

## Six Seconds

It was several years ago that my hard headed / thick skinned abilities were called on to fight the fight that I thought I personally would never have to face. I call it the 'six seconds that changed my life'. Yep I was injured and was very swiftly swallowed up into the maw of horror called the workers compensation process.

This 'maw of horror' is a familiar place for injured nurses – the fields around it are littered with the broken bodies of once useful workers. Their bodies are not the only broken thing - broken promises, broken dreams, and broken journeys can be added to the wreckage. We who were the nurses became the patients.

I do not think the Workers Compensation system was created to make me feel like a failure but it did. I do not think the Workers Compensation system was created to make me feel like I had nothing left to offer society but it did. I do not think the Workers Compensation system was created to make me feel as if I've done something wrong but it did. I do not think the Workers Compensation system was created to make me feel blame for my injury but it did.

Now the activist in me has one more fight and that is to help change this seriously flawed compensation process that has added to the physical, mental and emotional pain of those who have to journey the path of the injured nurse.

I have struggled through the Workers Compensation process. At present there is no cure for my pain. My life is about getting on and living with pain – a pain that impinges on every level of my life. I spent six and a half years trying to get back to work into a job that I loved and was good at. A job that could help me realize the dreams that I had at that time. I've lost those dreams and now have to walk a road I have never walked before in search of dreams that I have never dreamed before.

Now my journey is taking a different direction. I have found that my skill in writing political blurbs has translated into the creative flair. There has been much angst walking this path of injury and pain. I have found that I have been able to express some of my thoughts and some of my journey and share that with you now.

*'Have you discovered yet the reason why you walk this earth? Living is a journey into the unknown. A place where courage is found; where knowledge is sought; where life is lived; where maturity is nurtured; where wisdom is found; or not! I search for who I am and I take many different paths to do this. I do not search to find a better me or to be better than anybody else, I search to find my truth and my truth alone. Anything else is not my true path.'*

And another:

*'The joy of living is sometimes squashed by the discomfort of reality - the knowledge that there will always be some pain on the road of living. How does that make you feel? Will you follow that pain with anger, bitterness, jealousy or with the maturity of understanding that we might not get to choose our direction at all?'*

I will never nurse again. I have lost track of the times that tears have meandered down my face at this thought. Yes my career may have been cut short but I still live. I am now discovering another path. .... but the nurse and activist in me will never die.