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The Mayday Project

Interview with Josh Cutler



Acceptance is Not A Death Sentence

The Illusion That You Will Never Get Well



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From the Editor

On Illness and Friendships

As time goes on, you begin to forge close relationships with people from all over the world who have the same illness as you. These people may be far away, yet nonetheless you share a closer bond with them than people you have known your entire life who live close by. You lean on each other. And while you might miss your old friends, the amount to which you yearn for the rekindling of your relationship is likely fantasized and amplified in your head.

The truth is, when it really comes down to it, and worse comes to worst, whose voice would you rather hear on the other end of the phone? The person you grew up with who lives nearby but leads an entirely different lifestyle than your own, or the person you only recently met online who lives on a different continent? That most of us would choose the latter in a heartbeat says a lot which begs me to ask the question, even if our old friends had continued visiting or calling us, would we not have eventually been the ones who stopped reaching out to them?

In many cases, I believe so. Not because we are rude and most likely not because we do not like our old friends, but because they can never possibly come close to understanding us the way our friends from all over the world whom we met in online support groups can. Just the same, is it then possible our old friends didn't betray us or leave us, but rather that we simply no longer have much in common with one another?

Perhaps this is the case, the truth at the core of it all, because there is no doubt that illness and solitude forever change us. We will never be the same, we will never be the people they initially bonded with. They were friends with the old versions of us, not our illness induced reincarnations. They made friends with who we once were, not with who we are now. Likewise, who we once were held a much stronger bond with them than who we are today does. After all, the changes we undergo are in no way similar to the life changes experienced by the average individual. Ours are rapid and severe, their impacts permanently branding our souls and hearts with igneous iron that entirely changes who we are and endows us with a new set of eyes void of the veil hanging in front of our previous ones.

"Become an alchemist. Transmute base metal into gold, suffering into consciousness, disaster into enlightenment." -Eckhart Tolle



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"The Mayday Project: Interview with Josh Cutler"



Lisa was the US coordinator for the World-wide Lyme Protest for two years in a row and also does free teleconferences that address the spiritual side of Lyme disease with Jenny Rush. To find out more, visit www.lymethriving.com.

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"Eliminate Electromagnetic Pollution to Eliminate Disease"



Connie Strasheim is a medical researcher and author who has co-authored three books in the Journey To Wellness series (2014) with W. Lee Cowden, MD, in addition to five books on Lyme disease, cancer and spiritual wellness. For more information, visit: www.ConnieStrasheim.com

Tired of Lyme

"Permanence: The Illusion that you Will Never Get Well"

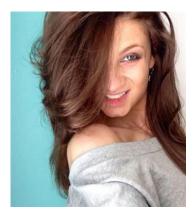
WASSENGE TIPE OF LYMPE

Tired of Lyme was created with the intent of becoming a site dedicated to continuously provide support, consolation, and education for those enduring Chronic Lyme Disease.

Website: http://www.tiredoflyme.com

Marissa Cassella

"Acceptance is Not a Death Sentence"



Marissa Cassella is a certified EMT battling Lyme disease. She is a guest writer for Public Health Alert, and writes uplifting pieces for those who are healing.

It seems to me that almost all our sadnesses are moments of tension, which we feel as paralysis because we no longer hear our astonished emotions living. Because we are alone with the unfamiliar presence that has entered us; because everything we trust and are used to is for a moment taken away from us; because we stand in the midst of a transition where we cannot remain standing. That is why the sadness passes: the new presence inside us, the presence that has been added, has entered our heart, has gone into its innermost chamber and is no longer even there, is already in our bloodstream. And we don't know what it was. We could easily be made to believe that nothing happened, and yet we have changed, as a house that a guest has entered changes. We can't say who has come, perhaps we will never know, but many signs indicate that the future enters us in this way in order to be transformed in us, long before it happens. And that is why it is so important to be solitary and attentive when one is sad. -Rainer Maria Rilke

The Mayday Project: Interview With Josh Cutler By Lisa Hilton

The Mayday Project

Josh, thank you so much for doing this interview for Public Health Alert. We would like to thank you for all that you have been doing for the Lyme community over the years and say that we are grateful for all that you have accomplished, notably with the last Mayday Protest.

Lisa Hilton: In your interviews you have done for Mayday you say you have been sick for a long time. Can you tell us a little about your illness? How does it affect your life and how long have you been sick?

Josh Cutler: I've been sick with Lyme disease for eight years -two of which I was misdiagnosed. It's affected ever single aspect of my life -personally, socially, and my ability to work. I'm no longer able to enjoy the things I once enjoyed in life. My symptoms range from horrible brain fog, memory issues, visual issues, cardiac issues, being light headed. and an inability to exercise.

Lisa Hilton: What made you decide to become an activist?

Josh Cutler: I'd lost a close friend to Lyme disease. I took her loss hard and realized I wanted to try to help fight for change.

Lisa Hliton: In what ways has it helped you personally to advocate for other Lyme patients? I know it must be hard while being so sick yourself. What

have been your most difficult obstacles in trying to fight for awareness?

Josh Cutler: The obstacles are trying to run an organization and advocate for a community of sick people, which is taxing on anyone. For some-

one who is chronically sick it is tenfold. It has helped me realize I am not alone in this battle. **Thousands** of people out there are fighting the same fight. My health has been my biggest obstacle.

