



Walking In My Shoe A Breast Cancer Survivor's Story

It is something that I have always dreaded and for good reason; my aunt died from breast cancer when I was 17 years old. I think she was in her 30's when she passed away. I did not fully comprehend what it meant to have such a horrible disease, but as I got older I realize my worst fears may come true.

December 2012 I went for a routine mammogram – thereafter, I receive a notice in the mail to return for another. I did but with very little anticipation as I did not want to give voice to my fear. On my return for the second visit I was told a biopsy was required, so I followed the process of getting this done. Everyone reassured me it was nothing to worry about as it was something that was done as a precautionary measure.

One morning on my way to work while riding the New York Subway, my phone rang and the Doctor was on the other end (sigh) ;-) she asked if it was a good time to talk and being the positive person I am, I said sure. She proceeded to say those words I dreaded to hear, after she delivered the news she bid me good luck. Luck!! Luck?? I need GOD. I was caught between panic street and lost avenue.

I made it to work, logged on to my computer and started researching: bad idea as it made things worse. I reached out to my dear friend Opal who gave me some comfort, then my coworker Lynette came into my office and cried with me, It took me a month before it sank in. I had so much support and realized how loved I was.

I did not know how to tell my mother and my children, but I knew it had to be done. I put up a front, yes a brave one as I did not want them to worry. They handled it rather well, but why shouldn't they? I delivered it nicely... LOL

My youngest child Kayla was a great inspiration, she was so positive and comforting; God bless her little 14 year old heart. My other 2 older children (Men) age 23 and 27 tried their best to be strong and they offered support the best way they knew how.

Anyway I went for a few consultations and chose Sloan Kettering as my treatment facility, where I underwent surgery, chemo, radiation and currently taking Tamoxifen (pills) which I will need to take for 5 years.

God has brought me through smelling like a bed of roses, I would like to say thank you again to these wonderful people for being there for me: Hugh Nash, Opal Hill, Janet Barnaby-Kerr, Colleen Ellis, Sandra Gurdon-Matthews, Kerry Ann Leung, Dr. Carlene Broderick, Lynette Donawa, Terri Thrash and Crystal Owusu just to name a few. I also cannot forget Sandra Matthews Bank of America Team for their encouragement.

With ongoing donations to assist in finding a cure I know this day is just around the corner.

~~ Evette Fairweather

My Mother's Cancer And Me

It was a cold fall night during late December; my mother was arriving late from work. My grandmother was heating up our dinner on the stove; it was mom's favorite stew peas and rice. When my mom arrived home fairly late she said she wasn't hungry and she took a seat on the couch by the window. She sat there very distant and quiet. I sensed something was wrong so I asked "MUMMY what HAPPENED?" she replied in a deceiving tone saying "Nothing". Then my grandmother came out the kitchen and sat on the couch and said "EVE what's wrong?" My mom tried to put up a brave front but we could see otherwise. As she burst into tears, I was so confused and worried I didn't know how to comfort her because of the fact that I've never seen her cry before. While grandma was comforting my MOM, she finally gained the courage to deliver the unpleasant news "Guys I have Cancer".

I was devastated all I thought was death. I thought about how I wouldn't be able to survive without my mother there by my side every step of the way. I felt as if my mother was being taken away from me. Then I felt as if I was being selfish because of the fact that I wasn't thinking about how my mom felt; then I started feeling guilty. Even though all these different emotions were flooding my mind I still remained calm because I knew everything was going on for reason and I also knew God had everything under control.

My mom had been adamant to relocate to Georgia and I think it was God's way of telling her it was not time. We had been planning on moving down for good starting fresh and new in our lovely home as a family in Georgia, but of course all those pleasant plans were canceled due to the fact now my mother has to do a number of appointments, treatments, drugs, and surgery.

As I watched her progress through each step of the way, I have to say she handled it all very well. There were times I could read my mother's face like she was not present but then that look of weakness was overpowered by a strong look of courage and faith. When I look back at the times my mother did have cancer I now perceive those memories as a blessing because at this very moment my mother is such a strong, hardworking, astounding beautiful woman and I thank God every day that I still have her and that He gave her the strength to defeat such a calamitous disease.

~~ Kayla Hatchette