

Subject: My Cronos Journey by Senecah

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My Cronos Journey by Senecah

I am Senecah, a 25-year-old bartender who is married to a chef. I love food, and to live life to the fullest.

A couple of years ago, I started to have little occurrences that seemed "normal," such as burping, (very loud!) Then there were some embarrassing moments at work like passing more than gas and needing to change clothes. Oh yeah, servers don't generally bring changes of clothes to work! There were stomachaches and certain foods that seemed to be creating discomfort and indigestion.

Complaining to my husband and family for support, we all brainstormed on ways to solve my "little problems" and it gave me the emotional support that I needed to keep my head about me.

My parents thought perhaps I was showing symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome. We all investigated nerves, sp foods, elimination of things that may have been inciting discomfort. I started to pay attention to what I was eating a while I was not on a diet or trying to lose weight, I wanted to put my best foot forward and become more responsible for my health. So I started exercising. Nothing super noteworthy, just normal aerobic activity a couple of times per week. I avoided overconsumption of obvious things that were low on the food pyramid and aimed for better choice

Expecting to have positive results, I came down with quite the opposite. I began to have bouts of vomiting. Being newlywed, of course I thought the obvious and started to see tiny socks in my future, but to my disappointment, the was no such prize for my pains.

The vomiting became more frequent and I began to lose my mind as well as my body's sense of balance as far as fluids and vitamins. Everything slipped downhill, and I found myself in the emergency room after a month of vomiti and not being able to work or keep anything down.

?With me an emotional wreck, my doctors were concerned and could not immediately "find" the problem. There w many tests and painful procedures to undergo and my life was put on complete hold.

At one point, I found myself feeling as though there was a conspiracy when a psychiatrist was ordered to my room asked me about my eating habits. Hearing that I'd not "kept anything down" for nearly a month, she started to say t words, "bulimia" and "anorexia" to the staff on my case. These whisperings frightened me and caused me to feel I couldn't trust the very people I was depending on to rescue me and help me get well.

My husband and his family never left my side and I thank God for them. My family who has always adored me was two hours away and could not leave work very often to come to my rescue. I tried to be a big girl about this, though longed for their company. I toggled between praying, crying, attracting wellness and keeping my sanity.

The best thing that happened to me at this point was IV bags of electrolytes and potassium and all the necessary things I needed to fight the dehydration and malnutrition from the inability to eat for so long. Little did I know, as I celebrated my come back, that it would not be a permanent fix for what I would continue to face over the next year. Nonetheless, ice pops and broth were a welcome sight, and I was hopeful that this was a fluke thing- that everythii would go away, and I'd be back to normal.

The worst thing that happened to me was learning that basically, there was a blockage somewhere in my "middle" :

that nothing could "get through." A solid wall made by my own body! So things were backing up like a clogged sink. I had to have a thick tube inserted through my nose, into my throat and down into my stomach to drain the fluids and yucky stuff that had nowhere to go. My family prayed for me over the phone as the procedure began. I awoke with the tube remaining in my nose and stomach, trying not to completely lose my composure while still feeling as though some staff were assessing my mental wellness. Meanwhile, thoughts of a mortgage and my doggie at home added to the weight on my shoulders as my husband tried to keep my focus on getting well. It just seemed like this couldn't be happening to me, and this by the way happened to be my birthday week! This was my first eleven-day encounter with Cron's disease.

Enter Dr. Sheela and Dr. Seela- brothers! To my great fortune, I met Dr. Seela and Dr. Sheela during two separate episodes in two totally different hospitals. Both treated me with kindness, respect and professionalism. Both were sincere in their caring commitment to resolve the complications I was experiencing from the Cron's. This was all new to me, and they empathized with my "being a new player" by no choice of my own to a field where they were experts.

The doctors put me on stringent regimens of various medications, and I embraced their treatment plans with unwavering faith and commitment. The meds were very expensive, and I hadn't worked since I was ill. Not to mention, some of them were not working out which meant revisiting their offices and trying new meds! There were days I'd visited their offices when I had less than a dollar in my wallet, nothing in the bank and was given "samples" to try by compassionate and caring staff. My faith based upbringing and my father's relentless commitment to attracting was with me every step of the way, coupled by professionals that seemed to want me to be well again.

My coworkers, employers, friends and family met me at every turn with gifts of collections they'd taken up, offers of time off from work, support and caring. My mom paid off my debts and my car! Tears of gratitude and joy were a common theme on this journey through Cron's. I had learned a lot and had so much more to learn and still had not reached my destination called "well." I knew I was not alone, and I knew I had to get in, stay in and keep going!

Part of my therapy from the start was steroids. I saw my body change dramatically from my face downward. Though the treatments truly provided relief, my doctors knew that I could not continue indefinitely with the steroids, and backing off of them sent me spiraling downward again- all the way back to the hospital. My life had now been interrupted four times by episodes of meds not taking hold, vomiting, severe dehydration, loss of ability to work and enjoy the normal things we so easily take for granted. Fear began to bully me, and my mental health was being challenged again! At this point my doctors introduced their treatment plan of a gastrojejunostomy.

Answers! My husband wanted answers from the onset of this journey, and finally, he was able to sit down with my doctors and myself and learn about a procedure that gave both of us hope for my wellness. I was at a scheduled routine enteroscopy when they made the decision to go ahead with the gastrojejunostomy. I didn't go home and plan for the procedure or schedule it at a later date. My husband called and informed my loved ones, and we went right in to the procedure. The caring and respect that I was treated with throughout the entire year gave me the conviction and trust I needed to believe that I could do this and get through it. I knew I was going in "blocked" and coming out "cleared."

I even had the strength to endure what was at one time my worst experience ever, having THE BIG TUBE inserted in my nose, down through my throat and into my stomach again. This time I would be rewarded with my restored health! I took the tube willingly, and though it was painful, I knew it came with future joy. I envisioned life with the simple, true pleasures of being able to drink a glass of refreshing water and have it go in and come out properly. I visualized eating a simple meal and having it "go through my body." I pictured myself smiling and feeling well. My father's lessons on attracting were helping me get through the procedures. My faith kept my balance the whole way through.

The surgery was complete and went well. My surgeon treated me like a special human being. Dr. Sheela and Dr. Seela continued to see me after the surgery and managed my medications. Steroids are a thing of the past, and my body has returned to "normal." I am down to one medication and back to enjoying my life with my doggie and my husband, who never let me see for one moment how much he was suffering watching me suffer. We are stronger now and appreciate the smallest things in life. I am even dreaming of "tiny little socks" in my future. By the way, my doctors say that I'm cleared for planning a family!

I am Senecah, a 25-year-old bartender who is married to a wonderful chef. I love to live life to the fullest. My Cron journey has taken a new turn, down a road where I can tell others about the hope and restoration to health that is available. This is where I get the awesome opportunity to encourage and help others that may be struggling with fear and emotional pain from suffering. This is where my health is renewed, and I enjoy the things in life that are small precious with the people that I love!