



Bright Light Foundation

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2014 BLF Recipient



On my 40th birthday (2003) I was diagnosed with a rare cancer known as, Ampullary Adeno Carcinoma (a form of pancreatic cancer). The prognosis for this cancer was a procedure known as the Whipple Procedure; which is basically a rerouting and semi-removal of various intestines and organs. The Whipple Procedure was a success and all the cancer was removed! However, post-surgery I suffered from very severe nausea and could not eat, which led to me spending the next few months in and out of the hospital. Once the nausea was under control, I started chemotherapy and radiation for preventative measures.

In June 2010 I was suffering from pain in my joints, swelling and just overall not feeling well. After multiple tests and I was diagnosed with Fibromyalgia. I went through physical therapy and took medicine, but it never seemed to help. In December 2010 I was admitted into the hospital and found that I suffered from Chronic Myolegenous Leukemia. I started taking chemotherapy for this and was told that I would be on a form of chemotherapy for the remainder of my life. It took three different medications before one was found that did not cause serious side effects such as pancreatitis, excessive swelling of my entire body and severe pain.

In February 2013 I started suffering from severe stomach pain and was admitted into the hospital multiple times. After various test the doctors could not find anything wrong and had said, "you're ok, there is nothing wrong." However, we didn't accept that answer and convinced them to perform an EDG which at that point the doctors discovered I had a tumor in my stomach (which did not show on any CT scan or MRI). In March I underwent stomach surgery to remove the tumor and the biggest portion of my stomach. Fortunately, the surgery was a success and I did not have to undergo any chemotherapy or radiation for this cancer. But, once again I was dealing with severe nausea and stomach pain post surgery.

In November 2013 I was still suffering from stomach pain and a high count of bilirubin; which is indicative of a liver disorder. I was admitted into the hospital on December 1st, 2013 with severe stomach pain and severe edema and was discharged on December 23rd with no answer. On Christmas day, December 25th I suffered from a seizure and was immediately readmitted into the hospital. The doctors determined that my biliary ducts were not allowing the bile to pass through like it was supposed to. They inserted tubes into each of the ducts and started draining the bile through these tubes. I remained in a hospital setting until May 29th 2014. I still do not have a diagnosis as to what the cause is for the illness I am going through.



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During my hospital stay I lost over 100 pounds. I still suffer with edema, stomach pain, and nausea and have to go every week to have a paracentesis (withdrawal of fluid) of my abdomen.

Even through suffering and multiple medical issues, I want to give thanks to God. He has never left me and is always by my side. It has been only through faith in God that I am able to be here tonight to be able to share with you the story that has been my life for the past 10+ years.