

No more "giving in". Today I was going to kill myself or die trying.

Lungs suck, left hip socket has a dull ache from either tendonitis or a lumbar issue, but who cares? The old me (er, actually, by definition, I am the "old" me) used to worship pain, used to see pain as an indication that I was alive. And I was. But then something happened, about the same time I (voluntarily) saw a doctor for the first time in... you don't want to know. It was confirmed I had breathing issues related to asthma, and at a subsequent appointment, that the pain in my left leg was one of those "getting old" things.

I gave in.

Not intentionally. I thought the point to seeing the doctor was to get better, but no, what actually happened was more on an intellectual level; instead of getting "better" (from using an inhaler for the asthma and Alleve for the leg), I ended up having a reason, a rationalization, for getting slower. I really should have thought about that going in; for me, in retrospect, this makes perfect sense. There really couldn't have been any other outcome (unless I was prescribed something that both eliminated the symptoms and substantially improved my strength, which wasn't the case).

Knowing what was wrong with me created a sense of limitation. There was a reason I was getting slower, an excuse to fall back on, and I believe that's what I did. I got progressively slower not because my ailments got worse, but because I chose to deal with them in an entirely different manner than I've done in the past. I became, for lack of a better way to put it, "normal" in my response to pain. I backed off. I saw it as an indication that I was not capable of doing more, when in fact, that pain has been my fuel. For years. Probably since I was 14 or so, when my Osgood Schlatter disease was a painful companion that followed me everywhere.

I'm not giving in anymore. Dealing with pain is a significant part of what defines us. And of course, there's a relevant Star Trek quote, from James T Kirk-

Damn it Bones, you're a doctor. You know that pain and guilt can't be taken away with the wave of a magic wand. They're the things we carry with us, the things that make us who we are. If we lose them, we lose ourselves. [to Sybok] I don't want my pain taken away! I need my pain!

The reality, my reality, is that I haven't deteriorated physically enough to explain my recent and substantial declines in my power on a bike. But mentally, when I discovered the reason for my suffering, I lost the rationale for embracing it. Beginning this past Tuesday, that's over. I can't describe how good it felt after Tuesday's ride when, late that evening, my left leg started cramping up. It hurt. Which meant I gave it a real workout, because nothing's really hurt after a ride for quite some time. This is the new (old) me. Embrace the pain, allow it to fuel what I intend to accomplish.

"Brave words. I've heard them before, from thousands of species across thousands of worlds, since long before you were created. And now, they are all Borg."

Resistance is not futile. No future but what you make. --Mike--