

COPD Writings and Poems

From Sheila Shiel

Some people with chronic lung disease find it helpful to put their feelings down on paper – or the computer. The simple act of writing down feelings and experiences, it seems, can provide help, calmness, and perspective. Through the hardship, frustration, and heartache of living with daily shortness of breath, can come stories, letters and poems. But what is most beautiful -- and somewhat surprising -- is that many times once the feelings are out, the heartache turns to joy and gives us the strength to go on.

Sheila Shiel is one of those people who has shared experiences and feelings about her own life with COPD. It takes a lot of courage to write about things that are painful and unpleasant. Sharing the questions and wishes we are sharing here is not meant to make you feel depressed or sorry for yourself. Far from it! The following poems are honest and reveal the pure emotions – ups and downs and all – of living with COPD. We hope that sharing them with you brings you something familiar and helps you know that you're not alone.

Sheila writes:

“I, too, was in denial — for a long time. I told myself I had no idea why I had less energy, bronchitis several times a year, needing round after round of antibiotics... What was happening to me? I was so sure that somehow this would all go away. Yes, denial was the way to go. But after a while, I had to face the truth.

“COPD makes a good subject to write about in a human interest sort of way. I can write about the loneliness of the disease, the ups and downs due to the medications, the tendency for some of us to “hide” because of the difficulty going out and facing the world, the over-reaction to being Short of Breath (SOB), and the tendency to want to just chill out when feeling good because of the fear of becoming ill again. Add to this the smoking aspect – not all COPD is due to smoking – yet everybody asks you about smoking no matter who or what. Then there are the day-to-day difficulties of just taking a shower, eating a meal, trying to cope, and so on.

“COPD is not a nice disease. Sometimes I get depressed. I wrote quite a lot one summer when I was ill. My poems tell a personal story about the ups and downs of having COPD.”

I Was Dreaming

I woke up this morning tasting food ... things I used to eat.
Lots of sauce and red meat,
Pies and homemade bread and things I used to make.
Opened my eyes ... I was in bed, for goodness sake!

I dreamed that I was walking on the beach,
No cane, no pain, walking with my head up high to reach ... the sky.
My, oh, my.

In my dream, I was so alive and carefree ...
The way I used to be.

I closed my eyes and went back to sleep ...
I wanted to hold on to my memories,
have something to keep!

I know I have to face reality ...
But sometimes I close my eyes just to see ...
A young and healthy me!

Crying

Why do I feel these tears tonight?
When everything was going alright?
Is this part of what I have to face for the rest of my Life ...
What's left of my Life, that is ...
for I don't know ...
How much time before
God brings me Home.

Up and down I go.
First I am happy and gay,
Living and enjoying every single day.
Then suddenly I feel so low ...
Where did that happiness go?

All part of this terrible disease.
So hard to believe
That one day you are so high ...
Wondering if you can fly?
Next day you hit that horrible low ...
A kick in the stomach, a terrible blow.
Tears run down my face ... and I cry ...
I don't even know why ...

Think Pink

Think Pink ... You can win!
Life can be happy and gay,
Depends on how you want to spend your day.

Lots of hardship, lots of pain ...
It is part of God's game.
Smile and go on and just look for my rainbow in the sky ...
Soon you will be feeling just fine.

See the moon and the stars at night.
Hug yourself really tight.
Smile with all your might.
Everything is a-okay, alright?

Love is something you keep inside and give out when you have to ...
Always remember the one to Love the most is YOU.

Full Moon Fantasy

They found a cure for COPD today.
It has finally come our way.

You take a pill and your lungs become all brand new,
Once again ... you can breathe like you used to do!

Bronchitis is a thing of the past,
No more coughing and meds that don't last.
No more gasping for breath.

Emphysema, too, has become a thing of the past.
Nobody needs new lungs or any other type of surgical
intervention.
They finally researched and paid attention ...
to our plight.
We won the fight!

Cigarettes have been abolished forever ... nobody smokes anymore,
All lung diseases have been cured.

It was only a dream ... another
Full Moon Fantasy,
But oh, I wish it were really true ... so I could be
the way I used to be ... able to breathe.

I walked on the beach today,
Felt the wind and sunshine on my face.
I walked for miles and miles with my toes sunk into the sand.
It felt so grand.

And in the morning I got dressed all by myself,
No treatment, no oxygen, I didn't need any help.

Another Full Moon Fantasy ... as tears run down my face ...
As I suck in my O₂ and dream that things are truly that way.

Hoping that someday soon ... they may.