

**Sharing, Understanding, and Exchanging Perspectives:  
An Autoethnographic Journey Through Chronic Illness, Diagnosis, and the Dialogues of  
Patient / Doctor Relationships**

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This paper, *Sharing, Understanding, and Exchanging Perspectives: An Autoethnographic Journey Through Chronic Illness, Diagnosis, and the Dialogues of Patient / Doctor Relationships*, explores the experiences of patients suffering from Nutcracker Syndrome (NCS), a rare vascular compression syndrome, through the lens of autoethnography. NCS, along with other vascular compression syndromes, is frequently misdiagnosed or dismissed by healthcare professionals, resulting in prolonged suffering, emotional distress, and delayed treatment. Through a combination of personal narrative and analytical reflection, I examine my decade-long journey to diagnosis, including the challenges of advocating for my own health in the face of medical gaslighting and misdiagnosis. I also integrate findings from a survey of individuals diagnosed with NCS, highlighting common themes of frustration, isolation, and the emotional toll of not being believed by healthcare providers. The paper delves into the broader implications of how social structures, medical norms, and communication patterns contribute to patient experiences of dismissal and delayed care. Autoethnography serves as a powerful tool in connecting personal health struggles with larger cultural and societal issues, emphasizing the importance of patient advocacy, timely diagnosis, and compassionate care. This study not only adds to the existing body of research on rare medical conditions but also contributes to the discourse on improving patient-provider relationships, particularly for those navigating complex, often misunderstood diseases like NCS. Ultimately, the paper calls for greater awareness, improved diagnostic processes, and more empathetic healthcare practices to alleviate the suffering of those affected by underdiagnosed and overlooked conditions.