Month 90 – A Date With the R.O.

May 11, 2018 By Dan Zeller

The week after my visit with the urologist last month, I had to relocate my office at work temporarily while the facilities team upgrades the HVAC system in our permanent offices. As I was setting up my new desk, I glanced up and saw the image above pinned to the bulletin board, apparently left by the previous occupant.

Coincidence? Yep. But the timing couldn't have been better.

I do believe that a positive outlook is helpful in situations like this, but with a healthy dose of reality thrown in for good measure. We can all "do our worst" in combating this disease, but the reality is that the cancer is in the driver's seat. Yes, we can be proactive in doing our research and selecting our path, but we're always reacting to the latest test result or the efficacy of the last treatment option.

Me doing my "worst" in the last three weeks has been slogging my way through the Veterans Affairs (VA) administrative logjams to get my appointment scheduled with the radiation oncologist. I finally got my appointment set up yesterday.

In a nutshell, the urologist forgot to hit the "submit" button for the referral. It took three weeks of emails and phone calls to figure that out, but we made it. The urologist was truly apologetic in his email to me. I get it. We've all made similar blunders. No harm, no foul.

My appointment is next Thursday, 17 May 2018, but there was a surprising twist in it.

All of my appointments with the urologists have been at the VA Medical Center in La Jolla (San Diego), and I was fully expecting my appointment with the radiation oncologist to be there as well. After all, it is the preeminent VA medical facility on the West Coast. Silly me.

The appointment is at Naval Medical Center San Diego. The twist? I work at Naval Medical Center San Diego—seventy-five steps (I counted) from the radiation oncology department. I pass the department twice a day on my way to or from my car, and I always thought to myself as I passed, "Someday I may be in a place like this." Little did I know that I would be in that specific place!

Of course, the first thing we need to do is answer a boatload of questions before making the decision to get zapped. That's the purpose of this initial consult, so I'll be working on that list this weekend and next week.

Stay tuned.

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