



## ***Paul Goldstein, Overcoming Adversity***

"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."

-- *Darwin*

My way of dealing with MG came without choices. Prior to being struck with MG, I suffered with a sudden onset of a blood disorder called pure red blood cell aplasia, which left me even weaker than MG. After one year, the pure red blood cell aplasia went into remission. During that year, my wife refused to be involved with my care or to assist me. I was left to physically and emotionally deal with it on my own, and it is a life threatening disease. Once it went into remission, I decided to get divorced as I had felt that I had been abandoned at the weakest point in my life, and while living in fear of death. Four months

later, I was struck with severe MG. The circumstances were as severe as one could possibly imagine, and just giving up would of been a common decision for most.

At that time, I was a business developer in Pharmacology, and also a licensed builder. My profession requires that I solve problems that others can't within our operations. Daily, patients' lives and other people's jobs depend on my ability to manage affairs and situations that are complex and that need to be resolved. Simply being physically weak with MG was not a justifiable excuse for me to not meet my responsibilities to so many others. The impact would have been devastating to many.

I simply refused to allow my disability to be an excuse for not being able to meet my responsibilities. I also used my anger and frustration from the combined set of circumstances as a tool to avoid self-pity, and swore to myself that I will use these circumstances as a tool for strength, and not as an excuse for weakness. I still follow this rule to this very day. Of course there are limits to what I can physically do, but mentally I never give up on striving to give anything less than 100%.

Since being diagnosed, I have remarried, I have a 10 year old son, and I am still active in business development and in the building construction trades. People around me do not identify my weaknesses, but in fact turn to me for my strengths. When others can't get the job done, that is when my job starts. I do what they can't through logical and critical thinking to find the answers. My MG will not prevent me from being a leader and to continue to move forward.

*Paul*