

# THE LHDF GRID

A Publication of the Love Hope Dream Foundation, Inc.

## WONDER WARRIORS:

Know the story behind every battle.

## LHDF GARAGE SALE:

Raising funds and awareness to support breast cancer warriors.

## FITNESS FOR LIFE:

Promoting healthy, active living for everyone.

*"... okay lang sumuka pero wag kang sumuko"*



Chef Roselle's healthy twist on a classic favorite!

Dance playlist from Coach McBry!

LHDF Partners with DOH, Surge + Lifestyle, and more!

**SHE DANCED TO HEAL, NOW WE DANCE AS ONE**

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# LHDF MEETS DOH TO EXPLORE BREAST CANCER ADVOCACY COLLABORATION



**IN PHOTO:** Vincent Sumergido, DOH Supervising Health Program Officer; Maria Victoria Naelgas, Former LHDF Executive Director; Anna Marie Periquet, Former LHDF Trustee; Dr. Ofel Alcantara, DOH Office of the Secretary Consultant; Fang Fang Li

In a world where health can sometimes take a backseat, fitness and nutrition are vital yet often underappreciated elements of a longer, healthier life. In this context, the Love Hope Dream Foundation (LHDF), led by its Chief Advocate Fang Fang Li, met with Department of Health (DOH) officials to explore a potential partnership to advance breast cancer advocacy through fitness and nutrition initiatives.

The meeting, held at the DOH Central Office, focused on aligning LHDF's advocacy, particularly its emphasis on fitness, nutrition, and lifestyle support for breast cancer warriors, with the Department of Health's ongoing public health campaigns.

Dr. Maria Ofelia Alcantara, Consultant to the Office of the Secretary of Health, and Mr. Vincent Sumergido, Supervising Health Program Officer, expressed their support for the collaboration. They highlighted how LHDF's mission could complement the Department's T.E.D. campaign (Tamang Pagkain. Ehersisyo. Disiplina), which promotes proper nutrition, regular physical activity, and personal discipline as core strategies for cancer prevention and overall wellness.

LHDF Chief Advocate Fang Fang Li also emphasized the importance of empowering mothers as the cornerstone of family health. **"Mothers are often the ones who nurture the entire household. That's why we focus on equipping them with knowledge by teaching them how to integrate fitness and nutrition into their daily lives. Because once the mother knows how, her whole family is likely to follow."**

Both LHDF and the DOH expressed strong interest in exploring areas of synergy aiming to define the scope of collaboration, identify priority projects, and advance initiatives that support cancer patients and communities through holistic health programs.

# LHDF LAUNCHES FITNESS FOR LIFE AT AYALA TRIANGLE GARDENS



In the hustle and bustle of daily life, it's easy to get caught up in the demands of work, family, and everyday responsibilities, often at the expense of our well-being. But one truth remains crucial: our greatest asset is our health.

On April 6, 2025, the Love Hope Dream Foundation (LHDF) launched the **Fitness for Life: A Fundraising Initiative** at Ayala Triangle Gardens, championing the importance of health and wellness as a vital part of daily life.

The event featured a high-energy Zumba dance workout led by an instructor from Surge, a leading fitness and lifestyle center. LHDF also set up a booth showcasing merchandise that was both practical and visually appealing.

Participants came together, not just to break a sweat, but to support the Foundation by purchasing merchandise, paying admission fees, and making donations, all of which directly support LHDF's advocacy.





After the workout, attendees were treated to a nutritious power breakfast specially prepared by Chef Roselle. It was the perfect way to refuel, recharge, and conclude a fulfilling morning.

A heartfelt highlight came when LHDF Chief Advocate Fang Fang Li personally handed out bouquets of flowers as a gesture of appreciation. **"If fitness is important for you, it's even more important for our breast cancer patients,"** she said. **"It promotes faster recovery and healing."**

The success of Fitness for Life marks the beginning of a movement that blends wellness with purpose. Weekly sessions will continue every Sunday morning, inviting the public to stay active and stand in solidarity with those affected by breast cancer.



