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Essay

## **Getting Through the Day**

Many people, doctors, parents, say that you can't get better, when you're sick, if you don't want to. That half of getting better is knowing you will. To me, that's what it means to "daily keep things wound." To get out of bed every morning thinking my day will be ok.

When I had first gotten out of the hospital, after being diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma (a form of cancer), I thought my life would never be the same again. All the bad news overrode the good. The doctors said it was a miracle that they caught it before it could spread anywhere else and that it was curable, but the gladness from that news didn't last long. The news that I would lose my hair and have to miss school for a year hit me hard and I immediately broke down in distress. The physical anguishes didn't make it any easier for me mentally. I knew that a big part of feeling better would be positive thinking, and that, I would have to do on my own.

For the first few weeks I couldn't even get out of bed. Aside from feeling sick, I didn't feel like myself. I didn't want to see or talk to anyone. All I could think about was how this is going to ruin my life. How could this have happened to me, and most of all, why?

I experienced many new pains and discomforts from nausea, to backaches, to pains in my bones and joints. These discomforts, especially the nausea, sometimes stayed for days and weeks. Sometimes the nausea would be there for so long that I

wouldn't be able to remember what my stomach felt like without it. Those were the worst days, when I couldn't look ahead and tell myself that at least I will feel better in a day or two because I wouldn't know how long it was going to be.

I began to realize that every day was the same and nothing was changing. That's when I knew I had to start approaching things in a different way. One thought that always got me down was thinking about how long it would be until it's over. The doctors said my treatment would last a little over two years and the thought of having to wait that long always upset me, so I decided to take it one day at a time. I started waking up in the morning and telling myself that all I had to do was get by this day. It would be easier this way and there would be more to look forward to.

Day after day I started to feel better and better, and I started to wake up in better moods. I started talking to and seeing more people, rather than just the close ones. The clinic I had to go to weekly, at the Hackensack University Medical Center, played a big part in helping me get through the days. They had programs and trips, including a ski trip which I attended, where I was able to enjoy myself for a few days. The fun I had on the ski trip helped my mental outlook on things not only because it was the first time in months where I was able to enjoy myself, but also because I was able to interact with kids who were in the clinic at the time or had been in the past. The kids that were already done with treatment were the best to talk to. Seeing how well they were doing, while knowing that they went through the same or a similar thing that I went through, always got my hopes up.

My friends were also a big part in helping my positive outlook. They would visit me often, sometimes in groups of 10 or more. They didn't necessarily help my positive thinking, but when I would be thinking negatively, they would make me feel better and distract me to get my mind off of things.

As I look back now, I'm not sure how I got this far. It's been over a year now, I'm back in school, and things are starting to get back to normal. I have around another year left and I'm feeling relatively well. My outlook on things is much better now than they were in the beginning. Things are looking good for the future.

To me to "daily keep things wound", means to mentally keep things going. To wake up every morning and tell yourself that you are going to have a good day, that your day will turn out well. It's preparing yourself each day for what's to come, for any setbacks that may occur. If you go in with a positive attitude there is more of a chance that you will come out with that attitude. If I didn't "daily keep things wound", things may have turned out very differently for me, for the worse. I don't know where I would be today. Would I be back in school? Would I be in the Hospital? Would I be here at all?