

## Thoughts and Tips from other Caregivers compiled by Steve Krisfalusy

- Have empathy not sympathy.
- Be patient with the patient.
- Be aware that your pain becomes theirs but often they feel helpless and feel guilty for strapping you with these challenges.
- Let your patient know you are there for them—all in – long haul – glad to do it- they are afraid and have a lot of anxiety.
- You may need help – do not let your ego get in the way.
- Be prepared to have your life impacted
  - Seek/set up help in certain areas ASAP
  - Cancer Center / Navigator / Nurses
  - Friends/family/ professionals
- Take care of yourself – you need a break away sometimes / somehow.
- Have a question – do not wait for the next Dr visit or treatment – call the nurses ASAP.
- Take some form of break each day – week / month – learn how long you can leave the patient and do it.
- 24/7 stress – how will you manage vs “JUST DOING IT” – tethered (exercise – bicycle – walking out side – gym – dance lessons- TV – Cooking- baking) Do Something – anything!
- Stay positive – your body language also sends them a message – be careful what messages your body is sending.
- Is your home a safe haven or prison for the patient during this journey.
- Remain calm – stay the course – this is an all-in situation that usually doesn’t end quickly.
- Be grateful you can help the patient – it will not last forever.
- Tell everyone no calls from X pm to X am – solo time but ALSO tell them their encouraging calls and texts do help both you & the patient. They will be glad to know this.
- Find something or set a small/simple goal every day to make you feel like you are accomplishing something – even if it is small.
- Learn something about your situation/self/patient each day.
- Listen to them – their needs – attitudes will change and that could be often.
  - They may come across crabby at times and take it out on the only person there – try your best to think in terms of that is the cancer talking – not my patient.
- Try to learn or know their needs but at the same time allow them/encourage them to do as much as they can – dignity – try to be aware of their feelings at the moment – it will change.
- DO NOT overwhelm them with your help but ask what they want or need.
- Stress at times is off the charts – DANGER – How will you deal with it at the moment?
  - Have a plan or ideas ahead of time. Emotions can run wild and thinking clearly may not be easy at that time.

**You are not alone - If thousands of others can get through this, YOU CAN TOO!**

**Be Strong Stay Strong!**