# LHDF JOINS SURGE GATEWAY CLUB GRAND OPENING



Exercise is not just a one-time effort; it's a lifestyle choice that requires consistency and dedication. At the Love Hope Dream Foundation (LHDF), we believe fitness fosters strength, healing, and lasting change. This core belief drives our wellness initiatives for cancer recovery and prevention.

On May 16, 2025, LHDF joined Surge Fitness + Lifestyle for the grand opening of the Surge Gateway Club, located at the iconic Gateway Mall 2 in Cubao. The event brought together LHDF officials, Surge coaches, and health advocates to emphasize the importance of fitness in overall health and wellness.

The grand opening also highlighted LHDF's Fitness for Life program, a wellness initiative in partnership with Surge, designed to promote physical activity as a fundamental part of healthy living. The program especially supports breast cancer warriors but is open to everyone looking to improve their health.

Fitness for Life takes place every Sunday at Ayala Triangle Gardens, featuring energizing Zumba sessions led by professional instructors from Surge. It aims to promote fitness as an essential aspect of a balanced, healthy lifestyle for all individuals.

LHDF's Chief Advocate, Fang Fang Li, shared her experience with the healing benefits of exercise during her own recovery. **"Even simple movements burn calories, which turn into energy. Thanks to fitness, I recover faster after every treatment,"** she explained.

Through partnerships with organizations like Surge Fitness + Lifestyle, LHDF continues to advocate for active living, proper nutrition, and strong support systems for breast cancer patients and their families.

# SNEAK PEEK AT LHDF'S FLAGSHIP PROGRAM



The Love Hope Dream Foundation (LHDF) is gearing up for an exciting flagship program, celebrating National Cancer Survivors Month and Nutrition Month, with a focus on holistic health and wellness.

This upcoming event will honor breast cancer survivors and promote the critical importance of physical activity and nutrition in recovery. It will bring together key health advocates and experts to offer guidance on living a healthy and balanced life after cancer treatment.

The program will feature a variety of engaging activities, including expert talks, wellness demonstrations, and interactive Zumba sessions designed to empower attendees to embrace fitness and proper nutrition as part of their healing journey. Survivors will also share their stories of strength and resilience, providing inspiration to others in the community.

In partnership with healthcare organizations, such as Fullerton Healthcare, Aventus Medical Care, Intellicare, Surge Fitness, and more, LHDF aims to foster a supportive environment for survivors and their families, encouraging active living, balanced diets, and emotional well-being.

**"We are thrilled to celebrate the courage and strength of breast cancer survivors while empowering families to embrace wellness and adopt healthier lifestyles,"** said Fang Fang Li, Chief Advocate of LHDF.

This event promises to be an inspiring and educational experience, uplifting cancer survivors while encouraging the entire community to focus on wellness and recovery.

# LHDF OPENS A GARAGE SALE FOR A CAUSE



On May 23, the Love Hope Dream Foundation (LHDF) officially launched its Garage Sale for a Cause, an initiative aimed at raising funds to support the foundation's programs for breast cancer patients, survivors, and warriors.

Held at The Bloc's parking area, the garage sale features a wide selection of pre-loved and new items, from clothing and household goods to books and accessories, all generously donated by supporters. Proceeds from every purchase go directly to programs that empower women facing breast cancer through wellness activities and emotional support services.

The garage sale will continue every Friday, offering the public a weekly chance to shop with purpose and take part in LHDF's advocacy.



**"We created this garage sale not only to raise funds, but also to raise awareness about breast cancer and engage the community in supporting our warriors,"** said LHDF's Chief Advocate Fang Fang Li. **"Every item sold helps fuel a journey of hope, healing, and strength."**



Whether you're hunting for great finds or looking to give back, every contribution helps sustain the Foundation's mission. Visit the garage sale, lend your support, and join a community committed to making a meaningful impact.



