So You Have a Spouse With Fibromyalgia

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Caring For Your Spouse With Fibromyalgia

Marriage and relationships are generally a ride of ups and downs. Good days, bad days. You will see one another at your very best and at your very worst.

Through the good and bad though, you are a team. One of the great benefits of being in a relationship is having a partner that always has your back. It is all the more important to support each other when one of you has an illness.

Being married to someone with fibromyalgia increases the challenges that are bound to arise. This is especially true when it first comes on.

It is a time of learning and adjusting. It may even be a time of mourning for some.

When a person is first diagnosed with fibromyalgia they are likely to feel distraught and lost. You are likely to feel agitated as well — and for very good reason. Fibromyalgia is a very complex illness that can affect every aspect of a person's life. And worst of all, it is chronic.

This is a scary time for the sufferer, but it is understandably a scary time for those closest to them too. It is likely to be a stressful time for you both. What can help you through this difficult time? What can help you to continue working together as a team?

Educate Yourself

Do research about what fibromyalgia is and what all it encompasses, including the difference between polymyalgia and fibromyalgia — they are *not* the same thing. This will help you better understand what your mate is going through.

It will also be a great comfort to them knowing that you care enough to find out more, to know that you are on their side and there to support them.

Be Patient

This will cover just about every single aspect of your lives.

Be patient when they can’t do everything they used to. Be patient when the house is a mess. Be patient when dinner isn’t made.

Be patient if they have to reduce their hours at work. Be patient when they cannot go out and do things with you. Be patient while they learn how to balance their normal activities.

Be patient when they are sad. Be patient when they are angry. Be patient when they are moody. These are all normal responses to finding out you have a chronic illness, but they are not likely to last forever. Be patient during this period of adjustment.

Communicate

Be open about how you feel. You might think you shouldn't complain, that your spouse has enough to deal with. But holding it all in is not good for anyone.

This can lead to frustration and resentment. Find a good time to talk and calmly explain how the situation is affecting you.

Be careful to not make it all about you, though. Encourage your mate to be open too. Be willing to listen without judgment.

Remember they may just need to vent at times, without you trying to fix it. Remind them that you are in this together.

It may be helpful for you to find someone else you can vent to as well. Perhaps joining a support group or finding others via social media that are going through similar situations. This can be helpful and therapeutic, helping put you in a better frame of mind to be able to help your partner.

Accept the New Norm

Obviously the hope is that your partner will find something to help them and bring them relief. But it is important you understand their life will likely never go back to what it was before fibro, which means your lives as a couple will be different from here on out.

This is not to say you will never have good days again — you will! But there will be bad days too. And more than anything there will be days that are a mixture of both. But with a little understanding and a lot of love you will be able to embrace this new life and learn to make the most of it.

Focus on what your mate is able to do. Try to find the positive in any situation. Find new, low-impact activities you can do together. This will be a welcome distraction for your loved one and help to keep your relationship strong.

Be Involved in Their Treatment

There is no one treatment that helps everyone. There are multiple medications, vitamins, supplements, dietary changes, and exercise regimens that have helped some with fibromyalgia, but not helped others. Trying to navigate what is going to work best can be extremely confusing and frustrating.

While your spouse tries different treatments do your best to stay involved. Take note of any changes, for the better or worse, you see in their condition.

Love, kindness and concern will go a long way in maintaining a close and happy partnership. Don't forget you are a team. They will need your support through this difficult time, just as they will do their best to support you when the occasion arises. View this as another opportunity to show your love and devotion.

Having your mate diagnosed with fibromyalgia will change your lives. But that is not necessarily a bad thing. Working together through this difficult time can help you both to cope and may even help you draw even closer together.