Lisa Hilton: How many Mayday events have you participated in?

Josh Cutler: Three

Lisa Hilton: Can you tell us how this year was different from previous years?

Josh Cutler: This year we felt like we helped start real change. All who attended the events felt a deep sense of hope. We are at the start of having open dialog with the ID-SA. They know who we are, and what it is we are requesting as a community.

Lisa Hilton: Can you give us a general run down of what happened this year? What was it like to be inside the walls of the IDSA headquarters and actually speak face to face with their representatives?

Josh Cutler: We had a two day protest in Arlington, Virginia. We surrounded the IDSA building with Lyme patients and protesters, while a bill-

> board truck slowly circled the building. We had the attention of all of Arlington. It was a surreal feeling to be inside. None of us thought they would

even engage us with us. Once allowed inside I realized they were aware of who we were and that people are really sick. It was a bit intimidating as they came down with three representatives. We presented our case well and provoked emotion from those we met.

Lisa Hilton: What are the goals of The Mayday Project for the next year?

Josh Cutler: This year we plan to compile the most recent scientific studies and peer reviewed research and continue to present it to the news media and the IDSA, asking them to review our case and reconsider their guidelines. The Mayday Project will be attending I.D. this week, which is the Infectious Society of

America's week long conference on infectious disease. Not only will we be present at the conference, we will be outside protesting in large force as well.

Lisa Hilton: I know you work with an excellent team of other Lyme patients, would you like to give them a shout out to?

Josh Cutler: For sure! Allison Hoffmann, Amber Limbaugh, Lisa Hilton, Tracy Hamer Will, Will Duggan, Melissa Ann, Saby Mo, Bruce, and everyone who helped online to accomplish this year's goals.

Lisa Hilton: Do you see change coming in regards to what we can expect for the treatment of Lyme patients in the near future?

Josh Cutler: It's quite possible. We have huge plans this year. Unfortunately, the medical and scientific communities are generally slow to change and even slower to admit they were wrong. Still, it seems the tides are changing and Lyme patients have reason to hope.

Lisa Hilton: Thank you, Josh, for taking time to answer these questions. We appreciate all the time and effort you have placed towards advocating for Lyme disease awareness.

PERMANENCE: THE ILLUSION THAT YOU WILL NEVER GET WELL

By Tired of Lyme, www.tiredoflyme.com



If you're like every other person battling Lyme disease, you're not alone in feeling frustrated, annoyed, and impatient. You're our minds false realities, or perceive false definitely not alone in feeling doubtful that truths, which ever you prefer, but the you'll ever rid yourself of Lyme disease. Believe it or not, this is a fairly common reality people with Lyme disease paint for themselves, despite it being nothing more than a complete illusion. The idea that you'll exist in your current debilitated state until death takes over, has become the perceived reality in the minds of many whom continue to battle Lyme disease, day in and day out. Even though the concept of never eradicating Lyme disease is a complete delusion, why do we ultimately end up not only generating this reality, but believing it? Well let's start with the basics, and then use logic to determine its possible origin.

Permanence: the idea that something will last indefinitely. Stop right there! That's exactly what permanency is, an idea. It originates in the mind, and exists only in the mind. But why? Well, the idea of permanence originating in the mind is due to the perceived circumstances a person with Lyme disease generates. We must reflect or record our physical state mentally, and we do so by generating an emotion towards that physical experience. The circumstances appear to be hopeless, and all efforts appear to be in vein. This in turn, though not always true, generates the delusion of permanence within the mind of those battling Lyme disease. From this moment forward, you sometimes recall your physical experience with Lyme disease as a permanent existence. This is the emotion or thought you label, or designate, to the battle itself.

Of course though, generating your own opinions and beliefs of your circumstances can have its problems, as they're not always entirely true; especially without any

hard evidence for a conviction. We human beings have a tendency to create within problem doesn't stop there as we then go on and tend to believe them in their entireties, despite lacking the evidence to suggest our beliefs are truth. What convincing evidence does a person with Lyme disease have to convince themselves that they'll be in their debilitating state forever? Well, not much. And the evidence they do find surely is out weighed in vast quantities by the evidence that suggests Lyme disease won't last forever.

Another possible reason why those with Lyme fool themselves into believing that Lyme Disease will last indefinitely could be in their genes. It could be out of your conscious control, and automatically generated in the mind by your instincts. But why? Why would your body and mind lead you to believe that you will never get rid of Lyme disease? The answer would have to deductively be survival.

Change the lens in which you perceive the body's ability to generate permanency of Lyme disease in the mind as cruel, and perceive it in a beneficial manner. It could be that after a certain time threshold is passed under the circumstances of Lyme disease, the mind has a natural tendency to develop an automatic acceptance of the state of your debilitation. The reason? Why waste energy and time on contemplating the fate or future of your life, when it could be put to better use; specifically in the present. It's almost as if the body is employing a survival tactic that forces you to focus on the present, and what you can do to better yourself now, instead of what appears to be uncertain in the future. It makes great sense though when you think about it because everything that we perform and do in the

"It's vastly important to remember that what we are and feel now, should never be assumed to be how we will feel or be in the future. There is no direct correlation."



www.tiredoflyme.com

present, and what you can do to better yourself now, instead of what appears to be uncertain in the future. It makes great sense though when you think about it because everything that we perform and do in the present as human beings, will ultimately give way to what will become of us in the future in regards to Lyme disease.

