

## Derek Shares His God Moment

We have a wonderful testimony to Trinity's spiritual fruitfulness to share today. Derek's story of a God moment on the operating table. You may recall that a couple of weeks ago, we offered prayers here for him, because he was to have surgery for what the doctors thought was cancer. I asked him and his partner to keep me posted about the results. On Wed I got this e-mail from Derek titled "All Clear".

*Derek:* Hi Ellie,

Just wanted to update you on my health situation.

I did get the all clear from my surgeon, who says that the pathology was clean, so that is a huge relief. He is going to do another scan in 2 months just to make sure there is nothing left LOL, but we are both very relieved at this point, and thanks for your support!

*Ellie:* O Derek, this is the BEST news of the morning. I'm so glad to hear.

It must be wonderful to breath really free again.

So what have been the learnings of this latest stretch of your journey?

Please share.

*Derek:* Hi Ellie,

Re: learnings...Thanks for asking!

I have to say that this has been a very tough few months. I may have told you that I had cancer 15 years ago, and came through it successfully. At that time I really felt like I was a winner and was going to fight it, and had a very positive attitude. I often tell people that it was harder for me to quit smoking than it was to deal with cancer, but 15 years later it was not so easy for me.

I had come through last year's surgery with flying colours after a tough go, and the news that I was probably dealing with a tumour hit me very hard. I went through a lot of "why me" stuff. I have been without work for months now, and I was just beginning to get my strength back and feel upbeat about looking for work when the docs began investigating this "unidentified mass" last summer, so it really took the wind out of my sails. I wanted to be upbeat and positive, but was really in a negative place. I really tried not to be, but somehow never managed to get to the same

upbeat, fighting spirit that I experienced 15 years ago. No job, health in question, kind of a nasty limbo after the beneficial surgery last year and beginning married life with John.

Thankfully John had enough fight for the both of us, because after extensive testing when the docs told me that all indications were that it was a tumour, I'm afraid that I really didn't handle things well. When I thought about the implications of the kind of tumour the docs were suggesting (doing my own research on the web definitely did NOT help) some part of me deep inside gave up a little bit. I think I just felt that everything was overwhelming, and too much for me to deal with.

It was and is very hard for me to talk about these things, and pretending the problem didn't exist became my coping strategy. Funny, because I have always been very open about discussing my earlier cancer experience with anyone. But when John asked me if I wanted to ask for prayers at Trinity, I was kind of reluctant at first, and I am not sure why. I have no problem offering prayers to others on the list, but I was kind of struggling with whether or not my situation "fit the profile" and I know that's silly but it's the way I felt; that others were probably in more desperate circumstances. I guess I was really afraid of hearing things spoken about publicly, something about not talking about it took away its power in my mind perhaps. But I definitely wanted the prayers.

I am very grateful that you did mention my situation that Sunday, although it was very difficult for me to be there listening. I can't tell you how wonderful it was that many of the Trinity folks came and talked to me and offered their kind prayers and support. Some asked for the exact time of my surgery so they could pray for me then. Although it was hard for me to hear at times, I did very much appreciate peoples expressions of support. I didn't know how much it would help until my last few moments of consciousness before surgery.

I went into the hospital hoping for the best, but still with many nagging thoughts deep inside that this was not going to end well. It was literally on the OR table that I started doing some deep breathing exercises to clear my mind and relax. As I laid on the table, I began the exercise and opened my mind and my body to any of God's healing energy that I thought might perhaps be out there for me. Kind of a last ditch, "well it can't hurt" kind of thing. As they began to put me out, the faces and voices of all the folks at Trinity who had said they would be thinking about me, praying for me, wishing me well came to me in rapid succession and the feeling of strength that it gave me was overwhelming. I really felt that I was not alone on that table, that I

could completely let go of the fear, that others would take the load from here, and it was a wonderful feeling.

It is still hard for me to talk about this experience and I do get very emotional about it. I am going through a box of Kleenex even as I write this. I do have one more small hurdle until my next scan in a few months, but I am looking at that as just confirmation of what the docs have told me, i.e. that there is/was no tumour. You asked what I had learned, and I guess I am still learning, but here's the list so far:

I am so lucky to have John in my life whose strength and support has seen me through multiple medical crises over the years, and who manages to keep my spirits up even when I know he is very scared too. I can try the rest of my life to repay him for everything he has done for me, but will still end up in his debt.

I am very thankful to be a part of the Trinity community. My life is much richer for knowing so many kind and caring people. I believe that their sincere prayers and wishes were instrumental to my recovery, and they are a huge part of what makes Ottawa home for me. I hope to be able to offer them the same kindnesses and support in years to come.

I need to open myself to God's power more often. Maybe I shouldn't wait until the last minute, or until I am so desperate that it feels like the only remaining option. Things might have been easier if I had tried to unburden myself earlier. I will have to work on that one for sure.

I will not look for my own medical prognosis on the internet.

Thank you so much for your support to us over the past couple of years Ellie. I did want to share this with you, so thank you for asking, as it is much easier for me to do in writing. It has been cathartic to put my thoughts down, although the Kleenex is now fully depleted.

Many thanks again, and blessings to you and yours.

*Ellie:*

What a joy it is to read this, and reach for my kleenex too! Do you realize that you have written a beautiful testimony of faith? This is such a gift. I would like you to share it on Sunday, if you could? It would be so helpful to others.

God blesses us in you!