30 Days of Gratitude Challenge Day 1 — Health

I claim my health in my faith, in my heart, in my life, in every aspect of my life I am healthy.

November 1, 2018 By Lisa Vento Nielsen

I blogged every day of October last year and this year although I felt I did not do much I did get featured in Elle (thanks Sophie Mayanne and Behind the Scars) and did cut the ribbon at the Making Strides Walk for my city and you know just kept trucking through what was a time of disquiet in my soul and heart…

Now here we are in November — Pinktober is over but hopefully some of the lessons remain like how metastatic breast cancer kills 114 people per day but only gets 7% of the money raised for all things "pink" oh and also that breast cancer is not pink or sexy or fun — it, like all cancers and diseases, is a thief, a curse and a constant thorn in the side of all who have ever been told, "you have cancer."

But on to gratitude — this is the month of my cancerversary — I was diagnosed in November 2016… it feels like it was 2006 though to me — it feels like sooo much has happened in these (almost) 2 years.

I will NEVER thank cancer for anything but I will begin my journey of gratitude today this November 1 on a very important thing — HEALTH.

I am grateful for my health. Now, what did I just say? Health? Me? Someone who probably could not get life insurance if I tried? I'm happy for health?

Well, let me tell you right now my big secret of how I keep smiling every day — I CLAIM my health in my faith, in my heart, in my life, in every aspect of my life I am healthy, I am cured and I believe that until the day that God forbid I am told otherwise.

Despite stage 3 breast cancer and all of its treatments and side effects including a radical right mastectomy, lymph node extraction, 8 rounds of chemo (during which I worked full time and was a mom — kind of — I lost the job but kept the kids so yeah!) and 33 rounds of radiation. From going bald and feeling so ashamed and not wanting anyone to know I was sick to having a blog (or 3) with more than 2,000 to 3,000 readers per week and serialization in Cancer Health and other sites and news outlets oh and being in Elle with my naked chest out for the world to see — me who wouldn't wear a bathing suit once I became a mom is now just like hello would you like to see the

space where my right tit used to be — sure!!

And of course I also have continued therapies for hormone-positive cancer — I went into medically induced menopause in February 2017 at 40 years old — my mom kept her cycle until like 58 so that is 18 years earlier than I should have stopped my cycles and damn does my body know it — so daily anastrazole pills, every-3-month lupron shot and now in a few days a prophylactic removal of ovaries, fallopian tubes (hopefully laproscopic) and a d&c to test the lining of my uterus and other parts, just to be safe.

My 9-year-old asked me this morning, “Are you doing this procedure so the cancer does not come back?” I have some freaky smart children but I also balance the fact that they need to have some black and white in their life and not just shades of gray so I believe in my heart and soul that I am healthy. I do a lot — for the kids the house my husband me and my family and the 2 businesses I am running with some clients and everything and just trying to also spend time on me my friends and my creative pursuits.

I claim it, I believe it and I am grateful for it — so damn grateful because it could always be worse. So as I sit here smiling and laughing one thing I’m not doing is complaining — I don’t ask “why me?” I ask “why not me” — cancer does not discriminate and it does not care about risk factors and for the 1/3 of us breast cancer patients that become metastatic and for the many diagnosed stage 4 de novo I hope everyone tries to do more in any way they can… me, I’m sharing my story and hoping for awareness campaigns to become cure campaigns instead.

Who’s with me? What do we do next?

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http://beta.docker.cancerhealth.com/blog/30-days-gratitude-challenge-day-1