My name is Francisca Alejandra Sepúlveda Meza, I am 24 years old, I live in Peñaflor, Chile. I am currently a student of Public Administration. I consider myself a kind, humble and responsible person. When epilepsy came into my life I was only 13 years old. This was something surprising, I felt very sad, it cost me a lot but I have accepted it over the years. It caused me learning problems and I was bullied by my peers at school and university. Over time I have learned to take care of myself and accept myself. I feel like I can get ahead too. I would like to tell young people that I don't know how to let ourselves be guided by those who minimize us, we too can go far.

At first the symptoms were confused with migraines because they were intense, because people still don't know much about the condition of epilepsy and specialists are few where I live.

When she was 14, an electroencephalogram revealed that she suffered from left temporal lobe epilepsy, characterized by seizures.

absence.

Adolescence was a challenging period for me. Changing schools, basics for higher education, and weight gain due to medications negatively affected my self-esteem. At 16 years old, bullying and the desire for "normality" led me to stop my treatment and consume alcohol, which aggravated my condition. I wanted to fit in with my classmates and I ended up hurting myself

College brought new challenges. Despite some comments like: “a woman with epilepsy will get nowhere.”

At 20 years old, and after changing

neurologist, they adjusted my treatment again and diagnosed me with epilepsy that was difficult to manage.

This made me decide to change careers in the humanistic area, where I found a more understanding environment.

At 23 years old I experienced a setback in my condition, but the understanding and support of my teachers allowed me to continue with my studies.

A while ago I found a community of support in the Epilepsia y Juventud foundation, which reinforced my acceptance of

Epilepsy as part of my life, not as a limitation to my aspirations, and it showed me that with my experience I can inspire other people to also recognize and believe in their abilities.

I feel comfortable and happy within the foundation and I hope that it grows more and more and we can support more people with epilepsy and their families. I identify with their stories and it gives me great satisfaction to help improve the quality of life of people like me and provide the support that I did not receive before but that we all need, giving us the necessary tools to empower ourselves with our condition and advance with greater strength. . The unconditional support of my family, partner and the Epilepsy and Youth Foundation helped me reduce the frequency of my seizures. I believe that support networks beyond medical treatment are very important and can make a difference in our quality of life as people with epilepsy.

 At 24 years old, I feel more confident in my ability to manage my condition and continue to advance in my studies and personal life.