

# Waiting in Darkness, Waiting in Light

Category: Waiting

written by Mary B. Wiecezak | October 13, 2020

January 8, 2016, was a day I shall never forget. I received the news that the issues I was experiencing with my right knee would require a total knee replacement. My primary care physician assured me not to worry: "Everyone has knee replacements." And so began my period of waiting in darkness. It would last for more than four years.

The first of what would be six procedures was scheduled for two weeks later. Infection set in just four days after my surgery. Oral antibiotics gave me a sense of waiting in light. How wrong I was! Eight weeks of IV fluids were ordered.

Subsequent arthroscopic surgery removed scar tissue and a bone spur. But infection number two reared its ugly head. Lab tests revealed the infection had spread throughout my body, so the implant had to be removed while a spacer was placed in my leg. Darkness continued, as I remained dependent on others for the next three months. A second round of IV antibiotics led me to depression. Would the light never come?

Knee revision followed. as my leg was cut open for the third time. How many times could skin be cut and stapled? I experienced further pain and darkness as my patella began to wear thin and become fragmented. A nerve block procedure was ordered, with severe pain the likes of which I had never yet felt.

Throughout the four years, I consulted with orthopaedic specialists, traveled within and outside of my state, and several times confronted the true darkness of possible amputation were I to experience another infection. I took that risk and found a surgeon who was willing to offer me the light for which I had been searching. I am now engaged in painful and daunting physical therapy. I am not in my prime and know that recovery will take a long time. But the light is getting brighter as I realize I have the heart and fortitude to reach my goal.

*I will get better. I will walk again!*

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