



# Get to Know Your Hero!

Diagnosed 10/06 with non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma  
Remission achieved 2/07

Becoming a cancer patient never crossed my mind until I started having symptoms at the end of September 2006. I had just started a new job in the spring of that year, exercised at the gym religiously and lead a normal social life. I thought things were going great.

In the space of ten days my life would forever change. Cancer treatment changes you physically, emotionally and mentally. I had no idea of what was ahead.

When I began my chemotherapy treatments I knew the statistics were not as encouraging as I wished, but I decided from the beginning to treat this as a character building experience. No matter the outcome, I wanted to enjoy each day no matter what that day entailed. I was not going to be a grumpy patient because nobody wants to be around an Eeyore.

During my treatment I was able to take stock in my life, my friends, my family and how all those things would contribute or detract from my goal of getting well. I made some hard choices and some that seemed hard at the time but surprisingly they directed me down a new path. I was able to focus all my energy on my health and what was really important.

One of those choices was to become involved with fundraising for The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. During my treatment, The Society became my lifeline for disease and treatment information. I also received patient financial support and emotional support from the postings on the bulletin boards.

As I started feeling better I figured it was time for another decision. Becoming involved with Team In Training is one of the best choices I have ever made. The training has helped me regain physical fitness and the fundraising, even though challenging at times, made me get out there in the world again. I began my training with the same attitude as when I started treatment. It was going to be tough, but all things that are worthwhile take effort. I participated in the P.F. Chang's Rock and Roll marathon on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Looking back I've discovered I've met some wonderful people and have surprised myself in what I can do.

Thanks to modern medicine, the support of family and friends and The Society, I am here today to say that cancer will change you forever, but that change is only negative if you choose to see it that way. Your life can be more meaningful then ever before.

**Bernadine Visalli, SURVIVOR**

