



LIVING WELL WITH DIABETES

Anderson County Health Department

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Thinking Positively About Diabetes

When people with diabetes are successful and happy, their situation is often viewed as having been achieved despite the obstacle of diabetes. I am advocating for a shift in that perception. What if instead of seeing all the good in our lives as existing despite our disease, we begin to see everything that we are—the challenges and the achievements—as a direct product of *all that we are made up of, diabetes included?*

I remember the very moment that this realization came to me. I was talking to a natural healer in Forest Row, England, sitting in a room filled with late afternoon light, soft music playing in the background. The healer looked at me and said simply, “Why do you want to be cured?”

Now, there are many valid reasons that a person with diabetes would want to be cured, and I do not intend to minimize any of them. Diabetes is physically, emotionally, and psychologically painful. There can be devastating long-term consequences, and the stress stemming from the constant planning, the minute-to-minute battles, and the associated money worries is no small thing. But looking at the woman, I could not think of a reply.

“Well,” I began tentatively, “sometimes it hurts. When I hit a bruise, or something like that.” She nodded slowly. “What else?” I paused and then said, “That doesn’t happen that much, though. The needles are pretty small. Most of the time you can barely feel it.”

The woman didn’t say anything. “I don’t want to be held back from anything. Travel, things like that,” I added. “Have you been?” she asked. I shook my head. I hadn’t. I was visiting friends in England for two weeks, after having spent the last month in Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia. In three days I would be leaving to spend five weeks in Northern Africa.

“Anything else?” she asked. “It’s not the injections, in and of themselves, that are hard,” I said. “It’s the infinity: that everything is based around it, that it will never be gone.” She smiled at me, a kind, twinkling smile. “But the truth is,” I began again, “I can think of a lot more reasons as to why it is good for me than why it is

bad.” “Oh yes?” She raised an eyebrow.

I began listing the reasons: It taught me how to take care of myself, allowed me to be vulnerable and sensitive, gave me a constant reminder to be healthy, and helped me remember how fragile and thus, how beautiful, our mortality is. “Do you think that thinking about your diabetes the way you do has something to do with your numbers being so good?” the woman asked me. I nodded. My A1C since my diagnosis, four years previously, had been between 5.4% and 5.6%. With an A1C like that, I’m not going to have to worry about long-term consequences.

As I left the healer’s house and walked home through the dusk, a dog bounded out of the darkness toward me. As it neared, I noticed that it had only three legs. Reaching me, it raced around me, its panting smile making me laugh. As the dog raced off again, I was struck by its grace, and by the fact that it did not seem to notice that anything about it was different, or “wrong.” As I walked on, I thought about the way that we allow disease to define us. The dog had only three legs, but it did not question its condition. It ran with the same speed, the same joy, that it would have run if it had all four.

Since then a day hasn’t passed that I don’t think of the importance of feeling all sides of the spectrum that is offered to us through disease. Sometimes I’m angry or hurt, but when that is the case, I let myself feel it. All the other days, I make sure to take the time to sit with this “thing” that has been given to me and listen to what it is telling me. Every day, diabetes teaches me something new about loving myself, about opening up to others, about compassion and the value of receiving as well as giving.

I think it is safe to say that there are very few people who have not been affected by disease in one form or another, either personally or indirectly. It seems not only logical, but also necessary, that we begin to incorporate positive thinking into our lives as a way to better understand and cope with illness.

Reprinted from:

<http://www.diabeteshealth.com/read/2012/10/14/7676/thinking-positively-about-diabetes/>



ANDERSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE
DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP PLEASE
CONTACT:

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THE ANDERSON COUNTY DIABETES SUPPORT
GROUP WILL MEET

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 5 AT 7:00PM

IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM OF THE
ANDERSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

Postmaster, please deliver to:

Important Dates in November

American Diabetes Month

4 - Daylight Saving Time Ends (*Fall Back*)

5 - Diabetes Support Group Meeting

6 - Presidential Election Day (Health Dept. CLOSED)

12 - Veterans Day Observed (Health Dept. CLOSED)

22 - Thanksgiving Day (Health Dept. CLOSED)

23 - Holiday (Health Dept. CLOSED)



Recipe of the Month

Penne with Broccoli, Ham & Cheese

6 servings

Ingredients

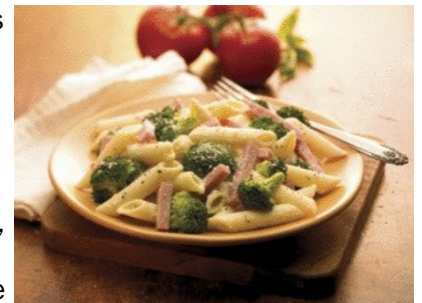
- 1 box Dreamfields penne rigate**
- 6 Oz. Cooked ham, cut into thin strips
- 10 oz package frozen broccoli, thawed
- 1/3 cup grated parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper

Directions

1. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain well.
2. In a large bowl, combine pasta,

broccoli and ham. Add cheese, toss gently. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

A recipe that always comes out when there is leftover ham in the refrigerator, this colorful and very healthy dish tastes great. Use just deli ham from the grocery store or dress it up with some fancy cured ham such as real Italian Prosciutto.



**If traditional pasta is used in this recipe there will be more carbohydrates.

Nutrition Facts

Calories: 288 Carbs: 8g Sodium: 534mg Protein: 18g
Total Fat: 5g Sat. Fat: 2g Fiber: 6g Cholesterol: 22mg

