

Richard Cohen

I was diagnosed with MS three months ago. I am 67 years old and had retired to enjoy my "golden years," only to be diagnosed with MS. I definitely relate to Richard Cohen. His attitude of why he rides the subway—"because he can"—reflects my attitude completely at this point. I struggle to do things and others ask why, stressing they can do it for me. But I

do it because I can. My deep fear of that time when I may not be able to things for myself keeps me fighting for my independence now. Mr. Cohen's article was a source of strength for me and, I'm sure, for many others. I hope he knows he is appreciated. Your magazine has been a great resource for me. Thank you.

Audrey Whitman Council Bluffs, Iowa

Jonathan Katz

Dear Dr. Katz: Your brand of comedy is terrific! The head of the rehab department that I benefited from was a doctor who had multiple sclerosis (MS). He had MS, but it didn't have him. Way to go!

Liz Cole Georgetown, IL

THE EDITOR RESPONDS: Thanks, Liz. If you like Katz's kind of comedy, you might check out his Web site at **jonathankatz.com**. There's plenty of funny stuff and some information and links related to MS as well.

Speak Up

I enjoy reading your magazine. I was very impressed with your story, "Bay Window" by Louis DeCaro. How could his wife leave him because of his illness? I was my husband's caregiver for nine months until he passed away at 58 years

old. It's been 20 years and I still miss him so much—we were married for 35 years and had four children. God bless you, Louis. I'm praying for you to get better every day.

Josephine Giannino Brooklyn, NY

Thank you for publishing the "Speak Up" essay written by Alex Cathcart, "Greatness Becomes Me" [May/June 2007]. This piece was so well written, so moving and inspiring, and so nervetouching and raw, that I truly hope you will publish more of his work.

While it may be true, as Mr. Cathcart states, that "people become accustomed to bad news and tend to get on with their lives," I don't fully accept that the author is no longer the pillar of strength he feels he once was. He might not see that the words of his essay shout with the "wisdom, humor, and the light of meaning..." that he is afraid he lost.

Mr. Cathcart's heroism in the face of illness might not rank up there with his own definition of a hero as someone who comes up with a cure for ALS. We can't deny, though, that someone who can write, get published, and is able to say he toured with a Ramone comes pretty darn close.

Terri Lesser Long Island, NY

Illustrating Depression

A member of my household subscribes to your excellent publication. I am a massage therapist, and I occasionally thumb through *Neurology Now* for anything that may be of interest to my clients. I am passing on "Living in Denial" and "Battling the Black Dog" [July/Aug 2007] to one of them. The illustrations accompanying "Battling

the Black Dog," were some of the most appropriate that I have ever seen. They could have written the whole story. You have a very sensitive and aware artist on your staff.

Anne Lauzon Roswell, GA

Myasthenia Gravis

Kudos to Susan Klinger for her letter to the editor in the September/October 2007 issue. It's about time we begin to read more on myasthenia gravis. My 20year-old son was diagnosed with it two months ago. Thankfully we got him to a new neurologist, and he was diagnosed within two weeks. I believe that had my son not shown all the symptoms of myasthenia gravis at one time—and had we not found a neurologist who was very familiar with the condition—we may never have received an accurate diagnosis. My son had surgery to remove his thymus gland along with two growths that were attached to the thymus. He is currently on medication to manage his myasthenia gravis. It has been a rough two months, but the prognosis seems to be great.

> LuAnn H. Parkinson Smithfield, Utah

THE EDITOR RESPONDS: Thank you for your letter, LuAnn. Look for more stories on myasthenia gravis in 2008.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: Correspondence for publication on this LETTERS page must include name, address, and daytime phone number, and may be edited for purposes of space and clarity. It should be e-mailed to neurologynow@lwwny.com, faxed to 646-674-6500, or mailed to 333 Seventh Ave., 19th Floor, New York, NY 10001.

PERSONAL ESSAYS: The SPEAK UP essay is a forum for people who live with neurological conditions and those who care for them.
Submissions should be kept to 600 words and sent to the addresses above.

ASK THE EXPERTS: If you have a question for a doctor to answer in our ASK THE EXPERTS department, send it to the addresses above.



SUBSCRIPTIONS

You may order a subscription—available for free to individuals with a neurological disorder and their families and caregivers—through the following methods.

PHONE: Call 1-800-422-2681.

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WEBSITE

neurologynow.com features an electronic version of the print magazine, dating to our premiere issue. The site also offers publication information, resource links, and web-exclusive content.

Sex and Mutiple Sclerosis

I really think their needs to be an article with more details on the lack of sexual desire in women with multiple sclerosis. I have spoken to my neurologist about this, and even he says there is not much to help out there. I'm only 39, but I feel like I am 109 due to the lack of energy and bouts of MS, which go on for weeks. I bet if more wives of the men that invented Viagra had MS, they would have invented something by now....

Sandie Crue

Everyday Hero

My friend Karen almost died when she was 7 years old. One day she started falling off her bike and convulsing; then came all the doctors and tests. Diagnosed with severe epilepsy, she had surgery and awoke with a metal plate in her head. Afterwards she had a hard time thinking of words and speaking. School was extremely difficult for her, but she made it through and graduated the same year I did.

Karen lived with her parents until she was 30 years old and then struck out on her own. Her parents helped her buy a

Margie Barnhart Canton, OH

house. She can't drive because of the sei-

zures, but she takes the city bus every day

to her job at a nursing home where she

has now worked for seven years. She has

rallied through her disability and refuses to

be labeled. Karen is a strong, courageous,

independent, and God-fearing woman: all

it takes to be an everyday kind of hero!

Disability on the Job

In 1997 I was diagnosed with myasthenia gravis and advised my leadership at General Motors. I received support and consideration of the limitations on travel and the fatigue that come with this disease. I did, for general protection, investigate and became familiar with the ADA in case any issues did arise, which they didn't. I was subsequently given a substantial promotion in 1998 and later retired at that new level in 2003. While I perhaps had some apprehension during both experiences, I certainly was treated with care and thoughtfulness.

Ron A. Smith Rochester, MI

SEND US MORE ARTWORK!

We want to see your drawings, paintings, photos, sculptures, etc. Although the 2007 contest is closed—the winning entry is in "Speak Up" (page 48)—we would like to showcase more reader art on our Web site, neurologynow.com.

The work should relate to living with a neurological condition in some way. Ideally, it should communicate what it's like to live with a neurological condition or someone who has a neurological condition. Please include a brief (50-100 word) bio and artist's statement.

You can send images of your art via email to **neurologynow@lwwny.com**. Or, you can send the original work (or photos of that work) to:

Wolters Kluwer Health, 333 Seventh Ave., 19th Floor, New York, NY 10001, Attn: Neurology Now

Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope so that we can return the materials to you by mail.