



**Krippa Family Psychological & Wellness Services Newsletter:  
Tuesday Topic: Katelyn Jakobsen, LCMHCA & Stephanie Brekstad,  
Graduate Intern**

**“I don’t know who I am outside of being sick”**

Why me? Why did I have to get this disease? Why do I have to wake up tired and in pain? What did I do to deserve this? These are the questions I am often asked by my clients suffering from illnesses such as lupus, Lyme disease, dermatitis, diabetes and more. Chronic illness can very often feel like an unfair punishment. Through the proper support, you can learn to accept your illness.

Medical appointments, check-ups, procedures, medications, follow ups, and flare ups- this is the reality of a chronic illness sufferer. Our conditions can often feel all consuming. Where does our individual identity begin outside of our chronic condition?

**Six in ten adults** in the US have a chronic disease and **four in ten adults** have two or more.



HEART DISEASE



CANCER



CHRONIC LUNG DISEASE



STROKE



ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE



DIABETES



CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE



Chronic diseases are defined broadly as conditions that last 1 year or more and require ongoing medical attention or limit activities of daily living or both. Chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes are the leading causes of death and disability in the United States. They are also leading drivers of the nation's \$3.5 trillion in annual health care costs.

(CDC, 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdis...>)

Up to 23.5 million Americans suffer from autoimmune and chronic illness conditions such as Lupus, Rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, vitiligo, and dermatitis. Although it can feel very isolating and stigmatizing, you are not alone.



## **Introducing Katelyn Jakobsen, LCMHCA, Group Facilitator of Chronic Illness & Autoimmune Therapy Group**

As an individual with Neurological Lyme disease, period limb movement disorder, chronic fatigue, and fibromyalgia I understand first hand the hardships in managing personal life, and work, while managing your chronic condition. With my combined first person understanding on the effects of chronic illness, integrated with my education, and specialization in chronic illness and medical trauma I know what it takes to find balance and instill hope.

My chronic condition can sometimes get in the way of my work, social life, and self care. I want to do more, to participate more in life, but I feel limited by my condition. Together we can connect over core challenges, identify our limitations, and begin to find balance in our work, social life, and self-care calendars.

# Find Out More

If you or someone you know suffers from a chronic illness, visit our website to learn more about our group and to sign up!

[Website](#)



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