

On January 10th, 2013 I was diagnosed with a grade 3 Glioma called an Anaplastic Astrocytoma brain tumor. There are 4 grades of brain cancer with grade 4 being the worst and 1 the best. So I am sitting right in the middle of being cured and being given only a few months to live.

I had spent my childhood constantly in the sun getting horribly burned every summer, and then laying in the tanning beds during the winter months. I, of course, knew this wasn't good for me so I have spent most of my adult life fully expecting that one day the doctors would tell me that I have skin cancer. What I was not expecting was the call telling me that I have brain cancer. That was the furthest thing from my mind when I went in to get my MRI scan and then later a biopsy. The doctors tell me that the cancer probably came from a rouge chromosome gone bad but I just blame my cell phone.

I have never been scared that I was going to die from this cancer. However, I was worried about what it would do to my quality of life and the way I live day to day. I have always been a very active, outgoing person who doesn't like to sit still and certainly doesn't like to be strapped to a hospital bed. I knew that if I was going to fight this battle I had to give my enemy a name, and I settled on Walter. The name just sounds like a cranky old man that is going to stand in your way.

The second thing that concerned me, naturally, was finances and how am I going to pay for all of this. This cancer struck me at a young age so I didn't have quite as much saved up as I might have had it hit later in my life. I felt I had better control over my first concern than the second so I just decided I would put my finances in God's hands and trust that he would provide in my time of need.

I saw that there were two different parts to keeping up my life style. One would be my diet and the other would be my exercise routine. As far as my diet goes I cut out sugar, processed foods, most red meats and alcohol (the hardest for me). I also began juicing every morning to boost my vitamins and taking natural herbal supplements to help my body to fight off the negative effects of the treatments.

My exercise routine came a little more difficult and slowly as the treatments were making my body tired and weak. It was frustrating not being able to work out the way I was able to before. When your body is tired and weak, you have to be even more mentally strong to break through those physical barriers and to build your body back and not give up in the beginning. I was really interested in getting back into shape to get back on the golf course (yes golfers need to be in shape) and to get back on the boat and wakeboard. I can happily say that I can do both of these now as well as I ever could.

As I believed starting out, the finances have (up to this point) taken care of themselves. My business has carried over, but what has really been a blessing is all the support I have received through friends, family, and perfect strangers through donations and fundraisers. It really is a blessing to see how many people out there truly love you and are willing to do whatever they can for you.

You can eat healthy and exercise as much as you want but what it comes down to is that you

have to set your mind that you will keep moving. The cancer will not decide how you live your life. I got to a point one night, during my evening run, that I felt God telling me that there was no amount of treatment or medication that could slow me down or keep me from living a normal life style. I knew that I needed to take on as much as possible and attack Walter head on with everything I have, leaving behind no regrets.

I just want to be an inspiration for others going through a similar battle. I want to let them know that they don't have to be scared, that this isn't the end, and you can keep up your quality of life if you really want it. When you are fighting for your life, winning is the only option you have!