

SYRINGOMYELIA

A NURSE'S PERSONAL JOURNEY PART ONE

When I began my nursing career in my 20's I was headstrong; I felt like I could conquer the world! I never met a stranger in my nursing career. I have always had a unique gift of putting others at ease through compassion and just reaching out to them....getting to know them and taking time to listen. I was what others call "old school". I believed in taking care of the whole patient and their family...not just one aspect. It served my patients well and resulted in many lives being saved because I had a gift of identifying complications that few others would see until it was too late. I never knew the bigger plan for my life....the gravity of why my nursing career would serve an even greater purpose for me later on until I turned 33.

I love being a nurse.....it was not just a job for me...it became a passion. I worked in the areas of med/surg, transplant, and emergency room. I loved the difficult cases...the patients that no one fully understood how to treat...I guess you could call them rare. I also loved the patients that were critically ill because I felt I could make a difference and discover the reason that they were so sick in order to help save their life! I would frequently assign myself the worst patients to try and figure out how to help them. In many cases I did positively contribute to turning them around. Sadly, others there would have been nothing & no one to stabilize them and I would sit quietly; hold a hand; say a prayer and provide support to them and their families. This was a way of life for me. I was well respected by my peers and often would get called in by my colleagues to help provide input on difficult cases or show a newbie the ropes. However, at the age of 33 I began having symptoms that would present silently and slowly at first....and then more persistent developing into disabling symptoms that no one knew how to treat. Suddenly I became a patient and what was worse I had a rare disease called Syringomyelia that is poorly understood. Syringomyelia is a serious disease and in my case it led to intracranial hypertension, dysautonomia, heart failure, and pulmonary hypertension. Next month I will tell you how this happened & more of my personal journey...stay tuned for part two!

