

# SURVIVOR'S VOICE

Here's another powerful example of how your gifts are helping breast cancer patients.

**Breast cancer, when did those words enter your life?**

I was diagnosed March 7, 2011 with a large right breast cancer. This cancer also involved regional lymph nodes and there was an unsuspected and undiagnosed lesion on the left breast. I immediately underwent port-a-cath placement and 7 months of neoadjuvant chemotherapy, and had a bilateral mastectomy and removal of 9 lymph nodes. Definitive management of the chest wall is required in the form of radiation. Radiation treatments will begin on Nov. 14, 2011 and will continue every day for approximately 12 weeks. I will undergo reconstructive breast surgery once radiation treatment is complete and breast tissue is healed.

**How did you hear about the Help Now Fund through The Breast Cancer Charities of America?**

I heard about the Help Now Fund while volunteering for the BCCA.

**What was your first reaction when you heard you were chosen to receive this help?**

I was overwhelmed. I've never been in a situation to ask for help, but when I asked, the HELP NOW FUND was there.

**How have you stayed mentally and physically healthy?**

I've trusted in my faith to get me through this journey. God is number one in my life, he has given me the strength and courage to fight. I'm blessed to have the support of my family, friends, nurses and doctors. I participate in a weekly healing class at church and volunteer when I have the strength. I laugh a lot, I eat healthy, take lots of vitamins and supplements and drink plenty of water.

**What kind of lifestyle changes have you made since the diagnosis? What was the most effective?**

Eliminating STRESS! You look at the world a lot differently when you have cancer, I do not take things for granted, I do not freak out at little problems, and I see things in a more positive light because comparatively everything is bright compared to the darkness of my disease. I love and appreciate my family and friends more. I've learned to be more open and honest with my children and not to shelter them from my pain, my hurt and my disease.

**Where do you find the most support?**

My faith, family, friends, nurses, doctors and my friends at the BCCA.

**What advice would you share with others?**

Trust in God to heal you. I learned that I was much stronger than I ever thought I could be. I could not have made it without His love. The other person I could not have made it without is my mother. She has been with me and by me through this entire journey. We shed a lot of tears but we had a lot of laughs too. She never left my side. I now know where my strength and courage came from, my mom.



Victoria Clary, age: 49 of Montgomery, Texas

*When we are strong, we are always much greater than the things that happen to us!!*