Purple Day Ambassador Story 2023

My name is Christina Keough, I was diagnosed with epilepsy at 3 days old. When I had my first seizure the doctors knew something was wrong. As it turned out, I had a blood clot on the brain; I developed tonic clonic seizures. I had one hundred and five tonic clonic seizures and was told by doctors that I would never walk, read, or write again

because of the area of my brain that was affected. I endured two open heart surgeries and at the age of ten I had to have half my left lung removed due to having pneumonia over twenty times. After nineteen months of shear determination, I learned how to walk, read, and write again. After my lung surgery my lungs seemed to be doing ok again and at the age of eighteen my seizures seemed to ease off over time.

My family was not supportive of my diagnosis. For years I hid my seizures because my mother and sister were ashamed of me if I had one in public. It took me a long time to come out from the shadows and live the life I wanted. It seems that even today, epilepsy is rarely talked about publicly and it seems like the slogan “out of the shadows and into the light” applies to this devastating disease.

Today, I only have the small seizures, but over the years, its feels like I have prescribed every seizure drug on the market; today I am on two medications that seem to work for me. I only have seizures now if my INR (International Normalized Ratio) is to high or low or if I get an infection. My seizures may never truly be under control but I'm glad that the medication I'm taking is working for me and that I can lead a normal life and do the things I enjoy doing. I enjoy doing crafts and even though they may not be perfect, crafting brings me joy.

For me the most important part of this journey is the little things I do and being there to help others when I can. I can look back at my life and see how far I have come; from a child who had a bad heart who wasn't expected to live to be this old to someone who has overcome so may challenges. I look back at life, I see how far I have come, it shows me that if we hang in there we can over come anything.

Christina’s message: “My husband and I believe that epilepsy should not be hidden, and we are all equal no matter what the sickness, we are all one.”