

June 22nd, 2008

I really believed that I couldn't get any happier than the way I was feeling, but I was wrong: going back to Johns Hopkins had the power to make me feel even happier.

I continue to talk about happiness in most of the letters I write and I am sure that it might sound strange to feel this way while having a serious disease like MS, but I have realized that happiness is something that we create for ourselves and that it can be felt and experienced in such different ways from person to person...and I do it this way: I keep myself happy by finding heroes to look up to, by searching for deeper answers to my many questions, by paying attention to the smallest things in my life and by being grateful for every new day that comes my way.

Life throws us many curveballs at many different times during the course of it and I feel that it is up to us to find something that gives us the power to go on. Just like everyone else, I experienced a lot and I still do, but I have always felt that I have the special gift of finding and creating new reasons to be happy...just like I did this time.

When dreams come true or when I feel that the dreams are lost somewhere along the way, I believe that I have to create others and to believe in other dreams so I can avoid getting too scared thinking about my future.

By having a dream and a goal to concentrate on, I don't waste my time guessing how my future will be like and how bad my MS is going to be, but I truly live for the day and enjoy every single little thing that has the power to make me happy.

I just have different dreams now but I have some that are just as important and just as wonderful as the ones that already came true.

Now, these dreams have something to do with my disease and not just with wanting to travel, to go back to my country or to discover more of America, which is the place that fascinates me the most.

Mine might not be the typical desire or be a typical dream, but who can tell us what to hope and to dream for?

Maybe, the secret is to change the priorities in your life, change the focus on things and pay attention to other ones, ones that you would have never expected to have the power to touch you in such ways.

Just like I explained in one of my previous letters, at each difficult moment in my life, I always felt the need to create for myself new dreams and to find new heroes that could represent new hopes and that would help me look forward and guide me throughout my journey with this disease.

I want to believe in someone special, in something special.

I want to be a part of something useful and meaningful and the day I went to Johns Hopkins for the first time, I found it all.

Meeting Dr. Greenberg for the second time, while staying in close contact with him throughout the past year, was another wonderful experience.

I met his assistant Maureen that has the smile of an angel and that admits with all honesty that she wouldn't want to work for anybody else but for Dr. Greenberg and knowing very well the way he is, I can say that I completely understand her and that I share the same feelings.

I have to repeat myself by saying that having him as a doctor helped me tremendously. Any questions I had, any desire to share research news and my own thoughts on them, any concerns I felt with taking medications after spending my entire life not wanting them or needing them, have been helped by him, by his clear answers and by his kind way of showing me patience and understanding.

Like I said from the very beginning, I was looking for a doctor that would see me not just as a patient, but as a person and with Dr. Greenberg I feel like I am getting exactly what I was looking for.

Helping him with his research and with his many efforts to find better ways to understand many neurological diseases, is an honor for me and being able to be one of his patients is one of the dreams that I was talking about.

While I know that I might appear silly by expressing my feelings this way, I also know that both my unusual spirit and my unusual vision of life are what keep me strong, energetic and hopeful.

And if it's working for me, well, I will continue to be exactly who I am!

Until next time, take good care.

Love,

Angela