Fearing the Scan, Feeling the Feels, Living the Life...

April 6, 2018 By Lisa Vento Nielsen

No matter how much I am happy and smiling and so damn happy to be alive, I do still get down and feel "off." Today is one of those days. I am proud to say these days are few and far between but that is not by "nature" — that is because I actively work hard on it every damn day.

Most days, when I get caught up in all of the things going wrong (and trust, there are a LOT), I hit myself mentally with the memory of how I felt when I was first diagnosed with cancer and going through treatment and how much I wished and prayed for my "old problems" back and force myself to recognize how damn lucky I am that treatment is over and pray that it stays that way…

I try to imagine how it would feel God forbid to be told the worst news — if God forbid the cancer came back or spread — both things I try NOT to remember and worry about but when I get all caught up in petty b.s. I find it helps me to remind myself of what really is a "worst-case scenario" and what is just that petty b.s.

That being said, I am only human and I do get upset at times or worried or dare I say it "down." I can not really ever even claim to be "depressed" because I am naturally buoyant by nature and really have never in my life felt something that could clinically be called depression because I am fucking perky and trust me, most people can only handle me after a few cups of coffee.

Today, I am feeling upset about stuff. There is a family issue with one of my siblings, my dad's heart health, my upcoming clinical trial visit at Sloan … and ding, ding, ding — I know that all of a sudden feeling so upset about everything does have a lot to do with a weird kind of "scanziety."

You see, with my clinical trial, I go every 3 months to get blood work, physical exam (as in my remaining boob and my chest get manhandled big time by the doctor or nurse) and to collect my next 3 months of pills and drug diaries. For some reason, because I have plans for the week (a surprise vacation for me and the fam), I am hard core dreading this follow up despite never even acknowledging them emotionally before. For example, I have been through these clinical trial appointments already 5 times — this is my 6th go round and I never before batted an eye about them. But this one, this one is freaking me out.

As far as I know, there have been no changes — no lumps or bumps aside from what has always been on my scar. I have not had any issues (thank God) with the trial pills — I am done with cycle

8 and aside from my blood showing low WBC, I have been “ok” — I mean I walk 6+ miles per day, I run around after and with my kids and just balance a lot of stuff oh and I survived Spring Break with the kids home and with no hard plans because of, you know, budget issues.

So why am I dreading Monday’s appointment? Because in this reptilian piece of my brain is the fear, that little voice that says, “Sure all of your other appointments have been great and you never worried but now this one might NOT be and then you have plans to go away…”

I hate that stupid voice. I know that stupid voice — it is mine. I am telling me to shut up now immediately. That does not mean I will not indulge in a little crying — which is strange that I even feel the “interest” to cry as I do not cry — I cried once after diagnosis and once during chemo. I am just not a crier — there is nothing wrong with crying but I do not often feel the need to do it.

I mean, put Beaches on and I will weep hysterically like a baby child. Or, you know, put on Coco and I will be a puddle on the floor. I mean, I have a heart. I just am not the type of person who feels they need to cry unless something is shamelessly playing with my emotions like killing Barbara Hershey or showing a young child how his family dies and needs to be remembered and shit.

So this is what I do in the time between — work out my feelings on this blog and try to force myself to not panic. Should be fun! I will update of course after Monday but not too much as I plan to still be on vacation NO MATTER WHAT!

XOXOX

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