

MAGIC WORDS
by Marla Lukofsky

Years ago I had a positive experience with a remarkable Nurse Practitioner at UCLA named Sherry Goldman who was in charge of a special program for breast cancer, a disease which I had. I was struggling with the terrible side effects of my treatments. They were getting the best of my mind and my body. When I walked into her office for my appointment, she did the physical examination. She also asked me how I was feeling and remarkably she waited for the answer. I was open and honest with every detail. She validated my mind-set and made me feel less alone with my thoughts. Her medical suggestion to improve my status was to take walks every day. “Start small, short distances, a block or two and then make it longer with each day”, she suggested.

My response to her was a resounding “NO! I don’t want to. I don’t feel well, I don’t look good, and I don’t have the energy.”

Well, Sherry the NP sat quietly for a moment, absorbing my adamant stance and then said to me those magic words, the words that only one could say if they had taken the time to really listen, while having the keen observational skills to sense what the problem was with a simple walk. What were her words? I know you’re waiting for them... Her words were, “ *Then don’t walk for you Marla, walk for ME... and I want to hear how much you’ve walked when you come back to see me in two weeks.*”

Suddenly my eyes lit up, my back straightened and a fire was in my belly and it wasn’t acid indigestion. That day I went home and started to walk and with each day I walked more and more, longer and further. Soon, I was walking for hours daily, chomping at the bit to report back to Sherry with pride at my accomplishment. Two weeks later I did just that at my next appointment at UCLA, when I saw her. I looked like a new person. I was a new person.

There is a belief that one shouldn’t do things just to please someone else but rather to do it to please oneself. Well, that is all well and good some of the time but there are other times when it’s imperative to break that rule. If pleasing someone else is the key to getting a person back on track and healthy again then so be it and that’s exactly what happened with me. Not

only did my health and strength improve, but I also took up jogging and now I walk and run FOR ME! and I have not stopped since. I'm entering my first 5K Marathon in March. I have not had that kind of positive experience with the medical profession since, but I will NEVER forget what that incredibly smart and talented Nurse Practitioner did for me. NEVER!

Author: Marla Lukofsky: <http://www.marlalukofsky.com/>