

Lauren With A Side of Lewy

Failure to Frolic

by Lauren U,
PAC Core Team

On July 20, I had a fairly serious accident. During Equine Therapy, I fell off a spirited horse. I have a brain concussion, bilateral sacrum fractures, various gashes, bruises, muscle injuries, and contusions. I remember hearing a loud shattering noise. I thought it was my glasses, turns out it was my bones. It's all a bit of a blur. I remember the general confusion with the paramedics as they tried to assess my cognition post injury vs. prior injury with a dementia diagnosis. I remember recognizing the humor in that moment. I was taken to the Emergency Department via ambulance. I do not remember the ambulance ride, nor the CT scans, x-rays, or general assessments in the ED. I do remember telling everyone I was fine and just wanted to go home.

I've been on complete bed rest since, only out of bed to be wheeled to the bathroom by my husband, Eddy. Eddy has been incredible. He distributes my meds, helps with washing, moving, eating, everything. The one positive from this accident is that as much as I have been dreading the prospect of needing total care, I now know that Eddy can and will provide it, gently, carefully, and with love. This is not to say that I don't get numerous reminders from him about the consequences of my unsafe choices and carelessness with my adrenaline surged activities. He subscribes to a safer, more predictable lifestyle. Okay, he's definitely right about that, but I can't let him know just yet. Having complete dependence on others is very difficult. I've been outside only once to go to see my PCP and once to the Medical Center for additional scans. While it was great to be out in a wheelchair, it was truly painful and I was glad to be back in bed. I've tried to convince Eddy to take me out more but he's much better at following doctors' orders than I am.

I'm again plagued more by the tiny bugs, in my hair, on my body, and in the air. My usual method of control or elimination of these visual, tactile, and auditory disturbances is by using medical cannabis. That is useful in softening their impact. Since the accident, I have been taking pain meds and have chosen to stop the cannabis use to minimize any interactions with meds. I'm not certain if I made the correct decision and I may be trading one problem for another. If I were a truly positive person, I could recognize these disturbances as experiences to occupy my mind in this time of utter boredom.

It has been almost four weeks now and I have had numerous consequences from my carefree frolic. Teepa had to cancel my PAC trips. I've been unable to go to Saturday Club and see my little girls. My weekly and monthly outings with friends have been cancelled. My daily bike rides are no more. I can't go out with the dogs or with Eddy. I was unable to have a proper goodbye with my skydiving partner and friend Lana who has moved to Idaho. Pain is exhausting. LBD is exhausting. The combination makes for a generally unhappy Lauren. I'm looking forward to being able to be up and around again. I want to have more independence and less pain, and to be able to travel with PAC again, get some exercise and get back to my life, tiny bugs and all.

*Lauren U is a member of the Positive Approach™ to Care (PAC) Core Team. She was a registered nurse with the ANCC Board Certification in Psychiatry for 30 years. Now she is the keeper of the frolic. Lauren has been living with Lewy Body Dementia (love how they add "with behavioral disturbance") for over five years. She currently lives in Northern California with her professor husband, Eddy. She enjoys spending time with her friends (the horses) at her **TROTR** equine therapy program. PAC agrees with Lauren – that she is delightful!*