

# The 45 day migraine that changed my life...

look at this experience now, and I am grateful for it. Growing up, I heard you'll be thankful for your experiences, but I never understood exactly what that would entail. I think the experiences we expect to be grateful for are the ones that are happy, peaceful, and full of life in them. Those aren't the experiences I have taken to be thankful for. Mine come from a place of deep pain, deep pain that I should have seen the signs of, deep pain that the people who were supposed to protect me didn't, at least from the things they should have. This enormous amount of pain seems to never go away; it just sits at a distance, always waiting to blanket me back into the darkness.

I first gained knowledge that I suffered from PTSD, high-functioning anxiety, and depression years ago. It was a devastation, a world I didn't want to deal with, a world I was trying to run from. I slowly was doing everything I could to deal with my trauma, figure out my triggers, and constantly uncover new ones that would come out of nowhere until the noise, or the event, or a call, or a text message came through. I was constantly on the lookout, watching for her face every time someone walked in the grocery store or entered a building I was in but she never came. I thought I was handling my trauma well....Until I wasn't...

One night, I attended a Halloween party with my husband. I have never been big for parties, nor was my husband, but we went and had a great time until I decided to sit down and started feeling physical symptoms of what I thought at that time was just a bad headache. I immediately thought it might have come from that one grapefruit white claw I consumed that same night, but little did I know it was going to get much worse... I started experiencing sleepless nights, stuttering, and uncontrollable shaking; the right side of my head felt a mix of constant beating, or like my right side was being squeezed; memory loss was coming in small and big waves. How scary, right?

I underwent scans and emergency room visits, being given a "cocktail" of different medications to break this migraine many times that little did we know would last me forty-five days before finally getting in with a neurologist with clean brain scans attached.

I walked into the neurologist scared, worried, and wondering if I would ever feel relief. My neurologist asked me a series of questions and went over my medical history with me, including noticing the three diagnoses that were given to me. He gave me one answer to this migraine. Trauma.

I remember sitting there and wondering, after a couple of years of not seeing the woman who added so much pain and brokenness, how am I still suffering from all this? I thought I fixed myself? I thought constantly looking over my shoulder, jumping at loud yelling sounds, or getting scared and starting to panic when I dropped and broke something was all me protecting myself. It wasn't. I was in survival mode without even knowing it.

I needed a solution. I needed to be able to hope for a better future for myself and to know that I had the courage and strength to break the harmful and detrimental cycles that I endured as a child and to never allow them in my space as an adult, who wanted to do better and be better than what I witnessed from the person who sheltered us from all good things.

So that is what I did! I took action. I got on a preventative migraine medication that combated both my sleepless nights and prevented those horrific migraines from forming. Not to say that it always worked when I was feeling the stress, but overall, it gave me relief and a feeling that I would be okay. I started with a personal trainer to work on my mind and body. Slowly dropping the weight and working on my relationship with food. Taking action to also find the right person to also help me unpack all my trauma is something that made a difference and knowing that for one second I don't have to present myself as well all the time is and was a breath of fresh air.

Dropping the weight will not be easy, healing your relationship with food won't be easy, having the courage to trust others with help getting you those results will not be easy, constantly showing up will not be easy, going to therapy and talking about the memories and how they show up in your life today won't be easy, trusting someone with your trauma will not be easy.

I am not telling you that bad days don't exist, and hiding from the world isn't an acceptable strategy if you need to take a mental load off, but don't hide forever, and don't be scared to start. Remember that life is not a straight line but full of stops, starts, bumps, and curves, which is beautiful and will strengthen your heart

With Love,

Lina Grace