

Hi to whom this may concern at the CFAC,

the letter below this one has somethings that may be voiced by this letter & helpful I hope. The CFIDS community is truly under attack as if its not enough what they are already physically going through & the emotional anguish they face as a result of their/mine too chronic disease.

I know many in this world is suffering & I appreciate all them who take hands & feet & put them to action for the weak, sick, hungry or imprisoned. Thanks to you all for your help to us who are sometimes too physically weak to reach out & get the appropriate help we need.

Also, I find that much of the time the CFIDS community as one made fun of it saying we do all this research and online stuff, God forgive them, cause they don't realize what they are doing or saying. Sometimes thats the only outlet we have when we are confined to our homes everyday.

For some of us it is complete bedridden & for others (like myself) I can still get out sometimes for short periods but must pace myself well in order not to have a relapse & become physically worse. I cannot tell you, for some of us, this has drowned our dreams for the length of time this illness can take its toll.

This is enough to make someone depressed, but rather than to ever label depression or of that sort being the cause, may it never be, for most everyone of us if not all, this like a hurricane or storm that comes inevitably & sometimes we are mentally not strong enough, though hopefully we are. It defines this truth.....

There are strong in the world that help the weak, but the weak also have an inner strength that they who are physically strong are able to also learn from those who are weak & or chronically ill. Some of the most beautiful & strongest people I have ever met in this journey of CFIDS have been those with Cancer, AIDS, MS & other severe diseases even those near death.

All of them go through a form of depression even those who are healthy & strong have their trials they face. None of us are exempt. But to not only do the injustice of labeling CFIDS as a psychiatric illness would be of an utmost cruel type of diagnosis, but more sadly for those who would do such a thing of such ignorance. Also only shows their lack of true knowlege, understanding & compassion for humanity! Sincerely, Ana Maria Cornell

(Here below is the letter I just recently wrote by the deadline of April 20th, 2010 to the dsm-5 Task Force): Of this one &/or the one above you may select any part of it if it can't all be said, for the CFAC Testimony.....Thanks! 🌹

Hi, My name is Ana Cornell. I have been a long term patient of CFIDS. A very real & disabling physical illness. The challenge for people who sincerely have this illness is the amount of loss you have to endure because of this type of illness.

Most people like myself were not prepared for such a devastating loss through such a disease as this is. I am not sure that anyone would take this lightly or happily. I, like many had dreams in front of me and despite a hard life as many if not most of us have in some shape or form, I never expected to keep pushing & pressing while feel like running in place getting no where.

That in itself is quite depressing! It is most dangerous to even give this kind of treatment or label again as CFIDS patients and their advocates have fought so hard the good fight in trying to bring awareness of the root & truth of this illness. No doubt it brings on several mental challenges even most of them stemming from a life, a heart & a mind that can only take so much, nevermind the physical complications as you already have read about.

But according to what I am reading, if I understand correctly, you want to label this name of yours above & as the reason for CFIDS. May you reconsider & may it not ever be allowed to come to pass with already the devastation this illness has brought on so many. Not just to them, but their families especially those who have children with this physical illness & mothers & fathers who are ill & trying to raise children through this.

A mental diagnoses such as the one you portrait here is utmost dangerous & to say the least so deceiving. The body is the most complex & beautiful of all created things. Most amazing and yet can be most damaging what can happen to a human life. One might respond to breast cancer with 3 or 6 months to live, while another may respond by living 20 years longer.

No one immune sytem, nervous sytem nor all the parts of the body respond the same. However, viruses are very complex just as is a head trauma or physical injury in how they affect a human being. A cold being a virus can make someone irritable or flu like symptoms with fatigue for a few days and then go a way, but AIDS is a virus that can kill quickly, lyme disease is debilitating and yet one may live with the chronic symptoms it gives.

However because our bodies that get sick are connected from head to toe, it can all be affected. Menengitis can cause retardation in some who have the fever high & for a long period of time. This virus/fever causing such symptoms that so differ & yet all of these viruses cause fatigue. Some viruses lay dormant in the body & never spread & replicate to create a problem for some & yet others are disabled by the very same ones.

