

The defining moment in my diagnosis and treatment were the words “you have cancer.” It’s like someone handed me glasses and everything looked different. The little moments are much bigger, and the bigger moments are huge. I imagine no matter the type or stage of cancer, you now think of everything in terms of “I hope to....”

Not that my prognosis was grave, because it wasn't. But cancer has changed everything. I now live my life knowing that I have NO control over what happens next.

Humor is one of the biggest things that gets me through so much. It was a lesson I learned from my mother: laugh every chance you get. Seeing the humor in our dinner conversations about boobs (with my 7 year old boy, and 9 and 11 year old girls) instead of feeling the weight of what each of us might be feeling or thinking.

Looking back on this journey, I have found that the most unexpected impact on my life is that it has really impacted all of my life. “Cancer” lingers in the background of everything now. Not that it runs my life, or makes me live in fear. It is just another part of me that tags along, making moments matter a bit more, making the difficult things in life not so difficult anymore.

Cancer has become my constant reminder that every breath is a gift, every second matters, every hug could be a last one, and in every situation there is something to be gained.

~Johanna Moran
Edinboro, PA