

Millennials and Chronic Illness

13 Things That Might Resonate



1. *We never know how we'll feel from day to day or even hour to hour. "If opening your eyes, or getting out of bed, or holding a spoon, or combing your hair is the daunting Mount Everest you climb today, that is okay."* – Carmen Ambrosio

2. *Lists of intention, instead of lists of "to do" are a must-have tool! They keep us on track, get the details out of our heads, and are a great place to problem-solve. "Make a list of the things your illness actually does prevent you from doing, and then a list of workarounds for each limitation."* Linda Rodgers

3. *"Chronic" is a difficult word to accept and it requires both determination and courage. Tears are not only OK, they are a necessary way to work through the loss, grief, and trauma of chronic illness. "There is no need to be ashamed of tears, for tears bear witness that a man has the greatest of courage, the courage to suffer."* Viktor Frankl

4. *The words, "Have you tried...?" are an uncomfortable conversation-starter. If a treatment, medication, or supplement exists, we've probably either tried it or already talked to our doctors about it. There's just no easy way out of that conversation. "Going through things you never thought you'd go through, will only take you places you never thought you'd get to."* Morgan Harper Nichols

5. *Some days are a struggle. It might be symptoms, pain, exhaustion, having to say "no" to one more invitation, losing a friend to illness, feeling trapped financially, too many appointments in a row – sometime it's all just a lot to manage. "When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it ..."* Henry Ford

6. *The Pain Scale is a pretty ineffective way to communicate pain. "We are conquerors, we are survivors, but we are also sufferers. It is commonly misunderstood that a person cannot be both, but I wake up and go through each day understanding the reality of my health circumstances, which includes being honest with myself and those around me."* Devri Velazquez

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7. *We would love to be spontaneous, and "live a little," but we really do have to pay attention to what we eat, how much we drink, what we did yesterday or need to do tomorrow, sleep, medication schedules, temperature, sun exposure ... the list seems endless, and it really is a pain! "Chronic illness is hard. It's a new life. All I knew has gone. It's different now. I'm not depressed, I'm grieving. There is a difference. And it's normal."* Georgina E. Banks

8. *Dating is complicated. How much do we tell someone about our illness? When? First date? Second date? Not till we get serious? When do we discuss the impact of illness on marriage, children, finances, work? "...to all the men and women out there who are daunted by illness, I encourage you to get to know a person whose health may not be perfect. No, it may not be the easiest life, but you may never know the compassion that humanity holds until you meet someone with a chronic illness."* Anand Omprakash

9. *College comes with so many questions! Can we manage a full-time course load? Should we attend part-time? Can we live on campus? What about roommates? Should we commute? What about food and managing medications? How will our bodies cope with less sleep? More stress? How do we manage appointments and treatments? What about hospitalizations? We must be willing to let go of the life we've planned, so as to have the life that is waiting for us."* Joseph Campbell

10. *How will illness affect our ability to work? Live on our own? Afford insurance? Manage healthcare? "Behind every chronic illness is just a person trying to find their way in the world."* Glenn Schweitzer

11. *We want to be invited, even if we're not able to go. "So this is my life. And I want you to know that I am both happy and sad and I'm still trying to figure out how that could be."* Stephen Chbosky

12. *We have hopes and dreams for our future even when we don't talk about them. It just feels risky sometimes to put them into words in a life with so much loss. "Hope doesn't require a massive chain where heavy links of logic hold it together. A thin wire will do ... just strong enough to get us through the night until the winds die down."* Charles R. Swindoll

13. *Sometimes we're quiet, not because we don't want to talk, but because we don't have the words to describe what we actually feel. "Please be patient with me. Sometimes when I'm quiet, it's because I need to figure myself out. It's not because I don't want to talk. Sometimes there are no words for my thoughts."* Kamla Bolaños

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