

# How my best friend fought cancer and won

Sociology, Identity



Every morning, I would wake up to the sound of the alarm and I would open my eyes. I would stand still, frozen, thinking about how I am going to survive another ordinary and boring day of a fourteen-year-old self who went to school and then back home every single day of her life except the weekend. I would complain to my mother a lot about how my life is so uninteresting and how I have nothing to be excited about and she would always say: “ You only know what you’ve got when it’s gone”. But, to me, loss was almost inconceivable. The universe had never taken anything really valuable away from my life and the thought that I could lose something that is really important for me never crossed my mind. Almost every single day during lunchtime, my best friend and I used to visit this fast food place called “ Stars” to enjoy their delicious, crunchy and sauce dripping toast.

There would be a massive crowd of students waiting to order their food and the place would always become steaming hot, especially in the winter when people would wear these very thick knitted sweaters. We would always run to avoid the crowd and getting sweaty. Running to the place was, of course, her idea. But, one particular day she asked me if it was okay for us to walk because she felt really tired. This was an unusual thing to hear from her as she was the most energetic person I had ever met. This time we waited for 15 long minutes to get our food and it got really hot that I noticed sweat dripping through my hair as I pulled them up in a ponytail.

Our food was finally ready and as Lira handed to me my toast I felt her hands. They were ice cold and she was shivering. She had a pale skin tone but I had never seen her face that pale before. As we walked out of the fast food restaurant she asked me if her lips had turned a purple color. For a

moment I had a feeling that there was something really wrong with her, however, I told her that they were kind of purple-ish, as if I was trying to ignore the fact that they were very purple, the purple color your lips get after swimming in a really cold pool for a long time.

That evening, my friend, who lives next door, called me outside because she had something important to tell me. I was expecting another story about how her crush complimented her look and how he obviously likes her too but, as soon as I saw her face I knew something really bad had happened. She said only three words: “ Lira has Leukemia”. I rushed inside slamming the door behind me and texted Lira to tell her how much I loved her and how I would always be by her side no matter what. I had never told her that. How could I have never told her how much I loved her? The thought that I would lose her made me realize how important she is to me. I realized my days were not just some ordinary boring days. I had taken for granted every precious moment that we shared together. I had taken for granted all the joy and laughter that she would fill my days with. Lira was a fighter. She never quit hoping that soon things would get better. She had a lot of support and help from her friends, family, and people around the world rooting for her to punch cancer in the face and knock it down. She did knock it down. She is living cancer free for her fourth year now.

She is so lucky to have won her battle with cancer and be healthy again but I am too very lucky to not have lost my best friend. I am very lucky to have realized how important it is to cherish every moment of my life and to be thankful for what I have and to be thankful for my family and friends who fill

my heart with love every single day. I am extremely lucky to have realized how life can be fun and easy when you appreciate what you have. You get to wake up every morning and live another day of your life. For that, you should be more than thankful. All you really need is what you have. Do not take life for granted; appreciate the things you have before they are gone. Show people you love them every single day and live your days as if they were your last.