

SISTER WORDS!

My emotions on a scale from 1 to 10, top the 10 and over range, as we leave the doctor's office.

Whew, I'm glad that's over, I thought, because with each visit I have to face the reality of the loss of my breast and the fact that cancer cells were awakened in my body. Then, no matter how hard I try to avoid it, always the nagging question, will they pop up somewhere else and when?

Walking toward the car, Lorrie, my daughter, looks at me and asks, *Mom, are you okay? You seem a little spacey. I know you're stressed to the max. Give me the keys, I'll be your chauffeur and drive you home. You can just sit back and relax.*

I thought, *Oh sure, relax—easier said than done.* Whipping out a quick, *I'm fine*, I hand her the keys. And although a smile covers my face, my heart was heavy. I climb into the car, sink back into the seat and try to calm my thoughts that are running rampant in my mind. My emotions churn deep within me and my mind returns to the same old question that has no answer, “*Why me?*” Hands clenched tightly in my lap, I thought, *I hate Cancer, I hate my body being invaded! I hate being a Cancer statistics and I hate doctor visits.* (Hum, having a pity party are we?).

Three days after the surgery they sent me home with two tubes still attached to the area where my left breast was removed with instruction on how to care for the drainage tubes and the scar area that extended from under my armpit to my breastbone. Trying to wrap my mind around the fact of losing a part of my body was difficult to comprehend, and the tears would come. My sisters, Nadine and Maxine, came to help my daughters take care of me. Through the loving care of my family laced with tears and yes, laughter too, I knew I would make it through; I would be able to handle it; I would be okay!

One afternoon I retreated to my bedroom and my comfy recliner with the lame excuse I needed some space and alone time. Comfy, warm and snuggled deep within my favorite fleece blanket, feet up, and coffee cup in hand, my body relaxes and memories of waking up back in my hospital room after the surgery floods my mind.

I start giggling and then burst forth into laughter as one memory unfolds. I hear this soft little voice whisper into my ear, *Katie, honey, wake up; it's your sister, Nadine. Honey you're okay; you made it through the surgery. Open your eyes!*

Nadine touches my arm; I open my eyes, and see my sister bending over my bed. Exhausted, I close my eyes. Again I hear Nadine's soft, little whisper, *Katie, open your eyes, and wake up.* Then I hear the words that only a sister can say and get away with—*honey, you're okay now, their both gone.*

My eyes flew wide open and I quickly reach up to touch my right chest, as if saying, *WHAT! Oh no! Did they take both breasts? They were only supposed to take one! Did someone goof and take more body parts than they were supposed to?*

Seeing my reaction, Nadine realizes what she has said and quickly replies, *Oh no! Oh Katie honey, you still have one breast left. I meant that one breast is gone and the Cancer is gone—not both breasts.*

As I relax, she laughs and says, *well, that woke you up!*

Sisters, sisters, you've gotta love them!

Four months have passed since my breast cancer surgery. Four months of ups and downs, questions with no answers and the realization of having to “*let it all go!*” and move on with my life. How easy it is to say, “I’m letting go and moving on with my life” but, at times, the reality of doing it is still difficult.

At times I think back to the day when I went into Doctor Walters’ office to get the results of my breast biopsy. As he walked into the room, I knew from the look on his face and his body language that the results were not good.

I vaguely heard Doctor Walters say, *Katie, I am so sorry to have to tell you this. You have gone through so much in the last few years and suffered much loss. I wish the results were different, but, I’m sorry, they came back positive.* Then in a choked voice, He spoke those four dreaded words that rocked my world, *You have breast Cancer!*

Those four words struck terror in my heart and sent my mind and emotions into a crazy spin out. But through the daily process of healing, I thank the Lord for the wonderful and caring family, and friends that stood by my side and believed with me and for me, in the times of my wavering faith. Their love gave me strength to push through and they would not let me give up!