



## This Month: **Open Group Discussion**

Since July is often viewed as the gateway to the new school year coming up in September and the coming months of fall fun, the Dorough Lupus Foundation's support group chose this month to open the floor up for group discussion.

Support group members spoke on a wide range of topics spanning from A to Z while touching on how they have incorporated different methods of Lupus care from previous support group meetings that has aided them tremendously. There were three key points that maintained a steady constant throughout the meeting, they were: adjusting, balance, and focus. Support group members value utilizing these three key points in making learning to live with Lupus easier.

### **Adjusting**

As is the case with so many NEW things in life (the first day of school, a blind date, moving to a new city, driving on the express way for the first time, even paying bills) learning to adjust makes it easier to move on to the next step. Many support group members place "adjusting" at the top of the list in regards to learning

how to live with Lupus. One group member (we'll call her "pretty-face") who was diagnosed with Lupus three months ago stated that going through that adjustment stage has been one of the hardest, but most rewarding, things she has had to do.

### **THE HARD PART**

Pretty-face is in the transition part of her life - she is no longer a teen-ager, but is not quite an adult. Within a small time frame, Pretty-face has had to quit culinary school, see many doctors, and has lost a few friendships because of Lupus. At the meeting, she stated that she is learning how to control her disease through adjusting different things within her life. At first things were at a stand still, because she had to take time to "exhale" so to speak - everything was so over-whelming (from being diagnosed to living with Lupus), but now things are beginning to run smoother. What makes Pretty-face keep smiling? Adjusting her life to make Lupus fit her, and not the other way around.

### **THE REWARD**

Pretty-face is succeeding in living with Lupus by adjusting her daily routines, so that she can do her chores and have some personal space to relax. She does this by placing things in priority. One thing that helps this adjustment work so well is Pretty-face's good support system, her family. Each member has learned to adjust his or her schedules to help. What Pretty-face finds difficult to do, they do, and vice versa. Moreover, when things get tough, this support system anchors itself to help Pretty-face and the family to pull through. It was stated at the meeting that the patient has to continue to allow themselves to be the dominant aspect in their lives and make Lupus a part of that aspect - never should the patient allow Lupus to be the dominant aspect while placing themselves as just a small part of the whole. Pretty-face acknowledges that while she continues to adjust her life to make Lupus fit her, she will see it as another learning experience. And with this learning experience through adjustments, Pretty-face declared that she will go back to Culinary school, make new friends, and live an easier life **with** Lupus.

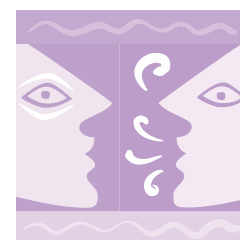
## **Upcoming Meetings**

**August 28, 2007**

**September 25, 2007**

**October 23, 2007**

**November 27, 2007**



Meetings are held the fourth

Tuesday of every month at

**Arnold Palmer Hospital**

Classrooms 1& 2

92 W. Miller St.  
Orlando, FL 32806

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### Balance

Many guest speakers at Dorough Lupus Foundation support group meetings have indicated how balance plays a key role in healing. For example, last month's guest speaker, Georgiana Johnson (a certified Reiki [ray-key] Master Teacher) spoke about how balancing the mental, physical, and spiritual aspects of the body aids in healing. Many Lupus patients can testify to the healing power of balance. One such person who can testify to balance being a key ingredient in learning to live with Lupus is Cindi.

Cindi is a Lupus patient who is a regular attendee of the support group meetings. As was brought out in last month's newsletter, Cindi met with Georgiana Johnson for Reiki sessions (one month, twice a week, for two hours). At this month's support group, Cindi stated that she is doing even better after continuing to practice what she learned during her Reiki sessions. Cindi is learning how to balance the pros and cons. For example, by crocheting, Cindi reduces stress; therefore, Cindi has better sleeps which add to less muscle spasms. In

addition, Cindi may go to the beach in the evening to take in some summer air and relax; therefore, Cindi's other stressors are minimized, thus reducing flare-ups and pain. You may be thinking "easier said than done;" but balance is attainable - just start with baby steps. Picture the scales evened out. For example, if you know that you are going to be very busy tomorrow, try to relax more today. If you have been finding it harder to be out in the sun during peak hours try scheduling activities for the evening hours whenever possible. Trial and error; the Ying and Yang; in short, find what works best for you and you will find balance. (For more on Cindi's experience, look at the June/2007 Dorough Lupus Foundation Newsletter).

