

Volunteering & The Power of a Daisy

I was diagnosed with breast cancer in November of 2008. Throughout the subsequent year of treatment I gained a clear perspective of cancer and recovery. From the early detection and lumpectomy through the chemotherapy and radiation; I witnessed how cancer affects my family, friends and self.

As I journeyed through the maze of doctor appointments and treatments, I was constantly amazed at the attitude, humor and "grace under fire" I experienced from the Kaiser Staff and volunteers. This sense of security gave me the confidence I needed to confront my cancer and recovery head on.

During this time of therapy, I often wanted to give back to all the doctors and staff who helped me through my recovery and journey. So, after my final treatment in June, I inquired about volunteering at Kaiser Santa Clara. In September 2009, Daisy and I became Pet Therapy Volunteers. Daisy is a small Bichon Frise with a fluffy white coat and beautiful dark eyes.

What an impact volunteering with Daisy has had! Daisy has been able to help patients reconnect with their hope, determination and the healing qualities within their bodies and souls.

An animal's ability to be "present" when patients are in the throws of fear, depression, and the unknown, helps pull patients out of depression and into a place of hope and wellbeing; a place where they can feel their lives moving forward beyond their illness.

It is true; a pet is the invisible healing link between diagnoses, doctors and treatments. I know because I have felt and seen its power and that is why Daisy and I continue to volunteer.

Sincerely,

Wilma & Daisy 