Even small acts like shopping or donating can help spark hope where it's needed most. The Love Hope Dream Foundation stands with breast cancer warriors, helping to rewrite their stories with hope, resilience, and renewed strength.

# LHDF TEAMS UP WITH BARANGAY PINAGSAMA FOR FUTURE ACTIVITIES



Support and healing grow stronger when rooted in community. Recognizing the importance of grassroots collaboration, the Love Hope Dream Foundation (LHDF) is expanding its reach through a promising partnership with Barangay Pinagsama in Taguig City.

LHDF key officials met with Barangay Chairperson Hon. Ma. Victoria M. Mortel to explore future joint initiatives focused on supporting breast cancer patients and promoting wellness in the local community. Chairperson Mortel expressed the barangay's openness to collaborating on upcoming health and advocacy projects.

This partnership follows LHDF's successful community engagements in Barangay Pio del Pilar, including Nourish & Flourish and Cover with Love – programs that focus on holistic support for breast cancer warriors through nutrition, fitness, and emotional care.

By working closely with local government units like Barangay Pinagsama, the Love Hope Dream Foundation is dedicated to empowering more women with the knowledge, guidance, and support needed for prevention, recovery, and hope.

# LHDF JOINS FULLERTON'S FIRST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



In a world where health and community go hand in hand, meaningful partnerships play a vital role in delivering care and hope. On June 28, 2025, the Love Hope Dream Foundation (LHDF) joined Fullerton Healthway Philippines in celebrating its first anniversary, held at its flagship clinic in Bonifacio Global City, Taguig.

LHDF key officials attended to express their support and gratitude for Fullerton's continued commitment to quality healthcare, as the two organizations prepare for a new chapter of collaboration.

LHDF and Fullerton Healthway have formed a partnership to launch joint activities starting this August, focusing on breast cancer awareness through wellness programs, medical talks, and community engagement. These upcoming initiatives will carry the theme "Preventive Health, Wellness, and Movement."

During the celebration, the LHDF team was invited for a guided clinic tour and a showcase of Fullerton's medical services. The staff were welcoming, professional, and eager to demonstrate the clinic's commitment to accessible and compassionate care.

With strong partnerships like this, the Love Hope Dream Foundation continues to look forward to building deeper collaborations with healthcare providers such as Fullerton, united in the goal of creating healthier, more hopeful communities.



# ON THE GRID

In this space, we honor meaningful moments, observances, and commemorations that resonate with our mission – raising awareness, inspiring hope, and supporting the breast cancer community.



Stress Awareness Month

## UNSEEN, BUT FELT

### *Recognizing Stress, Restoring Strength.*

April is Stress Awareness Month, and a perfect time to reflect on how stress affects our physical and emotional well-being. For many, stress is an invisible burden that impacts daily life. For women living with cancer, the stress of navigating treatments, facing uncertainty, and managing health can be overwhelming.

Stress is not just an occasional feeling – it's something that needs to be actively managed, especially during challenging times. For the breast cancer community, stress often comes in the form of emotional strain, fear of recurrence, and the pressures of treatment. But we also know that it is possible to face stress with resilience, compassion, and care.

This month, we encourage everyone to explore simple, intentional ways to reduce stress – whether through moments of mindfulness, physical activity, or leaning on support systems. Simple practices, like deep breathing or taking time to rest, can create space for healing and peace. We also acknowledge family members or the caregivers who carry their own quiet stress as they support others. Your well-being matters, too.

Stress doesn't define us; rather, our strength, courage, and ability to find hope even in the toughest moments do. This April, we stand with everyone who carries invisible weights and chooses to rise anyway. You're not alone, and healing, like hope, is always within reach.

From all of us at the Love Hope Dream Foundation.



World Health Day

# HEALTHY BEGINNINGS, HOPEFUL FUTURES

## *A World Health Day Reflection*

On April 7, 2025, we observe World Health Day, with the theme "Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures." This commemorative day calls upon us to focus on improving maternal and newborn health, ensuring that every woman and child has access to the care they need to thrive.

