



Barbara's Stones of Strength

Barbara was diagnosed with Brain Cancer
Stage 4 Glioblastoma multiforme (GBM) on July 9, 2012
Barbara became an angel in heaven February 2, 2014

Barbara's medical team: A team of doctors whose medical brilliance was matched by the compassion they displayed resided in Saint Petersburg, Florida and Nashville, Tennessee.

Barbara's primary care: Barbara's primary care was administered by a brilliant team of doctors located at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee. This team was composed of: William F. Meacham Professor and Chairman Department of Neurological Surgery; Neurosurgeon Reid C. Thompson M.D., Chair Division of Neuro-oncology including the Vanderbilt Ingram Cancer Center and the Vanderbilt Brain Tumor Center; Neuro-oncologist Paul L. Moots M.D., Professor of Neurology and Neurology Chair; Neuro-ophthalmologist Patrick J. M. Lavin, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., M.R.C.P.I..

Our goal during Barbara's nineteen-month battle against Brain Cancer was that she would become a long-term survivor of GBM. Despite our efforts and those of Barbara's medical team, she lost her life to GBM just as Senator Ted Kennedy did in 2009.

Evolution of Barbara's Stones of Strength: Barbara's life was more precious to me than my own. The idea for Barbara's Stones of Strength originated when it became apparent that there would be no benefit from further treatment.

Barbara's strength: One quality of stones is their strength. Throughout her illness Barbara handled her treatments, including two brain surgeries, medications, and side effects with unwavering strength and grace. She faced each with a smile and always expressed kind words of thanks, rather than complaints, towards the numerous doctors, nurses, and technicians who cared for her.

Barbara's determination and love of family: Barbara's determination was unstoppable despite being diagnosed with malignant Brain Cancer. Because of Barbara's never-ending belief that she would overcome GBM, she became a role model for other cancer patients. Love for her family strengthened and grew deeper despite facing extreme adversity. Barbara was a one of a kind angel whose wings touched those she met with sweetness, caring, compassion, kindness, honesty, and love.

Stones of strength meaning: The words on the stones: -- love, hope, peace and faith, -- were chosen with care to honor Barbara. She believed in the power of these words and used them daily to bolster her strength and determination. They also helped her find courage as she endured numerous treatments, procedures, and their side effects. These same words are intended to provide strength and courage as you confront cancer.

Emotional strength prevailed: During her illness Barbara never thought of herself as being sick. Her faith, courage, and determination contributed to her remarkable emotional strength. May the words on Barbara's Stones of Strength shelter you with a "roof of peace" providing strength, courage, and comfort.

Message from my heart to yours: Never give up hope as new cancer treatments evolve every day. Work with your doctors, listen to them and challenge them when appropriate. Don't let anyone tell you that "quality of life" is all that matters.

If you found Barbara's Stones of Strength helpful please write: stonesofstrength@yahoo.com

Important handing note: Please hold the bag of stones in your hand rather than by the ribbon to extend its lifetime.