

Too many believe if you are not on a narcotic or choose to not take them, then you do not have pain. This is so not true.

I have never known a day in my 44 years without pain. As doctors denied my reality I slowly deteriorated. I sought pain relief randomly when a doctor would listen. Usually an anti-depressant and a diagnosis of crazy was my care. The side effects had me tossing the drugs and learning to cope with the pain while trying to function at work and as a mom.

Nothing eased my senses and pain until I found just how beneficial cannabis is during my son's TBI journey.

Several years ago my body was overtaken with adenomyosis and endometriosis. A traumatic brain injury took me from my active daily life to barely functioning from the trauma my body was putting me through. Adenomyosis took over, I was barely able to eat or keep food down. My kidneys were in constant infected state, the intense pain, extreme weight loss, nausea, and uneasy mental state had me fear for my life. My saving grace was that I was a resident of Colorado during this experience. I was able to medicate myself in every way I could. Colorado had every cannabis option available to me for my healing from the fresh raw leaves of my own plant to perfectly made oil sold within a dispensary.

Cannabis is how I was able to eat, sleep, make it through a complicated filled surgery, gain my strength, and head home to Minnesota seeking this states superior medical facilities to continue my healing journey.

Doctors unearthed all the Whys about my life. The headaches, neck, and back pain are so excruciating that the desire to rip my skull open is only eased when the rest of my being is calm. Chiari Malformation Type 1 takes away too many days in a dementia filled fog.

Ehler's Danlos has my muscles so weak yet so spasmed I wonder why I want to continue to live. I am currently waiting for an electric wheelchair fitting as my home is turned into my "Long Term Care Facility"

Daily when the Mast Cell Activation Syndrome causes anaphylaxis on really weird and uncomfortable levels, never knowing when or how hard it will hit. From brain fog with psychosis to grand mals I live a life in my bed.

Just last week I tried a medication in hopes of some pain relief from my torn meniscus. After four days I could no longer handle the horrible stomach cramps, drunk feeling, worms under skin sensation, and the desire to self harm from the noise in my head.

Vape pens and ingesting oil tend to give me reactions such as hives, asthma attack with dry heaves, and psychosis. My psychotic episodes are fear based panic as I have an inability to stop the explosions in my brain or how my body feels. Seizures usually follow. I now know

this to be my mast cells going through degranulation. This has stolen years of time from my sons and grandchildren. Moments I will never see are lost because I can not cope with the intense pain of movement.

The inability to bear weight on any of my joints as cartilage, bone, and tissues rip up. Hives and burning skin. Days lost in silence, unable to even have a conversation because the noise inside of me is too much. I have become a prisoner of my home not just because someone's perfume could cause me anaphylaxis, but because I am unable to legally obtain or carry the medication I need to reduce my reaction.

Smoking cannabis in flower form stabilizes my mast cells. I never understood how or why specifically I was and am better after medicating, beyond the pain relief. Until I read Dr. Afrin's book, *Don't Bet Against Occman*, how cannabis stabilizes mast cells and shuts down the harshest parts of anaphylaxis. A quick online search will bring your articles explaining how those of us with MCAS find our best relief through smoking cannabis flower. But that flower needs to have been grown as organic and clean as possible to reduce any triggers from such things as sulfurs, molds, pesticides, etc.

I deserve a life of less pain and more joy. The only way for me to ensure this is to grow my own medication. I am on disability in rural Minnesota, hours from the Cities with a condition so sensitive I can not take risks. Just the travel to the Cities is placing me at many levels of risk just to obtain a form of cannabis I can not or may not be able to consume. The cost is too high financially and physically.

Growing one's own medication can bring them healing from the moment the seed is placed within its dirt. From fresh leaves for stomach healing to the cured flower that calms all misery, succeeding at something... What Joy that would be!

As I am going through the motions of preparing my world to accommodate this invalid body, I need my voice heard on how much my freedom means to me. Cannabis gives me the freedom to have quality of life! Everyone is worth Quality of Life!

I struggle daily with the fears of being imprisoned in my body. Why should I fear being legally imprisoned with this body simply because I Need to have some Quality, some Joy, Feel Worthy in this world if I am to continue to be in it?

Sincerely,

Angela Elsner-Brown