The mind instinctively and autonomously generates an acceptance of possessing Lyme disease forever, though we as humans consciously know it to be untrue. By performing this action, you then become able to focus your available energy and resources on not only surviving, but bettering yourself; this includes healing from Lyme disease. This could very well be the exact generation of the precarious mentality you create when you constantly go back and forth in your mind between Lyme Disease being indefinite and finite. You constantly ask yourself, "Will I have Lyme Disease forever?", but never being able to completely and convincingly answer that haunting question.

Your conscious mind yields the finite reality of your fate, and your instincts generate the indefinite, but delusional reality. Your conscious mind leads you to believe that Lyme disease won't last forever because of your understanding of the evidence readily available that shows it won't. Your instincts lead you to believe that the Lyme disease will last the remaining duration of your life, and it does so to serve as a possible survival tactic. However, what determines whether you perceive your battle with Lyme Disease as finite or indefinite, solely depends on the knowledge you acquire that will directly fuel your conscious acceptance of a finite battle, to override an instinctive, evidence lacking, conclusion and belief that suggests permanency. And of course, remember that all of this conflict exists only in the mind. It's all principally a perception, and nothing more.

Also consider how you fooled yourself into believing your health could never deterio-

rate as much as it has, before Lyme disease. You lived in a vibrant, joyous, and beautiful state of life before contracting Lyme disease, and as permanent as this reality appeared, it was a complete delusion, as your current state of health proves. So why can't you apply that same mentality to your current state. Well, you can! You need to use your newly attained revelation in that what appears to be permanent, may not always be. You can surely apply the same process by which a healthful state appears to be permanent but wasn't, to your current state of health as well.



The Lyme disease appears to be permanent, but it actually isn't, given what history has shown and what has become of you before. However, this time, you must be conscious of this process. When you were healthful and vibrant, you weren't in the least bit aware of what would become of you, but you did learn though the process that by which what appears to be permanent, is just an illusion. By consciously applying this tried and true reality, you have enough evidence to suggest that Lyme disease won't last forever.

Given what you as a warrior have learned through the forever precarious nature of your current state of health, you become aware of the delusion of permanency. And

in doing so, you can reasonably determine that what appears to be permanent, is nothing more than a thought supported by the lens that which you perceive your fate, and not hard truly convincing evidence. That by changing the way you perceive your state, and equipping yourself with the knowledge capable of yielding the results you desire to become from Lyme disease, you become aware of the inevitable course of recovery you've been on all along.

"Because what physically happens outside of our minds is not always in accordance or honestly reflective of what occurs within our minds. In other words what we think to be real in our minds may not be the physical reality or what actually exists outside of the mind."



Eliminate Electromagnetic Pollution to Eliminate Disease

By Connie Strasheim, Author and Medical Researcher, www.conniestrasheim.com

Did you know that babies are born with more than 200 chemical toxins in their bodies? If babies have this many toxins, imagine how many more those of us who have been on this earth 40, 50 or 60 years, have accumulated in to the body and damage it in our bodies!

Many of us are aware that environmental toxins of all they are one of the foremost causes of most chronic and degenerative diseases. I talk about toxins in my recently released book, which I coauthored with Dr. W. Lee Cowden, MD, and is entitled Create a Toxin-Free Body and we've probably heard that it's Home, Starting Today. In this book, we provide a broad overview of the many different types of toxins that are contaminating our bodies and

homes, along with simple tools and strategies for eliminating them, so that we can heal faster from whatever ails us.

While all toxins are harmful their own unique way, I've become particularly passionate about sharing what I know exposure is, we figure that we about what I believe is one of have to function in this world kinds are harming us, and that the most dangerous, insidious pollutants of our time- and that is electromagnetic radiation (EMR).

> magnetic radiation (EMR) that seriously, even though bad for us. If we did, we wouldn't be carrying around our cell phones in our pockets may be harming us more than in the "on" mode, or talking on them for hours daily. We

wouldn't be using Wi-Fi in our homes, forgetting to turn off the circuit breakers in our bedrooms at night, or ignoring the smart meters installed on the outside of our homes.

I suspect that this is because even if we have heard about how harmful excessive EMR with all the radiationproducing gadgets, so there's not much that we can do about it. Or, because EMR is a silent, invisible toxin and Some of us don't take electro- we often don't immediately feel its effects upon our bodies, we don't really believe that it's all that harmful.

> Unfortunately, I think EMR some of us think. Every month, I interview cancer

doctors for a podcast interview that I do for the Alternative Cancer Research Institute, and the doctors that have been in practice for over 20 years will often tell me that back when they started practicing medicine, it was rare to see children with cancer, and rare to find people with brain tumors. Now, they say, brain tumors are common- among the young and the old-, and are a direct result of cell phone use, because the tumor always appears on the side of the head where the person uses their cell phone.

Numerous studies substantiate this finding, as well as others, which link different types of cancer with specific sources of EMR, such as leukemia and power lines. But because evidence about the damaging effects of EMR hasn't been widely published in mainstream media, people have been falsely led to believe that Wi-Fi, smart phones, and all the latest and greatest technological gadgets aren't that bad for you.

