

Persistence Positivity and PD:

Renard Williams' CKD Journey



Seven years and a couple of hundred pounds ago, Renard Williams faced a critical decision. A diabetic, he had strayed off course with diet, medications and exercise, and weighed 445 lbs. "I got on the scale and said, 'I have to do something about this,'" Renard recalls.

To regain control of his life and health, Renard chose gastric bypass surgery and shed nearly half his body weight. But just when things started looking good again, he started feeling very bad ... again. His doctor delivered heartbreaking news. Renard's kidneys were failing, and he needed dialysis.

Choosing freedom ... and Liberty

The news was difficult, but choosing a therapy was not. Renard chose peritoneal dialysis with the **Liberty Select Peritoneal Dialysis Cycler** – for a variety of reasons. For one, a close friend with kidney disease had seen excellent results with PD therapy. Second was a love of travel, and Liberty's portability made it ideal for trips, whether across town or across the globe.



"(With PD) we just never stopped traveling," Renard remembers. "Our attitude was 'Whatever we do, we do, we just have to make sure to make room for these boxes (of supplies).'"

But the biggest appeal PD had for Renard was the control over his therapy – caring for his own equipment, dialyzing on his own schedule, and not spending hours in the car and at the clinic three days a week, as would have been the case with in-center dialysis. Being home also allowed for better oversight of meal times, choices and preparation, helping Renard to manage his diet and weight. He was determined to be the most adherent patient he could be.

Reliability Rules

"I put it like this," says Renard, with a hint of humor, "If you have a young child, no matter how much that child gets on your nerves, every night you're going to give them dinner and a bath and take care of them. PD was my 'child'."

Renard stayed accountable and felt he had a trusted "partner" of sorts in his Liberty system. He needed a cycler that would drain him without the possibility of stopping mid-cycle. "The Liberty would just drain you dry," recalls Renard. "Just pull and pull until it couldn't pull any more."

Due to his background in technology, at one-point Renard was asked by his clinic to try a new cycler, one with a multitude of high-tech features. He agreed, but, after three months of frustrations, concluded it wasn't a good fit.

"The other system had great intentions, but wasn't the right fit for me," Renard says. Every time it said, 'slow flow' it'd just beep and beep and beep. Renard provided his feedback to the clinic and swapped the new cycler for the Liberty he'd used from the beginning. "I called the Liberty 'old reliable,'" he says. "It just did what it was supposed to do."

Faith rewarded

At his clinic, Renard was known for being good-natured and a great patient. Throughout his four years he was on PD, he never missed a night of treatment that was within his control.

"When it came to the clinic, I had a favorite saying: 'I'm not here to cause trouble,'" he recalled with a laugh. "I'm here to make your job as easy as possible."

Healthy living and strict adherence to treatments made Renard a strong candidate for a transplant, and his dedication paid off Sept. 13, 2019, when he received a new kidney!

"I've definitely seen a spike in my energy, and a spike in wanting to do more than I did beforehand," Renard said of his life after transplant. "If I want to go to the gym I can just roll over and go. I just feel this need to do something active."

Renard also has a newfound appreciation for his family, friends, and the things that seemed so routine before he got sick.



Looking back, and forward

"When you're healthy you take things for granted ... private time with your wife, going to the park and laughing, time with family," he confided. "Once you go through something like this, you appreciate family, you appreciate life, you appreciate everything you get to do."

Renard credits his faith and his wife of nine years, Leshia, for helping him get through the tough times and getting him where he is today. "She was 100% incredible, and still is to this day," he says. "My attitude was not always great, and my wife would just talk to me and help me, and never had a negative word to say about it."

Along with a new kidney and renewed vigor, Renard also has some new goals – advocating for other CKD patients and spreading the word about PD therapy. His Facebook page, once dedicated to helping him find a kidney, is now a source of encouragement and information for others.

"I don't know what my next step is," he says. "But the kidney journey and the kidney fight are going to be part of it."



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