My name is Heather Stabler.

I was a primary school teacher for 32 years. Then Multiple Sclerosis intervened. I lost my job, my car and my house and I became a resident of an aged care facility at 59.

Once there my biggest problem was not the wheelchair disability people could see, but rather the angst which people could not see - the after effects of selling my home (pure grief) and the ensuing depression and disempowerment of being stuck in the stifling confines of Aged Care.

Daily I emerge from sleep stricken with a terrible anxiety. I often wonder if it is possible to die of sadness.

So how have I learnt to survive?

Building on the spiritual and people focused person l intrinsically am; I have committed myself to these sustaining practices.

- Be your own cheer squad!
- Congratulate yourself regularly for giving Life your best shot.
- Begin something new meditation, or joining a group.



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- Practise positive self talk. Start before you even get out of bed. When words fail me I look at a comforting image and I go into it.
- Think of 2 things that give you life, and DO them daily. For me they are chatting to people through the day, and enjoying the blue of the sky against the green of the trees.
- Do something for someone else. I listen to others, encourage and affirm them and myself. I also send cards of love and support.
- At the day's end consciously rehearse a moment from the day that gave you life, and practise the feeling of gratitude. This is about really noticing at the time, and later bringing those moments vividly back, eg
 - the lady in the lift with the cute baby, a miracle, tiny, tiny hands and microscopic toes.
 - wise words from whatever source.

Remember, and just bask in it.



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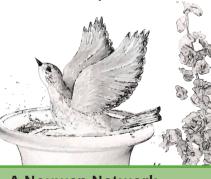
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