Anyway, these gadgets are fun, and make most of our lives easier because we can multitask while driving, cooking or exercising, which makes it hard for us to say "no" to using them. A decorated smart phone or iPad

that allows you to access Facebook or email anytime, anywhere, is really hard to put down. So it's just hard to imagine that these fun, helpful gadgets are really causing cellular mutations and cancer. And even harder to believe that the radiation that we're exposed to from them could be what's keeping those of us with chronic health conditions from a full recovery.

However, if you take a look at the Bio Initiative Report: www.bioinitiative.org, a 650+ page report compiled by a group of scientists and researchers from 10 nations, you'll find plenty of evidence- over 2,000 studies- about the damaging effects of cell phones and other sources of EMR, and the diseases that have been linked to them.

In my 2012 book, Beyond Lyme Disease: Healing the Underlying Causes of Chronic Illness in People with Borrelia and Co-Infections, (www.beyondlymedisease.com), I also write about the dangers of electromagnetic pollution, and mention the late Dr. Professor Cherry of New Zealand, who was a foremost pioneer in environmental health. According to Dr. Cherry, "EMR confuses and damages the cells' signaling system, which produces symptoms such as headaches,

concentration difficulties, memory loss, dizziness and nausea, and long-term diseases such as Alzheimer's dementia, brain tumors and depression." Other researchers have confirmed Dr. Cherry's findings.

Lynn Quiring, RPh, CCN, NMD, in her paper "The Cell Phone Poisoning of America" lists a variety of conditions that can result from prolonged exposure to EMR, or which are caused partly by EMR. These include: Alzheimer's, autism, Parkinson's, heart disease, brain tumors, leukemia, fatigue, depression, immune system disorders, learning dis- EMR plays a huge role in alabilities, memory loss, sleep disorders, lowered sperm counts, DNA damage, hormonal imbalances, cancer, and more. She cites over 66 scientific references in her work proving these associations.

Further, Dr. Thomas Rau of the renowned Swiss Paracelsus clinic in Switzerland, stated in a 2009 interview that was published on www.emrstop.com that "....cultures of normal human much as possible, so that our endogenous bacterial cultures bodies have the best chance of grow much less when exposed recovery from chronic infecto EMR." This means that our tions or other health condibodies produce less beneficial tions. bacteria when exposed to EMR.

Dr. Rau then states that this results in an overgrowth of bad bacteria that can result in conditions such as Lyme disease. So he seems to be implying in his interview that lowing Lyme disease organisms to flourish in the body, and that by reducing our exposure to it, our bodies can the microbes.

Some doctors and researchers. I've lived in condominiums in

such as Lee Cowden, MD, have also found that infections like mold multiply faster in the presence of EMR. Therefore, it is essential for all of us to avoid EMR as

It doesn't help that the amount of EMR in the environment is increasing exponentially, as we construct new telecommunication and microwave towers; allow smart meters to be installed on our homes, use Wi-Fi instead of hardwired Internet, buy smart phones and computers for 'round the clock use... and so on.

mount a better defense against I've experienced firsthand the detrimental effects of EMR upon my health. For years,

or apartment complexes, which are often awash in a sea of EMR from a multitude of Wi move to this home, suddenly became severe -Fi connections that come from the neighbors above, below and adjacent me. But what has hurt me the most hasn't been the Wi-Fi exposure (although that in itself can be quite harmful), but rather, the wiring in the ceiling in my most recent home; wiring that is connected to a huge outdoor lamp that is mounted on the exterior of my condo building.

Interestingly, I had measured the electromagnetic fields in my condo during the daytime, before I moved into it, but I failed to measure them at night, when that powerful outdoor lamp gets switched on. Which goes to show how challenging it can be to identify EMR sometimes!

It took me awhile to figure out why my body was "buzzing" and vibrating during my sleepand then I discovered that it was because of the powerful low-frequency electromagnetic fields from the wiring that was connected to that lamp! Imagine my dismay when I thought and energetic. I had finally found a home that was low in EMR.

The insomnia that had I suffered from, and

which had been mild to moderate prior to my and for over two years, my recovery from chronic illness was hindered as I lost the ability to function from severe sleep deprivation. To be sure, EMR wasn't the only reason I wasn't resting and recovering, but it was a major reason.

Some people might argue that I was susceptible to the effects of EMR because I've had chronic Lyme disease. Maybe so, but consider this: Dr. Lee Cowden, who is a very healthy, strong person, noted in our recent book, Create a Toxin-Free Body and Home...Starting Today (www.ConnieStrasheim.com) that when a smart meter was installed on his home, within a very short period of time afterward, he became fatigued, brain-fogged and developed atrial fibrillation (which is a potentially dangerous heart rhythm disturbance). Incredibly, his symptoms continued until he was able to get the smart meter removed from his home, at which time he returned to feeling healthy

Not all of us can afford to live in a house out in the countryside, and putting our cell phone in airplane mode during the day is inconven-

ient, as is having to sit down to talk on a landline or use a computer on battery power. However, I believe that more of us would recover faster from our chronic health conditions and illnesses if we did whatever we could to reduce our exposure to electromagnetic pollution.

