



spotlight on health

Tips For Hitting Healthy Milestones Year-Round

(NAPSA)—Any time of year can be a good time to set new goals for what you want to achieve in the following months. For many people, however, it can be difficult to stick to these goals, especially those living with a chronic condition such as multiple sclerosis (MS).

The disease, which affects approximately 400,000 Americans, can make even small daily tasks seem challenging. Fortunately, there are ways for people with MS to reach their goals.

“I’ve learned that you have to stay positive and surround yourself with people who motivate and inspire you,” says Debbie, who lives with relapsing MS. “By doing that, it was easier to accept my diagnosis with multiple sclerosis and gain the confidence and strength to achieve my goals.”

Debbie is an Ambassador for MS LifeLines®, an educational support service for people living with MS sponsored by EMD Serono and Pfizer Inc. Debbie and other MS LifeLines Ambassadors, Mike and Missy, share the following tips for keeping goals on track:

Set Realistic Goals

“The most important thing that I have learned is to look at the goals you had before you were diagnosed and strive to keep them—you may just need to modify them a bit,” says Mike. “Being diagnosed with a chronic condi-



MS LifeLines Ambassador Debbie works toward her goal of repairing vintage cars.

tion shouldn’t have to change your outlook on life.”

In some cases, modifying goals may mean extending your expected timeline or simply taking one step at a time and remaining flexible. “Try starting small and slowly progress to your goal,” says Mike. “You may even exceed your expectations.”

Stay Focused

Try making a list of your goals and displaying them in a place where you can glance at them every day, such as near your computer, on the refrigerator or on the bathroom mirror. Give copies to someone you are close with and ask that person to check in with you to help you stay on track.

Chart your progress by maintaining a monthly goal calendar.

Start small and work toward each milestone at a reasonable pace to avoid feeling stressed. You might find inspiration by checking out some of the MS LifeLine Ambassador journals at www.mslifelines.com/goals.

Welcome Support

Look to family and friends for support when it comes to setting and keeping goals. Knowing that someone is always there to help motivate you is a great way to stay on track.

It can help to learn from the experiences of other people who are living with MS. Visit www.mslifelines.com/goals for access to an online support community, as well as the Peer Connection Program, where individuals can schedule opportunities to speak with an Ambassador over the phone.

“The program has allowed me to interact with others who are living with relapsing MS and to learn how they have set and worked to achieve their goals,” says Missy. “When I hear what others are doing and how far they’ve come, it motivates me to keep trying and to push myself beyond what I thought I was capable of doing.”

For more tips and information, visit www.mslifelines.com/goals or call (877) 447-3243.