Today, I’m here to share a journey that has deeply shaped my life…a journey through cancer and the extraordinary power of **gratitude**.

Imagine... hearing the words "You have cancer."

Or maybe you vividly remember the moment you received the news.

It’s as if the ground beneath you suddenly vanishes, sending you into a freefall of fear... anger and disbelief.

But in all that chaos... there’s this inner strength… this guiding light that POPS up. That light is gratitude... Yes, believe it or not - gratitude and cancer… I never imagined those words would coexist.

But somehow in all that I found my greatest source of strength and resilience.

My journey began in March of 2023 when I went for my annual mammogram. (Please make sure you get yours!)

During the exam, I just had this nagging feeling that something just wasn’t right. I left the hospital feeling anxious and a bit worried… but somehow managed to push away the negative thoughts and move on with my day.

But then, the next day I received a call, and that’s when the journey began.

Even though I had this gut feeling, I was still shocked. I guess I had hoped that my gut was wrong. But no, that wasn’t the case.

Everything started moving so fast, and I had no idea what to do or where to start.

In my head, I thought, maybe the doctors are wrong and that getting another opinion will prove this is all a mistake.

I mean, it could happen, right?

But after FOUR different opinions, because let’s face it, I am stubborn. I found myself back at square one, and staring down a year of treatment.

I thought how…was I ever going to get through this?

I was filled with fear and anxiety, believing I did not have the ability to cope with the situation. I began to doubt my own worth and ability.

Suddenly, all the joy in my life was gone, and I truly felt UTTERLY alone.

I didn’t recognize myself. I started blaming myself- thinking ridiculous thoughts like, how could I have allowed myself to get cancer? I know that sounds crazy, but that really was how I felt.

I even seriously considered not going through with any treatment.

But then….the unwavering love and support of my family and friends helped me to see and believe in myself.

Their guidance and encouragement helped me develop a plan.

YOU all gave me love, respect and support. YOU introduced me to options that would help me along this journey. YOU laughed and cried with me during treatment and appointments. YOU never turned your back when I tried pushing you away. YOU checked on me. And YOU pushed me to visit the Victory Center.

I initially thought that visiting the Victory Center would be a constant reminder that I have cancer, making me feel like I was admitting defeat. But I was wrong.

Instead, it represented love, support, compassion, trust, and hope! The staff and practitioners are incredible. They are ALWAYS smiling, supportive, reliable, and kind.

From the moment you walk in, you can feel this amazing positive energy. I quickly realized the impact they would have on my journey.

The services are exactly what I need.

The massages are gentle, peaceful, and uplifting.

Reflexology was a blessing. Chemo had intensified my restless leg and reflexology helped ease the episodes.

Reiki is another service I adore, and it will continue to be a part of my life. The deep relaxation and peace are like nothing I have ever experienced. The healing powers are unbelievable. You just can’t imagine.

I have walked away pain free after sessions, its honestly life changing! I’m a firm believer everyone needs it in their life!

I also experience the sound baths. They are so relaxing you might just end up drifting off to sleep and end up snoring louder than the sound bath. This is the truth, it actually happened.

I even joined yoga classes and gave belly dancing a shot. Now, that was quite a spectacle and I’m so very thankful my family wasn’t there to watch. UGH…

It was great exercise even if I never quite found the rhythm.

I had hoped being Lebanese would lend me with some natural support, but it absolutely offered none. While I lack rhythm, I am grateful my granddaughters possess it!

Sharing my story is my way to keep the discussion honest and out in the open. We are at our best when we're supporting each other. And that is what my family, friends and the Victory Center has done for me.

I encourage each of you to take a moment today to thank someone who has supported you, no matter how big or small their role. Gratitude has the power to transform our lives and those around us.

My heart is overflowing with love and gratitude. Thank you for allowing me to share my journey.