It's not easy. It's not a matter of doing just one or two things, but every step that you of the wall wiring. (https:// can take to reduce your exposure will bring you one step closer to total wellness. Following I mention some of the strategies that I have found to be helpful, which you can learn more about in Dr. Cowden's and my book, Create a Toxin-Free Body and Home...Starting Today, (www.ConnieStrasheim.com) since it is beyond the scope of not use these, either. I have this article to describe them in measured the fields that radigreat detail. I also mention these in my 2012 book, Be-

yond Lyme Disease. (www.beyondlymedisease.co m).

First, turn off your bedroom circuit breakers at night. This reduces the amount of lowfrequency fields to which you are exposed from your appliances and even the wall wiring while sleeping. Consider Graham-Stetzer filters to neutralize or mitigate the effects www.stetzerelectric.com).

Next, use a landline connection instead of Wi-Fi Internet, and use your cell phone only for emergencies, and preferably, on speakerphone. Headsets or blue tooth devices will not protect you from the radiation emitted from cell phones, so I personally would ate from the headset using a Trifield meter and found them will not filter out low-

to be similar to when I hold the phone to my ear.

So-called radiation-free headsets that use air tube headset technology might be a bit safer, but it is more like using the speakerphone option on your phone than not talking on it at all, since the frequency signals still run up most of the length of the headset cord.

Sleeping under a metalliclined Faraday cage at night is also a good idea. Faraday cages filter out high-frequency electromagnetic fields, such as those that come from microwave towers and Wi-Fi. If you are like me, though, and are exposed to low-frequency fields from appliances, wall or ceiling wiring, you'll also want to consider Graham-Stetzer filters or memon technology (mentioned later in this article). The Faraday cage

frequency radiation, which is just as dangerous as high-frequency radiation.

Also, avoid living in close proximity to microwave and other telecommunication towers. You can see how many antennas and towers are within a four-mile radius of your home by doing a search on: www.AntennaSearch.com. An area that is less densely populated might have 4 towers; denser areas might have 45 or more.

Next, do whatever you can to get the smart meter removed from your home (if you have one). Some states, such as California, have created legislation that allows you to do this. For more information on how to get a smart meter removed from your home, visit: www.stopsmartmeters.org.

During the day, when you are working, use a laptop computer on battery power whenever possible, rather than a desktop computer or laptop plugged into an outlet. Never place the laptop on your lap.

Finally, consider a technology such as memon (note: the company's name is not capitalized) transformers

(www.memonyourharmony.com), which are devices that will partially neutralize the effects of the EMR in your home or work environment. Not all EMR protective devices are effective, and some can even be dangerous, especially when used improperly. Choose a company and device that has testimonials, studies and a reputation to back their effectiveness.

I mention memon here because it has been studied in at least one university in Europe, and been approved for use in some schools in Europe. I have also personally benefited from this technology. (Note: I receive no financial compensation from memon for mentioning their products in this article).

Finally, you might want to try wearing an EMR-protective device, such as a pendant. I haven't personally found most of these devices to be effective, and some can even misalign your body's own energy even further, but you may find one that works for you.

One EMR expert whom I interviewed for the Alternative Cancer Research Institute, Dr. Elizabeth Plourde, a clinical laboratory scientist, medical researcher and advisory board

board member of the American Anti-Cancer Institute, uses in public, when all kinds of a product called bioDOT, which apparently has a homeopathic-like effect upon the body.

According to Dr. Plourde's website: "The bioDOT is programmed with powerful resonant Phi Technology®. The natural, coherent frequencies used in this programming harmonize your biofield. They remind it of its optimal functioning state, making it more coherent and resilient. It is like ing...among other positive recharging your battery, restoring and rebalancing your energy." Thus, the technology is somewhat different from that of other devices that aim to block EMR.

Dr. Plourde sells these devices on her website, but is also electro-sensitive and believes that this product has been the only one of many that has enabled her to function and go out other gadgets failed. I believe that there is no one-size-fitsall solution when it comes to protecting the body against EMR, but the bioDOT may be helpful for some of us.

We can't avoid electromagnetic pollution, but by taking steps to mitigate its effects upon our bodies, I believe that many of us will find our energy increasing, sleep improving, and brain fog dissipatbenefits. I also believe that reducing our exposure to EMR will help those of us with chronic health conditions, such as Lyme disease, to heal faster, better and more thoroughly.

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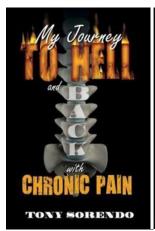
Author Spotlight

Tony Sorendo "My Journey to Hell and Back with Chronic Pain"

What is hell? That de-

pends on your perspective. For first-time author Tony Sorendo, Hell was a physically and

emotionally painful journey with chronic pain wrought with heartache, disappointment, and despair as he made his way toward an awakening of positivity and a life dedicated to helping others.



In a page-turner that is admittedly "his story," Sorendo allows readers to truly live in, relate to, and feel a world in which an estimated 80 million Americans or more are trapped today: the world of chronic pain.

