



“I now have a mission which I did not have before I was diagnosed – I want the cause of MS to be discovered so that eventually a cure can be found.”

Hi, I'm Andrea. While I was not diagnosed until the age of 57, I can document at least seven episodes that started in 1982 and continued through my diagnosis. Why, after seeing numerous neurologists and specialists did no one put the pieces together? On the other hand, what would I have done with an MS diagnosis since there were no treatments available?

Upon hearing that I had MS, I immediately went to work researching and reading the huge quantity of information available at the library and on the internet. I read so much that I stopped shortly after I had begun – too much information is not good when you can't sort out the useful from the not so useful, nor what's accurate.

I also started volunteering with the Society which has become a very large part of my life. Here is where I have met people who really care about helping those living with MS and where I have learned to wear many different hats within the organization. From envelope stuffer to support group leader to fundraiser to lobbyist, people living with MS and without are there to help.

I now have a mission which I did not have before I was diagnosed – I want the cause of MS to be discovered so that eventually a cure can be found. It is this mission that propels me forward to spread the word on how important finding the cause is.

The good news is I've made some good friends through the Society; the not so good news is I've met them because we share the common bond of having MS. I've learned how to lobby in Albany and Washington, DC. Again, it is because I have MS that I can do this.

My life has definitely changed, but many good things have happened to me since my initial diagnosis in 2003. But life goes on and I definitely want to live it to the fullest!