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## DELIBERATELY CHOOSING JOY

by Paula Hayward

One way I Rise Up particularly on challenging days is by Deliberately Choosing JOY.

I'm usually able to see the Good in all things and situations. But, some days are just better than others. Yesterday was a big medical day. You know the drill...pick ups at pharmacies, co- pays (or lack of them), and long waits on hold with insurance companies seeking explanations of medical benefits.

At day's end, I was a bit forlorn.

So, I asked myself in the midst of the day's paper war...*what can I do about it?* Now. First, I realized that I had to accept the circumstances. My Grandmother would often say, "this too shall pass." Eventually, the fog did lift.

I completed my tasks at hand as best as I could. I did all the right things and then I decided to *let...go.*

The act of letting go (even for a moment) is freeing. Later in the evening, a friend called, and we shared the events of our day and a few chuckles. Friendships, real ones that is, are important. As friends, we get to witness each other's lives on a daily basis. We celebrate our Joys and share our sorrows. Together, it's just easier. Friends, help us move beyond the hurt. Early in my diagnosis, friends dropped away. I learned pretty fast that when we change, our relationships change or grow with us or they simply "exit."

New friendships developed over time. I recognize that those old worn out relationships that evaporated were part of my evolution to a stronger self.

*Loss is necessary in order to gain what is healthy and whole.*

For today, I will not be afraid to enjoy what is beautiful, even on the most challenging of days.

With a little help from my friends, I can *Deliberately Choose Joy.*