With unbridled candor and honesty, Sorendo intimately shares the depths of his despair as he chronicles the seemingly never ending trichronic pain-and the people who love themwill recognize and sympathize with. Pain. Injuries. Insurance. Lawyers. Doubts. Anger. Frustration. Loneliness. Isolation. Depression. My Journey to Hell and Back with Chronic Pain isn't just one man's story or a story about chronic pain. And it's not a how-to or a self-

> help book, either. Rather, as Sorendo reveals his personal, life-changing experience, his story evolves into a series of modern-day miracles and inspiring examples of determination, positivity, and generosity of spirit that

will assure readers that they're not alone. My Journey to Hell and Back with Chronic Pain is wonderfully written in a down-to-earth style, and Sorendo is an adept and engaging storyteller. Vividly bringing his memories to life, his experiences become all the more familiar to his readers as he bares his soul openly, honestly, and with raw emotion. If Sorendo als and tribulations that so many individuals in can make it to hell and back with chronic pain -and find renewed purpose, joy, positivity, and hope-so can others, whether in chronic pain or not.

Acceptance is Not a Death Sentence

By Marissa Cassella

Acceptance is never something that is simple, nor something that is easy to do. Accepting a situation is not a moment in which we give in to the situation, but is a moment in which we realize that we must work with what we have in order to get to better and brighter days.

When I was just sixteen years old, I had to learn how to accept. It was the most important, yet most difficult lesson that I have ever learned. My life was thrown some unexpected hardships. Life always throws in some hoops and hurdles, but life isn't always a heavenly slice of perfection. If it weren't for these obstacles, we as humans cannot grow and flourish.

I had just been diagnosed with Lyme disease and several other infections. The sickness I felt every day was astronomical. Lyme made me feel so sick that I couldn't physically attend school. There was pain all over my body; it felt as if knives were stabbing me in my bones and joints and it felt like I was being beaten with a baseball bat on my head and back. The pain was unlike anything I had ever experienced in my sixteen years of life; however, that wasn't even the worst part. Due to the Lyme infec-



tion attacking my brain, I had neurological symptoms. I could no longer walk normally. My once perfectly functioning legs were slowly deteriorating, and it was extremely frightening. Every time

I stood to walk, it was a major effort. I had to prepare myself to sit up and stand, which was an effort for me not only due to the pain, but would stare at me with eyes like to my brain as well. It felt as if my brain didn't remember how to stand or walk: my knees buckled while I stood and when I walked, it felt like there were concrete blocks attached at my ankles. My legs felt so heavy. Each step was as if I was trying to walk out of quick sand, but the neurological chaos pulled me under in the end.

Each day started out the same: I'd sit up at the side of my bed and would prepare myself to stand and walk. I would get such an adrenalin There would be a moment that rush in hopes that this would be

the day that my walking would be normal once again. I would stand up to the same weakness, and proceed to place one foot in front of the other carefully, with unforgiving weakness and unsteadiness. Each day would end the same; I would lay awake in my bed and pray to God that when I woke up the next morning, that I would be healthy again and able to walk. I thought that maybe if I prayed hard enough, it would happen.

I had to use a walker to get around my house and around in public. I hated using that walker so much that I would end up crawling around the house. In public, using the walker was awful. People daggers, like I was an alien. It was hurtful. Having people stare made my dysfunctional walking only more apparent than it already was. I wanted to be able to walk normally again more than anything.

As the weeks went on, my legs grew progressively worse. I went from walking with the walker, to dragging myself with the walker. Each day I remained hopeful, trying more and more to get my legs to work like they were supposed to. each day held where I would try to

dance. I had been taking dance lessons since I was three years old, and I didn't want to have to quit lessons. Each turn and spin would end with me collapsing on the floor. I tried to attend my dance classes when I was feeling up to it, but it was torture. I had to watch instead of participate.

One morning, I awoke to the same exact hopes that I had every other morning: to walk normally again. Only this morning was very different. This morning I could not feel anything. I awoke to only feeling half of my body. If I didn't know any better, I didn't have any legs at all. Anxious and frightened, I remember tapping my legs. Nothing. More frightened, I slapped my legs - nothing. I remember crying and punching my legs, slapping them, scratching them, and felt absolutely nothing. Hysterical at this point, I moved my legs with my arms and propped myself up to stand. With this, I fell right to the ground and still felt nothing. I sat on the floor, feeling the scariest feeling I had ever felt: nothing.

I was so angry. Why did this have to happen to me? What did I do to deserve this? I could not understand why this was happening to me, or what I did to have this happen to me. There was sadness. I had lost my ability to walk, which

meant that I had to use a wheelchair and quit dance lessons. Quitting something I had done almost all of my life and practiced religiously was like taking a bullet to my heart. I grieved out of loss and disbelief that my life had changed so much...and not for the best.

I remember the day I got my wheelchair. I was disgusted with the fact that I needed one. I sat in it things are to come, including reand felt rage boiling under my skin. gaining my health. I had a new I didn't want any part of that wheelchair. Denial was setting in. I tried my best to go about my day ignoring the fact that I was paralyzed from the hips down. I had to physically maneuver my legs, but when it came to the wheelchair, I simply would not use it. When I was home, I would drag my body across the floor using my upper body. In order to get from room to room, I would do the army crawl. It was physically exhausting, but I couldn't accept what had happened to my body.

Slowly, I began to realize that I was in your life. You will find that acnot helping myself. I was only hurt- ceptance is the first step in your ing myself physically and emotionally through not being willing to accept. It was difficult to accept that at sixteen I was being tutored instead of physically going to school, that I was no longer able to walk, that I was in a wheelchair, that I was no longer able to contin-

ue dance lessons. I couldn't accept that I was so sick.

