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[Home](#) > The Crossroad. Chapter 1. My Life Comes to an End as I Know It.

The Crossroad. Chapter 1. My Life Comes to an End as I Know It.

Tue, 2015-07-14 20:02 — Robin Olson

There are times in your life when you know you're at a crossroad. Sometimes the path isn't so clearly defined and you have to first take a few steps in one direction before you realize you've chosen the wrong one. If you're lucky, you can turn back and re-think your choice, maybe even do something about it.

You can take a hard, cold look at your life and visualize the choices you've made and what problems you may be creating for yourself to face one day. For example, I saw my parent's health fail over things they could have controlled early on. I've had friends and family, who "*knew better*" but didn't do anything about "*it*" and slowly drank themselves to death or smoked cigarettes for 30 years and wondered why they got salivary gland cancer and died.

I'm not going to live forever, but HOW I live the rest of my life is up to me. I can live it in a strong, vital way or I can make up an excuse not to deal with it. I can give in and give up and just get sicker and sicker, being on more and more medications until I die.



©2014 Robin A.F. Olson. Goodbye carbs.

For 50-some years I've walked down one road, but there's a flashing signal alerting me to the failure of my choices and now I need to decide if there's still time to change course.

I've just been diagnosed with Diabetes (type 2).

My Doctor's office called and said my blood tests were in and the Doctor wanted to see me. There was "*nothing to worry about.*"

I hoped I'd find out that the chest pains and weird stabbing pains into my arms, chest and neck were related to being Vitamin D deficient (*and not the sign of a pending heart attack*). I knew maybe my cholesterol would be up or I'd be borderline diabetic, but I'm not a freak about eating sugar and I don't eat crazy amounts of food. I cut back on wheat and sugar over a year ago. I thought I was basically okay.

I was very wrong.

The Doctor, pardon the pun, didn't "*sugar coat*" the news. She said that due to my history (*my mother was diabetic late in life*) and my weight (*which is mostly in my belly*) that it was likely this could happen. She said that because my A1C Hemaglobin test was 7.1, and just over the indication of being diabetic (which is 6.5 and the test is accurate to +/- .50), that with diet and exercise I could possibly go into remission. **It might not be too late.**

My heart sank. I asked what else was wrong and the only other thing was indeed I did have VERY low Vitamin D levels, which can easily be remedied with supplements and some outdoor time. Everything else was normal.

I was glad Sam was in the exam room because I probably would have begun to cry and his being there comforted me. He was putting on a brave face, revealing only subtle disappointment at the news, but I wondered what he thought about what our

future might mean now. If I had to change my eating habits, then he might have to as well; **but would he be willing?**

I asked if any of the tests answered why I was having pains and she answered; “No.” I’m still to take an [Echo Stress Test](#) ⁽¹⁾ to see if my heart is in bad shape.

Of course with the plethora of information online I’ve already diagnosed my pain issues as [stable angina](#). ⁽²⁾ It would make sense, I have the symptoms, family history and risk factors. If my Doctor senses it, maybe she should have told me and we should have gotten the test done sooner or maybe she’s not really lying and isn’t certain that’s what is going on. **I don’t know that I’ve been more terrified of my fate than I am right now. I’m middle-aged. Shit happens-just not to me!**

So which path will I take? I knew it before the Doctor finished telling me I about how I had to make serious changes in my life if I wanted any chance to be healthy.

“I’m going to kick this in the ass with everything I’ve got. I heard the wake-up call and I’m listening.” I said to my Doctor.



©2014 Robin A.F. Olson. *Perhaps one day I can enjoy a mini-pastry again (if I plan for it and work out after eating it), but until at least next February-no more of this.*

I’ve lost weight so many times before, but not studied nutrition as I will have to do now. **I’ve never cared about my body. I think I’ve felt unlucky that I was never skinny like the popular girls. In all honesty I only weigh 5 lbs more than I did in early 2000’s, but I’m very overweight and all those years and the STRESS I deal with has taken a toll.** I must make changes for the rest of my life **IF** I want to have a life that does not include: *amputations, going blind, heart failure and more.* **I need to fight for my life and I need to stop hating my body and love and respect it with all I’ve got.**

I may already be too late or I may look back on this as the luckiest day of my life. I don’t know if I will be able to give myself the gift of healthy weight for once and for all. It’s been my life’s dream to get rid of this big belly, but something I felt powerless to achieve long-term.