The journey to health is personal for every woman. It begins with access to essential care, life-saving treatments, and the support of those around her. For women facing breast cancer, whether undergoing treatment, healing, or thriving after recovery, health encompasses not just the body but emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being.

Healthy beginnings are vital for every woman, whether she's embarking on motherhood or facing the challenges of breast cancer. It's essential that she receives the care and support she needs. Preventable deaths, whether during childbirth or from late-stage diagnosis, highlight the need for accessible healthcare for all women.

At Love Hope Dream Foundation, ensuring access to quality cancer care and support is central to what we do. We advocate for improved healthcare policies, striving for a world where no woman faces these challenges alone.

We provide unwavering support to those affected by breast cancer, focusing on not just medical care but physical, emotional, and social wellness. We are committed to advocating for policies that prioritize women's health, offering holistic support, and building a community where women never feel isolated in their health journey.

This World Health Day, let us work together to create a future where every woman thrives with the love, hope, and dreams she deserves.

Here's to a world where women overcome challenges and live healthy, hopeful lives.  
From all of us at the Love Hope Dream Foundation.



World Hemophilia Day

## HONORING WORLD HEMOPHILIA DAY

### *A Shared Experience of Strength*

April 17 marks World Hemophilia Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness about inherited bleeding disorders. While these conditions are distinct from breast cancer, they remind us of the ongoing challenges that come with managing a serious health condition.

At the Love Hope Dream Foundation, we focus on supporting breast cancer patients through their journey. Some of them experience bleeding complications due to low platelet counts, especially during treatment. These moments, though different in cause, bring similar concerns. They remind us of how important it is to have the right care, clear information, and a strong support system.

This day gives us a reason to pause and recognize that many people live with invisible conditions that require daily strength. Whether someone is managing a bleeding disorder or undergoing cancer treatment, they deserve understanding, respect, and consistent care.

On World Hemophilia Day, we stand with others who know what it means to face health challenges with courage. Compassion and connection make a difference, no matter the condition.

From all of us at the Love Hope Dream Foundation.



Mental Health Awareness Month

## YOU ARE NOT ALONE

*Empowering Breast Cancer Warriors, Together.*

This Mental Health Awareness Month, we want to bring attention to something many people don't always see: the emotional weight that breast cancer warriors carry.

A breast cancer diagnosis changes more than just physical health. It affects how a person feels, how they think, and how they move through each day. There is the shock of hearing the diagnosis, the fear of what comes next, the stress of making decisions, and the emotional ups and downs during treatment.

Even after treatment ends, many are left with silent struggles. There is the anxiety of follow-up scans, the pressure to return to normal, and the challenge of living with long-term effects. Survivors may feel grateful and hopeful, but also exhausted, uncertain, or isolated.

These emotions are real. And they matter.

That is why mental health is part of the healing process. Emotional wellness is not separate from physical care. It is part of it. When people feel supported, they cope better, communicate more openly, and feel less alone.

At the Love Hope Dream Foundation, we want every breast cancer warrior to know this:

You do not have to carry everything by yourself.

You are not expected to be strong all the time.

You are allowed to feel whatever you are feeling.

There is strength in speaking honestly, in asking for help, and in making space for rest.

This month, let us remind each other that healing involves both body and mind. Let us create space for quiet conversations, small comforts, and honest support. Whether someone is in treatment, just beginning their journey, or trying to move forward after it all, they deserve to be heard and cared for.

Empowering Breast Cancer Warriors, Together.

We make mental health and emotional wellness part of the care we offer, not just in May, but every day.

From all of us at the Love Hope Dream Foundation.