I slowly began to accept that this is my life for now. My life won't always be like this. This wheelchair is only temporary, this pain is only temporary, this illness is only temporary. One day I will graduate from high school, I will go to college, I will have a career; great sense of life and felt renewed when I accepted my hardships. I began fighting hard for my life so that I can one day have a better future.

When one is battling an illness, it's important to have acceptance. To be able to accept that this is the way life is in the present, is only when you can begin moving ahead to the future. It does not mean that you're quitting. Instead of focusing valuable, divine energy on asking yourself questions like, 'Why me?', focus your energy on healing. Remember, great things are to come journey to wellness.

Let this be your mantra: This is my life for now. I vow to focus my energy on healing and gaining a better future. My journey will have its ups and downs, however nothing bad in life lasts forever. Acceptance is not a death sentence!

Herbs for Candida Die-off

By Shelley M. White

While it is true candida lives naturally inside our intestines where it is supposed to be in balance with the healthy bacteria within us, it is also true that our not so healthy environments are prone to destroying this healthy bacteria; thus throwing off the balance between the two and allowing for candida overgrowth. When this occurs, a multitude of undesirable symptoms follow. Such symptoms may manifest mentally or emotionally in the form of depression, insomnia, anger, memory loss, anxiety, brain fog, and/or mood swings. Other possible symptoms include, but are not limited to, inflammation, thrush, white coating on tongue, heart burn, bad breath, indigestion, numbness, painful or swollen joints, vision problems, chest pain, muscle aches, bladder infections, cramps, lowered libido, infertility, frequent urination, chemical sensitivity and/or nervousness.

Candida is often caused by antibiotics designed to kill off harmful bacteria. Unfortunately, in doing so, antibiotics kill off friendly bacteria as well. That being said, using antibiotics while treating candida over-growth is not plausible. It should also be noted that treating candida may produce candida "die-off" symptoms, which basically means your symptoms will get worse before they get better. The following herbs have proven beneficial for treating candida and candida die off symptoms.

ASHWAGHANDA

Ashwaghanda is an herb commonly used in the Ayurvedic healing system that has anti-inflammatory, diuretic, sedative, anti-bacterial, and antifungal activities. Ashwaghanda helps with candida die-off symptoms by supporting the adrenals, supporting a healthy balance of cortisol levels, building the immune system, rebuilding the body's energy reserves, and reducing stress and thus reducing improper cortisol release. During an active candida infection, and during candida die off, adrenals are often weakened and cortisol levels are lowered. This typically leads to sleep disturbances, in which you may find it difficult to relax and to go to sleep at night. When this happens, as it often does in the beginning stages of adrenal fatigue caused by candida die off, the body attempts to compensate by transmitting high levels of cortisol throughout the bloodstream, which then results in restless sleep and eventually leads to lower than normal cortisol levels in the long run. Therefore, not only do you have trouble sleeping at night, but you may find you have trouble staying awake throughout the day as well. As time goes on, adrenal fatigue prompts the body to produce excess adrenaline in an attempt to compensate for low cortisol levels, which only leads to further problems of insomnia, causing the problem of sleepless nights and fatigued days to increase in severity. This, accompanied with the other factors of candida and candida die off, also leads to depression and other emotional and mental symptoms. As you can see, it is a double edged sword for the body when it comes to correcting the problem alone. It may be that your body needs aid in doing so, and many find that Ashwaghanda is the perfect solution.

When taken at night, Ashwagandha will not only help you fall asleep easier, but will also promote a more restful night of sleep. On the other hand, when taken in the morning, Ashwaghanda will help raise your energy levels by supporting your endurance and working to rebuild your energy reserves. However, merely taking it at night in order to fall into a deeper sleep will provide you with more energy the next day and vice versa.

While this is an amazing aspect of the healing properties of Ashwagandha, one of the most well-known benefits of taking the herb is its ability to train the body to adapt to stress, therefor allowing it to act as a natural mood stabilizer. Most people who deal with candida problems also deal with a roller coaster of emotions, making this herb a prime option for consideration.

For

many, Ashwaghanda's ability to reduce stress, depression, and anxiety is as powerful as prescription drugs. Ashwaghanda also helps with forgetfulness and helps normalize blood sugar levels. To start, try taking 600mg of Ashwaghanda in capsule form daily, and increase the dose as needed. Depending on your system, your preferred dose may range anywhere between 600mg and 1,000 mg daily. Ashwaghanda will not cause drowsiness.

BLACK WALNUT

North Americans have used the bark, husk, and leaves of the black walnut tree for medicinal purposes for centuries. Black walnut is known to combat candida and candida die-off symptoms better than many mainstream antifungal drugs. It is found in many herbal remedies designed to combat candida, but accompanying the product you is also available and useful in concentrated form.

In 1990, a study conducted by the University of Mississippi found the active ingredient "juglone" found in black walnut to be as powerful as many commercial antifungals in regards to fighting candida overgrowth. The study results showed thatjuglone had moderate antifungal activity and was effective at killing candida as zinc undecylenate and selenium sulfide, both of which are popular commercial antifungal agents. There are also natural tannins in black walnut that work to kill other parasites, yeast, and fungus. Black walnut is also beneficial in regards to treating high blood pressure, thyroid problems, diarrhea, sore throats, and asthma.

husk, or hull, of black walnut in a liquid tincture form. Black walnut severe. Neem is also a very pois harvested when green and then soaked to remove the husk, at which point it is then extracted into tincture form. Although it is most effective in tincture form, you may also take black walnut in capsule form. If you can't find Black Walnut in capsule form, look for a Candida supplement like Candida Support. This contains Black Walnut extract, as well as Caprylic Acid, Oregano Oil and Pau D'Arco. Dosing varies depending on the potency of the specific product you choose, so follow the dosing guidelines as indicated on the box or bottle purchase.

