



My name is Andrea Emmes, I was diagnosed with RSD/CRPS Stage 1 in 2006 and have made some incredible strides in the past 10 years in being able to find my hope and "way" again. I'm much more functional thanks to my doctors, meds, and spinal cord stimulator. And mostly, due to the loving support of my family and my ability to dig deep within myself and choose hope. Chose life. It's not easy and it's a daily struggle to make that choice but I thought that maybe my story might inspire others who are suffering to not lose hope. To accept the disease but don't allow it to engulf them. That they can still contribute to society, be productive work wise, thrive socially, and find/be love(d).

In 2008, while in the throes of bedridden pain, I wrote and released an award winning album about my pain called, "I'm On My Way". In 2009, I was able to go back to college and in 2012, I graduated with my Bachelor Degree for Game Art and Design. Right after graduation, I was hired by Disney Interactive as an associate game designer and in 2014, I married the most wonderful man ever, Giovanni Cenna who not only supports and loves me, but doesn't allow me to let RSD let me down.

Now, I'm working from home as an Audiobook Narrator, which allows for a flexible schedule for me as when pain flares come up, I just stop working, go lay down and ride it out and then get back to work later. Also, and most excitedly, I'm the Producer of an animated short film called, "Mila" which is the story of a 5-year-old little girl from Trento, Italy (1943) who lost her family in the bombings and finds hope to survive and love and family with another person who also lost her everything.

When I was diagnosed with RSD, I felt like I lost everything. My life, my ambitions and dreams, my friends, and my ability to do even the simplest of things. I away, I felt like a huge part of myself had been lost or died. This film is not only a story about children survivors of war, but speaks to everyday people who go through such challenging hard times that can seem overwhelming and impossible to "survive" through. Much like RSD, I have felt this depression and overwhelming sense of feeling worthless and useless and that there's no hope for me. Working on this film, has reminded me, that we all go through hard times, and they vary in severity, but there is always a way to choose to fight and find hope.

Thank you,

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Trailer: <https://goo.gl/g9lJtK>