



Sara Jones Sermon #1 - Perseverance to Go the Distance

Trials Don't Rule Us - We Determine the Path of the Fight

One of our most courageous and inspirational Survivors that the Project Athena Foundation helped to live her adventurous dream was an awesome Firefighter from Virginia Beach named Sara Jones. At the time that Sara wrote me this text, she was a 39 year old two time Breast Cancer Survivor who had recently discovered that her Cancer was back and had metastasized to her liver and her spine. I wrote to her one day and asked how she handled people around her complaining about just the little trivial things that bother them in life when she has stage 4 Cancer. And she wrote this back to me:

"U know exactly how it is bc u hear other people bitch about nothing and look @ ur journey. I love that u get me and you get IT. You've taught me so much about Life and how strong I really am when faced with utter disaster. There's no choice but to fight. Whatever it takes! Trials don't rule us, WE determine the path of the fight"

It's funny how even in just firing off texts, Sara unwittingly always shared a wisdom far beyond her years. "We determine the path of the fight"

I love Sara's philosophy--we can't always determine what happens to us, and there is a good deal of pain and fear in that feeling of being out of control of our lives and our destiny, wondering what's next. But Sara showed all of us that, no matter what, we always have control of our attitude, our perspective and how we choose to handle the fight. Regardless of what the universe has thrown our way, we determine the path of the fight by not running AWAY from setbacks, but in proactively running toward what inspires us, and in finding gratitude for what is good about our day and our lives. This wasn't just an offhanded comment for Sara. This is how she lived. Every day. Not in control of her body, but in control of her LIFE and every breath and every moment in it. She didn't have time to feel sorry for herself because she was loving and caring for everyone around her and inspiring us with her constant gratitude for everything good about her day and the people that loved her back. This is why everyone loved her so much. She showed us how to gracefully face the unimaginable: with her head held high, in command of her spirit and her perspective, and a sponge for and giver of love. Sara lost her battle with cancer on Feb 15, 2013. Surrounded by her family and friends, and I was honored and humbled to be among them. She died the way she lived. In control of her journey, in harmony with her struggle. It was her CHOICE to end the fight. To leave her battered body and in reality become the angel that she was to all of us on earth. She saw it as freedom. A gift she finally gave herSELF. So let's determine the path of our fight in honor of Sara today and in honor of all of the guardian angels in our lives who inspire us. The greatest way to honor them is to make them proud of us, every day.



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