

# Migraine and the Workplace

---

"DO NOT JUDGE ME BY MY SUCCESSES. JUDGE ME BY THE NUMBER OF TIMES I FELL DOWN AND GOT BACK UP AGAIN." – NELSON MANDELA

Dr. Anikah H. Salim

*April 12, 2021*



# About Me

---

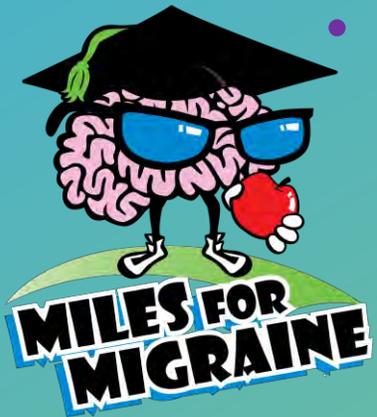
- Full-time work
- Love to travel
- Love to eat
- Extroverted
- Community service
- Support group leader

Beneath my smile is an invisible illness. You wouldn't begin to understand it unless you walked a mile in my shoes.



# My Story

- Chronic conditions since childhood
  - 2008 – Knee Dislocation Surgery
  - 2014 – Procedure for Herniated, Protruding Disk
  - 2015 – DX with Chronic Migraine w/ Aura



# Advocacy Beats Stigma

---

- Share your stories to create effective change.
- Visibility is key to reducing stigma.
- The more people see us, the less they can ignore us.



**“Better health through better partnerships”**

- VADM Jerome M. Adams, MD, MPH, U.S. Surgeon General

# Disability in the Workplace

---

A study by the National Organization on Disability indicated that only 13% of companies in the U.S. have reached the Department of Labor's target of having 7% disability representation in their workplace.



# NOBODY

---

SHOULD HAVE TO DECIDE  
BETWEEN THEIR HEALTH AND  
THEIR CAREER



# Migraine and My Job

---

- Prevention
- Curb triggers
- Understand sickness policies
- Know when to talk
- Support system



# 'TOP 10' most commonly used reasonable adjustments to help people with migraine thrive at work



We surveyed over 400 people with migraine about their experience of managing their migraine at work. They told us that they were most likely to use the following kinds of 'reasonable adjustments' to help them:



Flexible working



Time off for medical appointments



Changes to overhead lighting



Flexible breaks



Technological changes, e.g. an anti-glare screen



Flexible working from home policy



Changes to their desk



Changes to their chair



Access to drinking water



Access to a quiet room



“When asked for a time for a ticket order, he gave the excuse that he was working through a migraine, leading a co-worker to call him a crybaby.... Then, the head chef asked him what was going, which he could not answer properly.... Another co-worker laughed at the situation, and Matt said it was not funny. He explained to the head chef that he did not feel anything in his hands....so he was kicked out of the kitchen.”



MATT SIGEL



Having migraine disease has made her anxious about when the next one may strike and how it might interrupt her day—or days. "The impact has been fear, basically," she says. "You start to get one and [wonder], is the whole day going to be shot? How do I explain to somebody that I'm in the middle of doing this and I should probably stop? I just want to go in the bed, I just want to go in the closet, but you gotta power through—we don't have a choice."



# WHOOPIE GOLDBERG

# Advocacy

---

Being your own advocate does not make you a difficult patient or a difficult person.



**Migraine advocacy is more  
important than ever before.**



Good morning,

This email is inform you that the office policy is to maintain a **'fragrance-minimized' work environment** for staff who suffer adverse health effects from strong scents. This means that:

Fragrant products such as air fresheners, scented candles, potpourri and other similar items are not permitted in the workplace.

Care should be taken by staff to not over-apply fragrant personal products (fragrances, colognes, lotions, powders and other similar products) to a level that becomes easily perceptible to others.

We have colleagues in the office with asthma, easily stimulated allergic reactions, migraines and/or other respiratory disorders caused by exposure to fragrant products.

Staff with such sensitivities are more susceptible to effects of these irritants at levels that are much lower than what might cause problems for those in the general population.

People with fragrance sensitivity often experience symptoms such as wheezing or worsening of asthma symptoms; headaches; migraines; nausea; hives and other skin irritations; and/or limitations in memory and concentration.

While we cannot eliminate all scents (e.g., cleaning supplies) from the office environment, we do need to limit it to the minimum that is reasonably possible.

Thank you for supporting a *'fragrance-minimized'* environment to ensure a safe and healthy workplace for your colleagues.

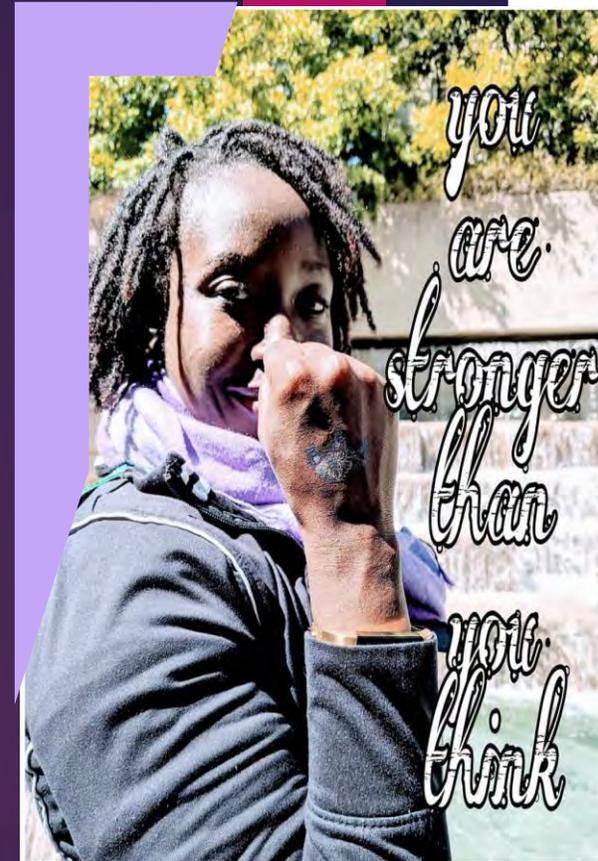


“Just because I could yesterday  
doesn't mean I can today.  
But just because I can't  
today doesn't mean I  
won't be able to tomorrow.”

Georgina E. Banks

HEY WARRIOR,  
keep going.

Be gentle  
with yourself.  
you're doing  
the best  
you can.



# Outshine Your Label

---

YOUR PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES  
DON'T DETERMINE WHERE YOU  
CAN GO; THEY MERELY  
DETERMINE WHERE YOU START.



Nido Qubein

# Remember...

FIND YOUR  
VOICE AND  
INSPIRE  
OTHERS TO  
FIND THEIRS

*Stephen R. Covey*



Each step was legendary.  
Not for where she was  
heading, but because she was  
brave enough to keep walking.

**madalyn beck**



Thank you!



@Migraine.Doesnt.Win