A head cold can cause a person to be irritable or not beable to concentrate well & also become physically weak & tired. What I am getting at is you cannot underestimate a person & call them hypocondriacs all over again when this kind of illness is one that probably the reader would not beable to endure if you had to bear this. You cannot

imagine the devastation because you have not walked in these shoes.

I have compassion on so many as a result of my own loss & yet so much gain to understand to be so careful to judge who & how. Just because they have not found the underlying cause of why the body may react & breakdown so low to Chronic Fatigue (which to me is mildly put), does not disqualify the reality of such a disease. Most dangerous would it be to define this or label this as a mental disorder.

No doubt for many this has caused people to even commit suicide. I am not one of those people. I still love life despite the fact I have lost so much. Like I said above, I also feel as though I have gained more through this, perhaps not on the outside obviously, but on the inside, I'm not sure I would trade this if I had all the health in the world & not this compassion & understanding that has grown from this disabling illness.

For years the CFS community have sought so hard to get help & advocacy and being a patient myself, I understand the difficulties so many a times of not even being able to get to the people who can help. I am very thankful for people like Suzanne Vernon, Dr. Nancy Klimas, Kim McCleary of the CFIDS association who help us to find the strong ones along with they themselves to defend the weak.

I agree this is a difficult illness to define perfectly in its entirety, however being a survivor of this for over 25 years, I know that there are many diseases yet undefined & that is a part of life where we are all limited creatures who can only depend on a unlimited God. Its that grace & truth which is my faith & keeps me strong in Christ. Treat the ill with love & respect & listen to them, because as I describe this illness this way:

"Can you see a stomach ache when a little child tells you "Mommy, I have a stomach ache"??? Absolutely not, but that does not make it unreal. There has been enough biomarkers to define truth in CFIDS. There is no need to do such an evil in labeling them any worse than what they physically suffer. Anyone going through such loss & disease is subject and vulnerable to mental & emotional pain & suffering.

I know there will come a day, that God will wrap this up & I know that we serve a godless society for the most part. It still doesn't change that it will happen! Revelations 21:4-7. May you who reads this & your department reconsider what in truth only God knows the cell to its core. In the meantime, don't be little this illness to these definitions as ever being their root cause.

For then you ought to consider that maybe as there is always a new definition of an illness, there ought to be one for they who do such things as label something psychosomatic when if perhaps we had the root reason we can then treat & diagnose effectively.

But again, it is a part of life that we don't have medicine for all nor the root cause/name for all, but these are human beings we are dealing with which are most precious than all Gods creation and to mess with that in ones own definition is quite risky putting many

others at risk for what can label a lie for centuries to come.

This would not be the first! Once more, may you reconsider what you are thinking of classifying CFIDS under. These are or were people just like you (professionals who woke up sick & never recovered) that does not make them crazy nor these definitions you would label on them.

However, not myself by the grace & keeping of God to my soul & my life, but I have been through it in the past, to be labeled what I am not & in my weakness it in turn brought me low even to depression. Seeing as this illness was so misdiagnosed & misunderstood.

Then realizing through a divine intervention that reality is that no one doctor knows it all & we live in a fallen world with real illnesses that sometimes kill instantly or you can live sick &/or disabled as a result of them. Forgiving each other from the patient to the doctor is huge in this.

Giving space to knowing that we are not God and cannot perfectly and fully understand all. I will say once more before I log off here & leave this note. It is not wise that you add these kind of labels to the CFIDS community who have gone through enough to be heard & understood.

We are thankful (I speak for myself & those who have appreciated the help of our advocates) for people who have stood strong & in the gap for us. We may find the answers or we may not, but a truly ill person with CFIDS have dreams & goals just like those who live normal everyday lives except for that we can't live them out.

So this is what most of us do, we do what we can do & what we can't we just can't!!! Please try to understand we don't need more mental accusations that only bring on to the vulnerable more depression as this illness can challenge us to become. Thanks again to those who have helped us to stay strong in the midst of all!!! In Gods love, grace & peace to you all, Ana Maria Cornell (John 15:12)