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**Adult Honoree**  
**Walk to Cure Arthritis Denver**

From the joyous arrival of my daughter, shadowed by my enveloping pain, to the desolate fears of being unable to fulfill my roles as a father and a husband, my journey with axial spondyloarthritis began in confusion and isolation. What was supposed to be a time of celebration turned into a silent battle with an invisible enemy, leaving me with more questions than answers.

Years of active living, peppered with injuries and surgeries, had led me to believe my escalating pains were just remnants of a life fully lived. But as my physical struggles deepened, impacting my mood, relationships, and self-esteem, I was forced to confront the reality that something systemic was amiss. It took a crushing moment of clarity, shared by my wife, to shift my perspective and embark on a search for answers that eventually led me to a rheumatology clinic and a diagnosis that would change everything.

My battle with axial spondyloarthritis has been a journey of self-discovery, resilience, and advocacy. From the lows of feeling misunderstood and alone to the highs of finding a supportive community in Denver's LiveYes! Connect Support Group, I've learned the immeasurable value of connection, perseverance, and self-advocacy. My diagnosis, while a lifelong battle, opened the door to a community of individuals who understood the silent struggles and the profound impact of chronic conditions on every aspect of life.

Climbing Mt. Elbert became a testament to my journey – a challenge to prove to myself and others that our limitations do not define us. Every step was a battle against my body, a mental struggle against the voice telling me to give up. But reaching the summit with my wife by my side was a moment of triumphant clarity: we are capable of incredible feats, even in the face of adversity.

The Arthritis Foundation's mission resonates deeply with me, advocating for connections, empowerment, and relentless pursuit of a cure. As this year's featured honoree for the "Walk to Cure Arthritis," I stand in solidarity with every individual battling arthritis, striving for a world of understanding, support, and, ultimately, a life without limits. Our stories of struggle and triumph are a beacon of hope, reminding us that together, we can face any challenge and emerge stronger.

Join me, your peers, and the Arthritis Foundation in the fight against arthritis. Together, we can conquer the unseen, advocate for those yet undiagnosed, and support each other in our journey toward healing and understanding. The path may be fraught with obstacles, but it's a journey we don't have to undertake alone. With every step, every story shared, and every connection made, we pave the way for a brighter, more inclusive future for all.