Mother's Day

# THE HEART OF STRENGTH

## *A Mother's Day Tribute*

She is strength wrapped in softness. A quiet warrior who shows up, day after day, even when her body is tired and her heart is heavy. This Mother's Day, the Love Hope Dream Foundation honors the mothers in our community. These are the women living with breast cancer, those who have survived it, and those who continue to face each day with courage, grace, and an unbreakable will to live.

To be a mother is already an act of love. To mother while facing cancer is something even more extraordinary. These women carry the weight of fear, uncertainty, and pain. And still, they continue to care for others. They hold hands, wipe tears, pack lunches, attend school programs, laugh when they can, and cry quietly when no one is looking. They show us what true strength looks like.

For some, the journey begins with a diagnosis that changes everything. For others, it means a long road of treatment, recovery, and rebuilding life with a different kind of normal. And still, they rise. They rise to be present for their children, to fight for their families, and to protect their own wellbeing day by day.

At the Love Hope Dream Foundation, we walk beside these women. We see their strength not just in how they face the disease, but in how they choose to live with hope, dignity, and love. Our programs are rooted in the belief that healing is not only physical. It is also emotional, social, and spiritual. Every mother deserves care, compassion, and a supportive community that helps her thrive.

This Mother's Day, we celebrate the kind of love that heals. We honor the women who give so much to others, often without asking for anything in return. And we remind them, with our words and with our work, that they are not alone.

To every mother who is battling or has survived breast cancer:  
You are seen. You are loved. You are our inspiration.

From all of us at the Love Hope Dream Foundation.



National Cancer Survivors Month

## MORE THAN A SURVIVOR

### *A Tribute to Every Breast Cancer Warrior*

June is National Cancer Survivors Month, a time to recognize and honor those who have faced cancer and continue to move forward with courage, hope, and grace.

Survivorship is not just the end of treatment. It is every sunrise that a survivor wakes up and chooses to live fully. It is every moment of uncertainty met with bravery, every scar worn with pride, and every story shared that lights the way for someone else still in the fight.

For the breast cancer warriors we walk alongside, survivorship is complex. It can mean navigating long-term side effects, processing emotional trauma, and rebuilding a life that feels both familiar and entirely new. Many survivors carry the unspoken fear of recurrence, of health changes, of being misunderstood. And still, they carry on.

At the Love Hope Dream Foundation, we believe survivorship is a journey – not a destination. We stand with women who have completed treatment, those in long-term recovery, and those adjusting to a different kind of normal. Through wellness programs, survivorship support, and emotional care, we help women find healing in their own time, in their own way.

We celebrate the women who advocate, who raise awareness, who show up for others even when they're still healing themselves. These survivors remind us that cancer may have changed their path, but not their purpose.

To every survivor in our community: You are more than your diagnosis. You are proof that strength can rise from pain, that hope can outlast fear, and that recovery is possible.

You inspire us. Every day.

From all of us at the Love Hope Dream Foundation.



World Blood Donor Day

## A SHARED LIFELINE

*Gratitude for Those Who Give,  
Hope for Those Who Receive*

June 14 is World Blood Donor Day, a global moment to thank voluntary blood donors and raise awareness about the critical role of safe, accessible blood supplies. For many women living with breast cancer, especially those undergoing chemotherapy or surgery, donated blood is more than a resource – it's a lifeline.

Behind every bag of blood is an act of compassion. Someone chose to give, not knowing who would receive it. That quiet generosity can mean the difference between life and loss, exhaustion and strength, fear and hope.

At the Love Hope Dream Foundation, we see this impact firsthand. Some of the women we support face anemia, bleeding complications, or require transfusions during treatment. In those vulnerable moments, a single donation can mean renewed strength, stability, and hope.

World Blood Donor Day reminds us that healing is often a collective effort. That behind every step forward a patient takes, there may be countless others – doctors, loved ones, and strangers – helping to carry the weight.

This June, we honor the silent heroes who give so that others may recover. If you've ever donated blood, we thank you. If you've considered it, we encourage you to take that step. You may never meet the person you help, but your gift will live on in their strength, recovery, and story.

