

use is just the contingency or situational approach. Could I be the manager or manageress of the image? Management is also a business course I once took in college where I learned that managing is an art, and that the ability to compromise with the least amount of undesired consequences is the essence of the managerial art. It sounded good then; I even got an "A" in the course. It does sound good even now, but to me, the medical concept of "management" of my dilemma was unacceptable since it sounded too negative and promoted feelings of defeat. In fact, I found most of what I had read about living with MS to be very depressing and counterproductive.

One day I opened a book that was considered to be one of the best guides for MS patients and their families where subjects like "rehabilitation equipment," "wheelchairs and mobility," "when doorways and steps are a problem," "car hand controls," and "grab bars" (Oh, No!), were discussed. There was even a section on bathing, showering, and using the toilet! I did not read those. The thought of it was upsetting. Something else caught my eye as I cautiously leafed through the pages: "Continent Vesicostomy." I was intrigued so I read about it, but I won't tell it here. Suffice it to say that it is part of "bladder management." I still don't believe it! And then, of course, there is always a "sphincterotomy," if you are really desperate.

I am poking fun now, but I certainly do not mean to minimize anyone's disabilities or concerns for I know that they are legitimate. It is wonderful that medical knowledge has come so far, and that so many people may benefit from it in the various ways that the field has developed, and especially if they desire it. But to me, the medical statements and advice seemed predominantly negative, cold, and isolating; and although I was experiencing many of the symp-