I’m going to imagine my future. I’ve lost a lot of weight. I can walk comfortably and I exercise. Sam is right there with me, doing the same. We gave ourselves the gift of a better old age and with any luck we’ll get there, but there’s a very long road ahead and the next answers may be even worse than I fear.

Note to my friends:

It’s not easy to face the fact that you don’t feel quite right. Maybe you’ve been putting off getting something checked. Trust me on this-do NOT WAIT. Yes, there are plenty of reasons not to see a Doctor. I didn’t even HAVE Health Insurance the past decade and if I didn’t have it now I may not have gone. It doesn’t hurt to call a few Doctors and explain your situation and ask for help if money is an issue. **There are Federally Qualified Healthcare Clinics** ⁽³⁾ **all over the country.** They can provide services to low/no income families and because they get paid by the Government, it means they won’t cut costs on your care because they’re getting fairly compensated for their services (*unlike many Doctor’s offices who don’t get reimbursed enough and will refuse to provide care for people on State Insurance*). I found a few in my area and they even have cardiologists.

Be in charge of your future. Own it.

But meanwhile I wonder if I’m still fluttering on the edge of having a heart attack. My pain isn’t going away and I’m in a panic. **Are these the last few days of my life?**

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Comments

Wed, 2015-07-15 12:36 — GrabbyCats (not verified)

Hope this helps ^[9]

Where I work we have a whole website dedicated to recipes! Hope it helps!

<http://extension.illinois.edu/diabetesrecipes/> ^[10]

Sun, 2015-07-19 20:52 — [Robin Olson](#) ^[11]

Fabulous! ^[12]

This is awesome. Thank yo uso much!

Wed, 2015-07-15 12:57 — jmuwj (not verified)

RE: CHANGES ^[13]

I know it's not easy for (many) people to make big life changes, especially when they are changes we are unpleasantly surprised with having to make. But you're halfway there already, because you're looking this is in the face and making the decision that you are going to do what's necessary to win over this thing. I've been in a similar place more than once in my life, and looking at it from the other side, I can say that the changes I committed to making have resulted in my being much happier, healthier and stronger. Sure, it's not easy. But I have confidence that you'll be able to do it!

After all, those who love and need you are there for you, and they absolutely know you'll do it. For you, and for them.

Wed, 2015-07-15 13:04 — Catnynouse (not verified)

your health staus ^[14]

please watch forks over knives . avaiable on netflix. take care of yourself

Wed, 2015-07-15 22:16 — [Teri and her bl...](#) (not verified) ^[15]

I, too, have high AC1 and belly fat... ^[16]

Oh Robin, I found out last year that my AC1 was at 6.5 and that my weight is #20 too much and was to start exercising and cutting back on sugar (I scream for ice cream!) and the only change I have made is to sometimes eat sugar free ice cream. I keep saying with each new month, that I will start...haven't yet. I too was hoping my low Vit D would improve with daily liquid D and I have been doing that...need to do more! My thoughts are with you and maybe we can walk this road together!

Thu, 2015-07-16 09:39 — [annameow](#) (not verified) ^[17]

been there... ^[18]

Sorry to hear about your health issues, but happy you are determined to "kick ass". I experienced this a few years ago. After being under stress caring for my mom and brother, I had gained a lot of weight and was in terrible condition. I received the same diagnosis and like you, became determined to save myself, without drugs. I made some big lifestyle changes and in 9 months everything tested "normal" and has been that way ever since. You can do this Robin. And you can occasionally eat pastries too! Exercising (at something you enjoy), "pure" eating, along with stress reduction are the keys. We will all be cheering you on! Good luck!

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Robin @ [Google+](#)

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Links

[1] http://www.heartsite.com/html/echo_stress.html

[2] <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000198.htm>

[3] <http://www.hrsa.gov/healthit/toolbox/RuralHealthITtoolbox/Introduction/qualified.html>

[4] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/33>

- [5] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/37>
- [6] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/51>
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