From all of us at the Love Hope Dream Foundation.

# HEALTH & WELLNESS CORNER



This section highlights the vital role of fitness, exercise, and a healthy lifestyle in breast cancer recovery, drawing from the experience of our Chief Advocate, Fang Fang Li. Also featured: a Dance Playlist from Coach McBry, along with a glimpse of Chef Roselle's nourishing Organic Tapa.



## THE COMEBACK IS REAL: FANGFANG LI'S PATH TO RECOVERY

I've been a stage 4 breast cancer warrior since 2021. If you ask me what's been the most important part of my battle and why I've recovered so quickly, I'd say – fitness.

I have a love-hate relationship with exercise. I was a varsity athlete in grade school and high school, but once I entered adulthood, I stopped exercising for over 20 years. I was too busy with my career and neglected my body. At 37, I was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer.

Chemotherapy is brutal, and I faced the usual side effects – no appetite, nausea, extreme fatigue, and weakness. Chemo doesn't just target cancer cells; it kills healthy ones too, lowering white blood cells. Many doctors often recommend bed rest, which is what most patients end up doing. But less movement means fewer calories burned, leading to even less appetite and even less energy. It's a vicious cycle that makes surviving treatment even harder. Everything feels impossible.

But my family didn't give up. They researched ways to improve my quality of life and manage the side effects. That's when we discovered that exercise was the key. Even simple movements burn calories, which turn into energy.

At first, I hated it. How could anyone expect me to exercise when I felt depressed, drained, and hopeless? But there should be no excuses. Even on chemo days, a 30-minute walk made a difference. It wasn't easy – I literally dragged my feet forward one step at a time.

With proper guidance, my appetite improved, and I was able to eat more. I started getting stronger, and the cycle reversed. Instead of feeling weaker, I recovered faster.

After chemotherapy, I focused on cardio and lightweight training for my arms and shoulders to prepare for my mastectomy. Six months later, I had my operation, and in less than two months, my left arm fully recovered, thanks to physical therapy.

From barely making it through a 300-meter run, I joined 10K and 16K fun runs.

From having a “disabled” arm with no lymph nodes, I can now squat 80kg on my shoulders.

From being a frail cancer patient, I now look and feel strong, with a toned body.

And from not knowing a thing about dance, I'm now training to compete internationally in Latin dance.

Thanks to fitness and exercise, I recover faster after every treatment – chemo, surgery, radiation, and my lifelong targeted therapy.

Fitness and exercise are powerful tools for a stronger body to fight this battle. With proper guidance, it's not just about surviving – it's about thriving.



## **ORGANIC GOODNESS: CHEF ROSELLE'S TAPA FOR WELLNESS**

Chef Roselle's Organic Tapa is a wholesome, nutrient-packed dish crafted with the finest organic ingredients. Perfect for fueling your body with essential vitamins and minerals, this tapa offers a delicious combination of flavors that nourish both body and spirit. Whether you're recovering or simply seeking a healthy meal, this dish provides the nourishment needed to keep you strong, energized, and ready to take on the day.

Chef Roselle generously sponsored this hearty meal for the Love Hope Dream Foundation's very first Fitness for Life session, fueling breast cancer warriors with strength and energy.

Now, the Foundation is opening its doors to more partners who wish to sponsor nourishing meals for our brave survivors in future sessions.

Join us in supporting hope, wellness, and our advocacy, one meaningful act at a time.



## THE BEAT DROPS: COACH MCBRY'S TOP 10 TRACKS

These handpicked tracks by Coach McBry will energize your body and spirit, keeping you motivated and moving with every beat.

