My name is Tiffany Kerchner, I'm 34 years old and was born with Moebius syndrome affecting the right side of my face. I grew up feeling so shameful and negative about my facial difference. I avoided mirrors, I avoided discussions about it, I changed the subject, and I didn't want to acknowledge it. That's no longer the case. Self-love and happiness begin from within. Once I learned to love and accept myself, I realized I'm not beautiful despite my facial difference, I'm just beautiful. I found fulfilling work as a nurse, actually being inspired by a nurse I had during one of my many surgical procedures. After being taken care of my entire childhood, it's empowering to care for others as an adult. I'm proud of what I do.

My advice to others with Moebius syndrome or any facial difference is to love and embrace your differences. You are the only one in the world with your face, and just like a rare gemstone, you shine bright, and the people who matter most will see your light and beauty. Sometimes, making friends with others with facial differences can make a huge difference. I can say my life was saved by meeting others like me. It's good to know you're not alone when living with a condition that makes you feel isolated. Just know you're not alone; you belong to our community. Also, don't let the petty actions of others even affect you. I learned throughout the years that what people say about me is none of my business. Just brush it off your shoulders and keep your head up. Don't believe what they say. Once you really love and know yourself, you won't even be bothered by the words and actions of others. Find your own peace and your own happiness. The world needs all the love and light it can get.

Tiffany Kerchner
Advocate