**Black walnut is not recom-

mended for women who are pregnant or breast feeding, or for individuals with gastrointestinal issues. Individuals with liver or kidney problems should use the herb with caution, as it may further irritate these organs.

NEEM

Neem is an herb commonly used in Ayurvedic medicine. It is known for fighting infections and fungal overgrowth, as well as for stimulating the immune system which is compromised during candida infection. In order to heal, it is essential for you to build and support your immune system in order to allow your body to assist in fighting the infection. Without a strong immune system, healing will prove For candida, it is best to take the to be much more difficult and die -off symptoms will be far more tent detoxifier, making it a great aid in relieving symptoms produced by candida die off.

> As a detox agent, neem pulls out toxins faster. In doing so, neem will help to greatly decrease the overall discomfort caused by candida and candida die off. Candida can make you feel as if you are going crazy by causing an array of intense emotional and mental sideeffects, as well as relentless itching. These emotional and mental toxins work to create a toxic physical environment. Therefore, it is essential for you to detox well while treating candida overgrowth.

For candida, it is recommended that you apply three drops of neem oil to your gums and swallow it each morning. This will also help with the debilitating brain fog and zapped energy levels caused by candida. It is a very powerful natural oil.

**Neem is contraindicated for women who are pregnant or breast feeding, and should not be administered to infants. When taken in excess, neem may be poisonous. Always read and follow the instructions accompanying the product you purchase.

CALENDULA (MARIGOLD)

Calendula, also known as marigold, has been used as a medicinal herb for centuries. Calendula simultaneously acts as an antibacterial, anti-fungal, anti-infective, anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant, anti-septic, antispasmodic, anti-viral, aperient, astringent, detoxifier, diaphoretic, emmenagogue, and immunostimulant. Its healing benefits are seemingly endless, many of which stem from the herb's high content of flavonoids.

These flavonoids are chemicals that serve as antioxidants in the body, making calendula a major source of relief from candida die off symptoms via detox. Calendula Other traditional uses of calendula include treatment of cramps, coughs, eczema, gastritis, minor burns and sunburns, warts, conjunctivitis, and sprains, wounds, and other injuries.

Candida can cause oxidation, which produces oxygen-free radicals which are capable of suppressing the immune system. As mentioned earlier, having a properly functioning immune system is crucial in order to heal from candida overgrowth, and in order to deal with candida die-off symptoms. The anti-oxidants in calendula will help you to safely detox the body, thereby greatly reducing your overall symptom picture. These antioxidants also help protect the body's cells from further damage due to Candida toxins.

Calendula also greatly helps reduce candida overgrowth and candida die-off symptoms due to its ability to eradicate and/or reduce the common candida symptom known as "oral thrush." Oral thrush, characterized by a white coating on the tongue, occurs when candida accumulates on the lining of the tongue. It can create lesions, and is sometimes very painful. If not controlled, oral thrush may potentially spread throughout your gums, the roof of your mouth, your tonsils, and the back of your throat.

Calendula flowers are dried and used as herbal ointments, topicals, compresses, tincture extracts, and/or gargles. In regards to candida, calendula is most commonly taken in tincture form. Dosing varies depending on the potency of the specific product, so please follow the guidelines pertaining to the specific product you purchase. Also, it is advised that you consult with an herbalist if you choose to take calendula internally. To combat thrush in a relatively quick manner, gargle calendula in mouthwash form two to three times a day. If you wish to make your own gargle, you may do so by placing five grams of dried calendula flower heads into a liter of boiling water and letting it infuse for approximately five minutes. After you have strained and slightly cooled the mixture, you may use it as a mouthwash.



MILK THISTLE

Milk thistle has been used medicinally for over 2,000 years. Originally, the milk thistle plant was only found in the Mediterranean, but it is now found throughout Europe and North America as well. One

of the primary health benefits of milk thistle is its function as a liver tonic. The herb is such a potent liver detoxifier and protectant that it is now recognized in the conventional medical world.

Milk thistle helps with dieoff symptoms by protecting your liver from candida toxins, as well as by working to heal any damage that has already occurred. Eliminating toxins from die-off is essential if you wish to reduce your symptoms, and the liver must be functioning



properly in order for you to do so. The liver primarily rids the body of toxins in the blood, so taking an herb to support it is crucial. The biologically active component in milk thistle,

known as silymarin, supports liver function in various ways. Silymarin repairs damaged liver cells by stimulating protein synthesis, guards liver cells by modifying the cell membranes to prevent toxins from entering the cells, and stimulates new cell growth of liver cells. For candida, milk thistle should be composed of, at a minimum, seventy to eighty percentsilymarin. Most individuals can take up to 420mg of milk thistle per day, but be sure to follow the dosing guidelines as indicated on the packaging of the specific product you purchase. It is advised that you purchase the capsules which contain the powder form.

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