### 1. UPTOWN FUNK

*by Bruno Mars*

### 2. DO YOU REMEMBER

*by Sean Kingston*

### 3. ME TOO

*by Meghan Trainor*

### 4. LEVITATING

*by Dua Lipa*

### 5. ROMPE

*by Daddy Yankee*

### 6. RUN THE SHOW

*by Kat DeLuna*

### 7. LEVEL UP

*by Ciara*

### 8. LOVE YOU LIKE A LOVE SONG

*by Selena Gomez*

### 9. WOMANIZER

*by Britney Spears*

### 10. AFTER HOURS

*by Kehlani*

# WONDER WARRIORS

In this section, we honor the extraordinary women who inspire, lead, overcome, and conquer.



This third issue, we shine a spotlight on **Natividad “Betty” Correos** and **Catalina “Kata” Almonte**, two remarkable women whose journeys embody resilience, leadership, and dedication.

# A BLESSING IN DISGUISE:

## BETTY'S STORY OF SURVIVAL

**NATIVIDAD CORREOS** | Breast Cancer Warrior for 10 Years



*“It’s okay to cry, but you have to smile, it’s free. And remember, don’t give up because when one door closes, many windows will open.”*



Betty's journey began in 2015 with a simple accident. One night, her 10-year-old son elbowed her in the chest while lying beside her. The pain lingered, prompting her to visit the hospital for a check-up. What started as a suspected nerve issue turned out to be stage 3-B breast cancer. "I was shocked. At that moment, cancer felt like a death sentence," she recalls.

As a working mom and caretaker for her elderly, stroke-stricken mother, the diagnosis was overwhelming. The financial burden weighed heavily when doctors informed her that treatment would cost three million pesos. "I asked my doctor, 'How long will I live?' Because in Dasma, burial is free." But her doctor urged her not to lose hope. With financial assistance and the support of her family, she began treatment.

Betty underwent six rounds of chemotherapy, a mastectomy, 33 sessions of radiation, and 18 cycles of targeted therapy. Just as things seemed to improve, a new tumor appeared in her other breast, this time stage 3-A. Nevertheless, she persevered, telling God, "If this is my fate, I accept it. Just guide me."



Her strength came from prayer, her community, and support groups like Ka-Boobs and Project Pink, which motivated her to keep going. "When I saw others fighting, I thought, 'If they can do it, so can I.'"

Today, she continues to mentor other patients and volunteers with cancer organizations. Her perspective changed, and through her journey, she learned that cancer is not a death sentence, but a blessing.

To those facing the same battle, Betty shares this message: "Let go and let God. You were given this challenge because you are strong enough to face it."

# THE MATRIARCH'S FIGHT:

## KATA'S TESTAMENT OF HOPE

CATALINA ALMONTE | Breast Cancer Warrior for 10 Years



*“ My view of cancer changed. There is hope as long as you don't give up. Fight through the pain and surrender everything to God. ”*



Kata has always been the pillar of her family. After being widowed in 1998 and becoming a single mother to six children, she juggled her responsibilities by working in her barangay's Clean & Green program while selling food to make ends meet. Life was hard, but she persevered until breast cancer entered her life and changed everything.

In 2013, she felt a lump in her breast but chose to ignore it despite her mother's concerns. "I thought it was hopeless. I told myself, 'I'm going to die anyway,'" she recalled. The pain became a silent burden she kept from her children, wanting to maintain her image as the strong matriarch.

By the time she sought help at Ospital ng Makati, the lump had significantly worsened, festering and emitting a foul odor. She was diagnosed at stage 3-B. Her treatment began with chemotherapy, followed by a major surgery that required skin grafting from her thigh. "It was painful in both places, but I had to bear it," she reflected. Despite the overwhelming pain and setbacks, her children supported her, with one even leaving college to care for her full-time.



When her doctor recommended radiation therapy, she knew she couldn't afford it, so she put her faith in God. "I told Him, 'Lord, you are my only medicine now,'" she affirmed. Through every night of pain, she prayed, fighting for her children, her bedridden grandchild, and her future.

Today, she stands as a ten-year breast cancer warrior, sharing a message of faith and courage: "Don't lose hope. Even when you have nothing left, God will carry you through. Just keep holding on."

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