Spoonie Denied Disability Due to Photos Posted Online

by KATE TURNER

Fibro Warrior's Disability Rejected Due to Photos She Posted on Social Media

Do you think your social media profiles depict your life accurately? Could a stranger look at your profile and determine you have fibromyalgia just by browsing through your photos?

Most would say the answer is no.

But New York City-based comedian Kayla Barry was recently denied an appeal for long-term disability for fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue syndrome because she apparently didn't look sick enough in a number of photos she posted online.

Barry explains in a post on Tumblr (where she is known as Fibro-Larious) that the physician who was hired to make the decision about her claim used photos posted on her Twitter account to determine if she was truly ill.

She hasn't tweeted in nearly a year, and the photos referenced in the document denying her claim, which showed her smiling and laughing, were posted between September 2014 and July 2015.

In her Tumblr post, Barry included an excerpt of the document: "The person depicted in most of these posts appears to be a young woman who is engaged in life activities, awake, smiling and alert," it reads.

"They do not appear to depict an individual who looks chronically ill."

These pictures, Barry explains, are not accurate depictions of her life. As anyone who uses social media can attest to, what we post does not paint the whole picture.

"People always use social media to show the BEST moments from their lives, even if they aren't the whole truth," she says in her post.

And like many with fibromyalgia and other chronic illnesses, Barry keeps a lot of her struggles to herself.

"I don't share the three days I have to sleep to recover from one stand-up comedy set. I don't share the intense pain my body is in after walking around in Central Park for a day," she writes.

"They're called invisible illnesses for a reason. People with chronic illnesses can look completely normal. They are hidden in plain sight."

Check out Barry's original Tumblr post here.