Teleconference Power Point Presentation, with Dr. Michael Nicolle, a professor of Neurology at the University of Western Ontario, on Myasthenia Gravis, on Saturday November 29, 2008 at 1.00 P.M. central time. Members may submit up to three questions, and Dr. Nicolle will answer the pre-selected ones. **Try to register as soon as possible.**

Presidents Report

By
Diane S. Kowaliuk

Now that summer is behind us we are planning our schedule for the following year. Our next meeting will be November 20, 2008. We will start the night with pizza and proceed into our annual elections for all positions. We ask all members that would like to be nominated for a position to contact one of the executive or display your interest at the meeting. For the current executive who would not like their names to stand please contact Verna at 586-6784 and stipulate your wishes. Our support group is only as good as all of us participating in making it such, and if we all share the workload it does not make it too taxing on just a few members. I would like to thank my current executive for their support, hard work and commitment to our chapter. I would also like to thank the members for their participation in attending the meetings and excellent support portrayed amongst each other. After the elections we will discuss new business and arrange for guest speakers for the following year. After the elections the executive will meet for our annual meeting.

Ten hints for better communication.

- (1) Keep skid chains on your tongue; always say less than you think. Cultivate a low, persuasive voice. How you say it often counts more than what you say.
- (2) Make promises sparingly and keep them faithfully, no matter what it costs.
- (3) Never let an opportunity pass to say a kind and encouraging word to, or about somebody. Praise good work, regardless who did it. If criticism is needed, criticize helpfully, never spitefully.
- (4) Be interested in others, their pursuits, their work, their homes and families. Make merry with those who rejoice and also with those who weep and mourn. Let everyone you meet, however humble, feel that you regard him or her as a person of importance.
- (5) Be cheerful. Don't burden or depress those around you by dwelling on your minor aches and pains and small disappointments. Remember, everyone is carrying some kind of load.
- (6) Keep an open mind. Discuss but don't argue. It is a mark of a superior mind to be able to disagree without being disagreeable.
- (7) Let your virtues, speak for themselves. Refuse to talk about others stories. Discourage gossip. It is a waste of valuable time and can be extremely destructive.
- (8) Be careful of another's feelings. Wit and humor at the other person's expense are rarely worth it and may hurt when least expected.
- (9) Pay no attention to ill-natured remarks about you. Remember, the person who carried the message may not be the most accurate reporter in the world. Simply live so that nobody will believe them. Disordered nerves and bad digestion are a common cause of back- biting.
- (10) Don't be too anxious about the credit due you. Do your best and be patient. Forget about yourself and let others remember. Success is sweeter that way.

Be kinder than necessary, for everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle.

Laughter is the shortest distance between two people and wrinkles merely indicate where smiles have been.

Coping with Chronic Illness

Strategies For Patients

You never fully appreciated your health until you had to face the fact you now have an illness that is not going away. You feel angry and depressed. It is hard to get beyond the questions, "Why me"? How can you learn to cope more successfully with your conditions?

Effects of Chronic Illness

Chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, arthritis or kidney disease cannot, as yet, be cured. However, they can often be controlled with carefully followed dietary, exercise and medication regiment. Once past the shock and despair, people with chronic illness often find that their condition requires that they live healthier, more health -conscious lives.

People commonly go through a five stages grieving and adjustment period as they learn to accept a chronic illness. There are feelings of grief, powerlessness, and fear. This is natural as you move through the stages. There is no fixed time schedule or order for your passage through the stages of adjustment, and many times the stages overlap. Sometimes you may feel you are experiencing several of the stages at once. This, too, is normal part of one's progress towards the final stage of acceptance.

The Five Stages of Acceptance

1. **DENIAL**. You are not ready to deal with the loss of your good health, so you deny your illness. You may feel that the doctor got the wrong lab report. You deny the seriousness of the condition: you're not going to let it concern you. This denial can take a dangerously defiant form. Statements like, "I'm going to eat, exercise and take or not take my medications just as I please!" mustn't become rules of behavior. Teenage diabetics are often great deniers of their condition and can get themselves into serious trouble if adults do not intervene.

2. **ANGER**. You're mad at everything and everyone. "I've paid my dues, had my yearly checkups, and went to church on Sundays. It isn't fair!" People around you seem to go on as if your problem doesn't exist, and that makes you mad. Or, worse yet, they hover around you, telling you how to live your life, acting as if you already have one foot in the grave. If you stay in this stage, you'll become bitter, and people will begin to avoid you.

3. **DEPRESSION**. The problem really hits you. You cry, feel sorry for yourself and generally give up. You find no joy in anything. Sorrow can lead to depression and hopelessness. These feelings can become self-destructive.

4. **BARGAINING**. You make a last attempt at reaching a compromise with reality. “If I only overeat on weekends, that won’t be too bad.” “If I give more to charity, I won’t have another heart attack.” The danger of remaining in this stage is due to the fact that chronic illnesses don’t make deals and don’t accept bribes.

