

# FAITHFUL *like mom*

Mother's Day Campaign 2020

Twenty-three years ago, when my daughter Lauren was only 14 months old, **I found a lump** in my breast. I really didn't think anything was wrong but called my doctor anyway. He told me that he wanted me to come in have a mammogram which I did the next morning. Later that same afternoon, I received a phone call from my doctor that would change my life forever - ***but in a positive way.***

Seven days later, I was in the hospital undergoing an **8-hour surgery** to remove my breast and then another doctor was there for the tram flap reconstructive surgery.

The cancer surgeon removed 16 lymph nodes and found 4 of the nodes to be **positive.**

Two weeks after the surgery, I began a 6-month chemotherapy treatment of what was called AAdriamycin "red devil" - following that with 7 1/2 weeks of radiation.

I had been diagnosed with a **Stage 4 Malignancy.**

Now, I tell you all this to also say in the past 23 years, the **advancement in cancer research and treatments has** been amazing! This is in part due to the work of **Susan G. Komen®** and their local affiliates and events like the Race for the Cure® and the new More Than Pink Walk®.

The more than 20 years of work Susan G. Komen® has done here in our area is about community - **people who are committed to making a difference.** People who are dedicated to fighting cancer head on by doing all that they can to eradicate this disease; advocacy, local community grants for screenings and diagnostic testing, providing breast health education, and providing money toward breast cancer research.

Credited as a leading catalyst in the fight against breast cancer, Komen runs one of the most innovative, responsive grant programs in breast cancer today.

Today, the work to upholding the promise made between two sisters all those years ago. A promise that turned into an organization that gives hope to all women, **now and in the future.**

It takes all of us committed in this fight against breast cancer to succeed. I feel, that as a Breast Cancer Survivor, it is my responsibility and my commitment to my friends who lost the battle, **to help find the cures for all women who are battling this terrible disease.**

I want to be able to tell my grandchildren that **I made a difference in someone's life** and I was a part of the generation that found the cures. I want my grandchildren and your children to be able to ask us, **"What was cancer?"**

You know, we all have adversities in our lifetime but the outcome of those adversities will depend greatly on our **attitude** and how we deal the situations. No matter what adversities we face, if we keep a positive attitude grounded in our personal faith, we can get through anything.

Through my bout with cancer - I stayed focused on my faith and I had the unconditional support of my loving husband and daughter, family, church and friends.

I learned first-hand the **Power of Prayer**, the **Power of Faith** and the **Promise of Hope.**

I was told by my oncologist that the major success of survival (apart from prayer and the treatments) **is our attitude!** People who are optimistic and happy have a far greater survival rate and can overcome adversity. Characteristics of an optimist are so important because they allow us to live in a stressful, negative world without being overcome by adversities or losing hope.

In 1994, I was given a wonderful book by a dear friend, Nell Mohny, and it's called *"Don't Put A Period Where God Put A Comma"*. In the book she wrote, *"To Lynda, who lives life like an exclamation Point to God!"* Because of my Faith and keeping my positive attitude, I was able to fight this battle head on and through all this, I was blessed with an **abundance of Faith, Strength, Grace, Hope, and Love.**

Through two sisters, Susan Goodman Komen and Nancy Brinker, look at the difference that has been made in millions of lives. So I ask you, **"can one person – can you – really make a difference?"** and the answer is **yes, we can!**

**Lynda Hood**, 23-year Stage 4 Metastatic Breast Cancer Survivor