Reading Time: 6 minutes

Main Post: I’m Walking 13 Miles in London For The Alzheimer’s Society (UK)

Hi everyone!

Seeing as the internet decrees that anyone doing any form of fundraising effort must post as much useless tosh as possible about their trials and tribulations, I have decided to do exactly that. I may end up doing these as videos down the line, all depends on how bothered I can be to boot up the old Mac Studio!

In an effort to keep these updates smaller than a Tom Clancy novel, I’m going to use three simple headings: The good, the bad, and the ugly. Here we go!

The Good…

I suppose the start of the ‘good’ update is that all travel, hostel etc is booked, and I have a plan ready to go in terms of what I’m packing, wearing etc. Being both a technophile and someone who carries half of a normal pharmacy with them on good days, I’ve already been training with medication that I will likely need on the day. The hostel have these storage lockers which will be fine…

I’m staying around the Russell’s Square area, as it’s easy to get to the start position on the London Underground, and it’s also a stone’s throw away from my favourite restaurant in the universe. I don’t even need to look at the menu, soft shell crab, and a Curry Laksa, Green Tea and a glass of water, thank you.

I’ve also decided to stay until Sunday, as I don’t need to be like Barney from How I Met Your Mother on the subway. Especially as London Euston continues to serve a singular purpose of testing our preparedness of navigating a station with luggage, a half eaten burger and an obligatory bottle of water when the platform for the train is shown on the departure board 3 minutes before departure, with train doors closing 90 seconds before departure. At least I reserved seats!

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In terms of actual training, I've been able to do 9.5 miles without any major issue in a day. I've developed a 'mild' training program, with two days on the exercise bike, two days doing medium sized walks, and am planning to do a 10+ mile walk once a week. Alongside this I'm keeping myself more in shape physically, and am meal planning to reduce the use of useless carbs. I'm actually scared that I'm going to forget what takeout food is soon!

Where I live is roughly at the 'northern third' of the Dudley borough, and I can walk to Stourbridge which is roughly the south which takes about 2 hours 30. Then I can simulate a lunch break by getting the bus back into Dudley Town Centre, head north west to a place called Sedley, and then down some country roads to get back to the wonderful area known as Gornal. Even better, the entire route isn't just pavement, using some canal paths and walking track routes along the way. As I'm still not 100% certain of the walking terrain the entire time, this may prove to be useful, as even though they say mostly pavement, some of that in London could mean that pavement potholes are getting their own potholes.

Oh, and I was able to actually find a pair of William Rast jeans for sale in the UK. If I can just lose a couple of pounds, they'll do just fine. And I should be sorted with more insoles and trigger point injections in my back next month, which will help with some pain.

… The bad …

I think the only major thing in this category is the level of pain I'm in on a daily basis, some of which I'll come into in a bit. I've recently been diagnosed with fibromyalgia alongside *(checks watch)* T1 Ketosis Prone Diabeties, 3 different spinal issues, diabetic neuropathy, plantar fasciitis + high arches, amenia and so on… Whilst I can handle the pain *some* days, other times it's a massive challenge, and the joy of NHS waiting lists means that I've been waiting longer than usual for trigger point injections along the full length of my back from my neck to my coccyx.

I'm not fully sure if it's seasonality or something else, but my appetite has fallen off a cliff the past couple of months. Breakfast is normally a case of 'How long will I have to wait to eat if I skip it', and I'm sure my cats have more frequent access to food than me right now! The good thing is that as I massively batch cook at home, at least what I eat is somewhat healthy, aside perhaps from this massive batch of slow cooked gochujang pork I made a couple of days ago. I've not got scurvy, let's put it that way.

I suppose the only other thing is that I'm going to have to slum it in a hostel, meaning I'm

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going to have to remember to pack earplugs at the very least. I’ve been to The Generator in London enough times over the years, and I did pay the extra to be in a room of 4 rather than 12. I am going to also have to remember to pack flip flops, as I don’t want that place to be where I somehow get an infection in my foot that I don’t notice till it’s too late with my neuropathy. It could be worse…

…The last time I stayed at this hostel, I did end up being treated at University College Hospital London just down the road, having been ‘pretty much dead’ for about 3 minutes until I was revived… Nothing major, honest!

… The Ugly …

The main one here is how I’m just completely physically drained, even if I’ve not been overworking myself the day / days before. One of the fun parts of having fibromyalgia, with a bit of amenia thrown in, and potential chronic fatigue syndrome. This could be because I’m awaiting these trigger point injections meaning that my daily dose of ‘pain’ is higher than normal, or also simply because I’m trying to pace myself more, which is ironic.

Ironically one of the things I’ve been weaning myself off the past few months has been caffeine, as I know how it can mess up the natural flow of the body, and would hopefully lead to less insomnia. I’ve not gone cold turkey, but there are days where I almost cannot function unless a good dose of coffee finds it’s way into my system. With the early start time I really need to keep on top of this, more really about getting dressed and ready, because my brain seemingly has a ‘life’ function as soon as I get within 50 yards of public transport.

The other ugly aspect is the flip flopping of my diabetes, being worse than my mood and suicidal tendencies a few years back. One day I can force food down my gullet and still have dangerously low blood sugars, and other days I can be having the complete opposite, regardless of how much insulin I take alongside metformin and semaglutide. One of my doctors, to put it politely has suggested it’s in part because of my digestive system being stop start like a set of temporary traffic lights, so that’s ‘another’ diary I have to keep now!

That also makes me think about marathon runner Paula Radcliffe from 20ish years ago who was ‘caught short’ and didn’t have time to have a proper toilet break. I am literally going to pinpoint everyone on my map of the course. I am NOT doing a Paula, even if I have to go backwards!

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The good news I guess insulin wise is that I’m not in any risk of DKA at the moment, but I’m going to have to add extra insulin, and extra glucose shots / sweets ‘just in case’. They do provide lunch, but a good diabetic knows to never rely on third party food. Having temporarily high blood sugars isn’t a massive issue. It’s having low blood sugars on the day which is more dangerous. Luckily my body can tell this in advance, so if you see me necking a shot of something, it’s glucose. Not vodka. Glucose.

… Thank You!

If you’ve even bothered reading this or my fundraising page, then thank you. I know that not everyone has a ton of money to throw away at random charity activities at the moment, but if you do have a couple of bob spare to add to the donation list, I would really appreciate it.

Just as importantly, thank you to all those who are supporting me motivation wise. It makes a massive difference when I’m trying to find new swear words to try and exhale the pain out of me! Even if I don’t raise as much money as I would hope, I’d be nowhere without your kind messages of support.

Finally, I’m ensuring that my music playlist is as varied as possible before setting off, just in case I’m having a massive anti-social day. I have the Audiobook version of Tom Clancy’s Rainbow Six for emergencies, but if you have any music of any kind you’d like to suggest, drop me a message on the usual channels, and I’ll add it in. My playlist is so varied age, genre and theme wise that it’s almost certainly not going to be the biggest outlier out there, and if it helps me on the day, then all the better!

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Wil Vincent’s JustGiving Page

As Ever, Peace, Rage & Love xx

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