### Focus

A key step in learning to adapt to so many situations within our lives is overcoming intimidation - that feeling of inadequacy. You can probably think of some circumstances within your life that you once thought were painful and horrible, but now have conquered that fear and have grown from that experience because of focusing on the better. It is the same with Lupus. You

may have experienced this when you were first diagnosed with Lupus. Many support group members affirmed that this feeling of intimidation comes after the initial shock of the diagnosis and the denial stage. Nevertheless, the only way you can overcome the feeling of intimidation in order to adapt is by staying focused.

You see it in sports, music, medicine, and in just studying for an exam - the person who succeeds has a good focus on the prize - that gold medal, a Grammy, a cure, or an "A" on the final exam. Yes, learning how to focus on that better side of life, the positive side, has made living with Lupus so much easier to attain also. During the meeting, different support group members stated that there are many things to contend with, on a daily basis, with Lupus. There are aches, pains, flare-ups, and weakness to name a few; but there are also good days. In addition, by remembering those good days and good points, you gain a great benefit - a perfect focal point! Many

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### **Coming September 25**

We are proud to welcome back

#### **Dr. Brenda Montané, M.D.**

Dr. Montané comes to us with over twenty years of experience in General Pediatrics and Pediatric Nephrology. She has been honored for "Best Doctors in America" in 2002, 2003 and 2004. She continues to teach Pediatric Nephrology and General Pediatrics to medical students, Interns and Residents of Pediatrics, Urology and Nurses at University of Miami-Jackson Memorial Medical Center. Besides being an author to numerous books and articles published throughout leading medical journals of today, Dr. Montané is a Co-Principal Investigator in a Multicenter Study to evaluate pharmacokinetics, dose response, effectiveness and safety of **Toprol XL** in pediatric subjects.



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group members suggested writing down how you got to that good point, and trying to repeat that process - this adds to healing and overall balance, thereby aiding in making it easier to live with Lupus. True, you cannot, and should not, deny the fact that you have a disease that needs to be taken seriously, but you should remember that each new day brings another chance. The unexpected with Lupus does not always have to be bad and will not always be bad.

Remember, there is always a light at the end of the tunnel. It may seem difficult to focus on this ray of hope while you are adjusting your life to live with Lupus, but as soon as you allow yourself to control the disease, and not let the disease control you, the light will grow brighter and brighter. **KEEP FOCUSED!!**

### Here are some focus tips to jot into your journals

- Write your story from beginning to end and share it with someone; you never know who you might inspire along the way.
- Make daily goals.
- Find things that enable your mind and body to work together (listen to music; go to a nighttime concert, etc.).
- Take up a hobby (learn to crochet, try painting, or sign up for a bowling team, etc.).
- Get a good support system (family, friends, message boards, school, church, etc.).
- Stroll through the Dorough Lupus Foundation's Links page for additional online support.
- Remember that nobody is perfect, but everybody is unique!!

### Resources

-- A must have!! **The Lupus Book: A Guide for Patients and Their Families**, by Daniel J. Wallace (an L.A. based Lupus specialist). This book blends clinical information with practical advice for the entire family and individual. (available on sale for \$19.80 [new] and \$16.82 [used] at Amazon.com - [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com))

-- To find great ideas in diet, exercise, sleep, medications, work scheduling, and other practical tips for Lupus patients, take a look inside of the **Drug Digest** and search the term "Lupus." Visit [www.drugdigest.org](http://www.drugdigest.org)

-- Take a look inside of the **EUFIC** - a detailed site that explains how Low impact aerobic exercise can reduce fatigue in auto-immune conditions. Log onto [www.eufic.org](http://www.eufic.org)

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### 2007 DLF ANNUAL CRUISE INFO



**December 15-22**

- ✧ **Port Canaveral, FL**
- ✧ **Cozumel**
- ✧ **Belize City**
- ✧ **Costa Maya Nassau**

**For more information visit:**  
[http://www.doroughlupusfoundation.org/files/Dorough\\_Lupus\\_07.pdf](http://www.doroughlupusfoundation.org/files/Dorough_Lupus_07.pdf)

**Interested in Clinical Trials for Lupus? Check these out!**

<http://www.doroughlupusfoundation.org/files/lunar.pdf>

<http://www.lupustrials.org/>