Getting Past ‘The Wall’

by NICOLE HALL

Carrying on after Hitting a Wall

When my June lacrosse adventure with my daughter came to an end, I couldn’t help but be a bit sad thinking about how she was in her final stage of high school. This mixture of sadness and excitement was because I knew she would soon have her own adventures – adventures I would have to experience secondhand through stories and pictures.

After nine days of being on the go, logging in just over 2,700 miles, I hit a brick wall.

Everyone with lupus hits this wall, at some point. It’s like going 60 to zero in five seconds. Sometimes, if you’re lucky, you get a little longer and you are able to brace yourself for the impact.

Getting Through

- **Mind over matter –** I used to think there was no way I could ever convince myself that I felt fine when I was feeling like crap. I remember being told growing up that “the mind is a powerful thing, capable of more than you can imagine.” I’ve realized over the past few months that it truly is.
- **Quiet time –** Do you want a nap? Take one. For some a 15 minute nap leaves them feeling refreshed. For myself, it is more like 2 hours. Even if you think you don’t need a nap, just lay down in a cold room and turn on some relaxing music for 15 minutes.
- **Let your mind wander –** If you aren’t addicted to Pinterest like I am, catch up on a few magazines you have laying around. Sometimes just focusing on something other than what might be hurting or aching is enough to get you over that hump.
- **Recover –** I know you are thinking: “Well duh.” For me, I take my meds, which sometimes includes something for the pain – though more often than not I opt to not take pain medication. I personally don’t like how I feel when I take these meds, and have found that a very small glass of wine helps me “recover” better than a pill at times. And I’m not going to lie, there are times a nice fat juicy steak on the grill and mashed potatoes give me the same warm fuzziness as a glass of wine!
- **Suck it up buttercup –** What did I just say?? Yes, you heard me! Sometimes you just have to suck it up. My kids, family, friends all know I have lupus. They all know that sometimes my attitude is less than peachy because of it, but there are things that need to be done and events that we need to attend in person – not just for us, but for our families.

Suck It Up

By the end of the summer I was constantly telling myself to suck it up. I am so thankful I did, because in August my daughter was invited to visit a prestigious college for a campus visit and to discuss her lacrosse future.

When the day came, I didn’t snap a lot of pictures with my camera (per my daughter’s request), but I was there with her taking in the same sights and getting to experience the same thing she was at that very moment.

As my daughter and I made our way to her one on one meeting with the coach, my knee locked up. Every step pushed me closer to tears until I couldn’t fight them off. After about the longest 50 yards of my life, I pulled myself together so I could be there for my daughter for that last bit.

A few days after we returned home my daughter received a phone call from the coach. I was continuing to “suck it up." When my daughter walked up to me after the call with tears in her eyes and told me she she had just verbally committed to play for the Army, my pain quickly disappeared.

Suck it up buttercup – because if you don’t, you might just miss out on an experience that will wipe away the pain.