5. **ACCEPTANCE**. Having gone through the previous four stages, you now accept our illness as part of your self, a reality to be lived with, not escaped. You recognize that your best chance for future happiness lies in your understanding of your condition, and your disciplined commitment to its control

When to Seek Help

If you find yourself stuck in any stage before acceptance, you can benefit from professional help. And, after acceptance comes, such help is still valuable. Find a counselor who will respect your wishes and work with you as a partner. Join a support group. Take care of yourself. You can begin to take control of your illness instead of letting it control you.

How to Help Family Members Understand Chronic Illness

The loving support of family is a great comfort when we are living with a chronic illness. But the road to understanding can be a rough one. The most important thing to remember is that your family members do care, but their reactions can be confusing.

If your chronic illness began with a sudden, perhaps even life threatening, event it will have been quite a scare for everyone. At first family will gather around you and help in any way they can. But as time goes by they may not realize how weak you still are or how much pain you are dealing with. You need to know that they want you to get well, but each time you seem cheerful or exhibit some energy they may see this as a sign that you are better.

In cases where chronic illness comes on slowly it can be even harder for you and your family. There is no one point in time when the illness begins. It may even take your doctor a long time to identify your condition. During that period when you just don’t know why you feel so awful some family members will be sympathetic, but others may wonder if you have become a hypochondriac. Many individuals will try to keep up a cheerful front because they do not want to seem like a complainer. All this can result in a confusing situation as you wonder if your family really cares. Again, it isn't a lack of caring on their part but their wanting you to be well and happy.

The hardest thing can be that it takes time and patience When you are still struggling with adjusting to your chronic illness. Just remember that your family does love you and they too are having difficulty dealing with the changes your illness has brought.

Redefining Your Identity

Chronic illness can throw you into a no-mans-land where you are no longer who you that sure who you are becoming. You can no longer define yourself based on what you do or what you accomplish. In a society that often identifies us by things like our jobs or affluence this is especially difficult. Nevertheless you can gain back some of your identity through activities or you may have to develop new interests to replace old ones. Even these new activities may have to be adjusted depending on how you feel from day to day. You may join a knitting or quilting group then find your health problems force you to miss going at times. You may not be able to get out at all for a while so it becomes more important to find something that interests you at home. It is important not to get stuck and find ways to get out again. You may also be involved in the community of support for your disability, and might need to ensure you as well. Try not to let your disability become who you believe you are.

Internet Source

Myasthenia Gravis Triggers

Sometimes your Myasthenia Gravis may get worse for no apparent reason. Then again, some find their MG gets worse with the following. Some people tolerate some of the things on the list without any MG upsets, but you should be aware some of these may intensify Myasthenia Gravis symptoms.

Stress (good or bad)
Anxiety (good or bad)
Hot weather
Cold weather
Humidity
Certain medications
Alcoholic beverages
*Quinine or tonic water
Insecticides
Fumes
Inadequate or over adequate medications
Colds
Infections
Sunlight or bright lights (affects eyes)
Pet flea sprays
Hot tubs
Sunbathing
Sudden fear
Repetition
Hunger

Low potassium level
Low thyroid level
Diarrhea
Depression
Anger
Aerosols
House hold cleaners
Menstrual periods
Insufficient sleep
Fever
Illness
Smoking (second hand smoke)
Hot bath or showers
Saunas
Thrills (ex. Rollercoaster)
Intense negative situations
(ex. car accidents, news of death)
* Can cause problems for any Myasthenic.
Always consult your Physician or Pharmacist first.

Myasthenia Gravis Manitoba Inc.
Chapter Directors

Gary Parker
Verna Kapkey
Roger Ross

Resource Person

Anyone needing social or health care services or any of the wide variety of organizations in our community contact our resource person for information.

Doreen Amadatsu at: 888-8628

Myasthenia Gravis Manitoba Inc.
Chapter

Membership Fees are as follows:

Family-----\$10.00
Per Person-----\$ 5.00

Please submit your fees or donations to:

Myasthenia Gravis Manitoba Inc.
Membership
c/o Maureen Silk
614 Munroe Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada
R2K 1H8

Please Note

This newsletter is intended to provide the reader with general information to be used solely for educational purposes, and that any medical views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual author and do not reflect any official position of the Myasthenia Gravis Manitoba Inc. chapter. Always consult your physician or health care professional for medical advice.

We all have Choices

Are you an active member?
The kind that would be missed.
Or are you just contended
That your name is on the list?
Do you attend the meetings?
And mingle with the flock
Or do you stay at home
And criticize and knock?
Do you take an active part?
To help the work along,
Or are you satisfied to be
The kind that “just belong”?
Do you ever go to visit?
A member who is sick,
Or leave the work to just a few
And talk about the clique?
There’s quite a program scheduled
That I’m sure you’ve heard about.
And we’ll appreciate it if you too
Will come and help us out.
So come to meetings often
And help with hand and heart,
Don’t just be a member
But take an active part.
Think this over, members
You know right or wrong,
Are you an active member?
Or do you just belong?
Author unknown



Get well wishes to every one who maybe on the sick list.