

# Pain: A Source of Worry

Category: Worry

written by Ronna L. Edelstein | May 1, 2018

Ten years ago, I had my first jaw surgery; this past December I had my fifth. The latest surgery also came with radiation to—hopefully—prevent heterotopic bone from regrowing over the prosthetic device in my jaw and from causing me 24/7 pain. And worry.

Now, almost five months after the surgery, I have more mobility in my mouth, but I still suffer from pain. The ongoing pain has depleted me of energy; it has turned me into a couch potato who spends too many hours napping and too few hours engaging in mentally and physically stimulating activities.

The ongoing pain also fills me with worry—that my lack of activity will lead to dementia and/or physical problems, maybe even to suicide. I worry that my pain will blind me to the good in my life and will allow me to see only the bad.

I worry that my pain and its repercussions will shorten my life, leaving my two adult children without their maternal anchor. How will my son move forward without his mother to enrich his day with a “Good morning—I love you” phone call? How will my daughter enjoy theater, PBS shows, and books without having her mother with whom to share her thoughts and reactions? How will they find meaning in a life that tormented their mother with physical, emotional and mental pain?

I worry that my pain will further isolate me from the friendships I worked so hard to establish in my golden years. Before the jaw issues and constant visits to the maxillofacial surgeon, I would make arrangements with friends to see a movie, have dinner, take a walk. Now, the thought of making a phone call is too much for me. I worry that my friends will forget me as they struggle to find positive ways to move forward, despite their own challenges.

Pain is a real disease that takes over the body and the mind, leaving little room for joy. It affects the way the sufferer dresses, eats and carries out the daily tasks of life.

I worry that my pain will consume me.

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