



**Cindy Smith &
her Honey-do,
Rob**

Hi everyone! My name is Cindy Smith and this is my story.

Look back to August of 2009. I noticed my right breast had kind of collapsed in on the far right side. Doesn't that happen to everyone? Thankfully my doctor did not think so. I had my mammo done and the doctor told me that yes she was 96% sure I had cancer. That left 4% so I really was clinging to that until my next appointment with a surgeon. Those 4% did not pan out. I had breast cancer. Now what? Well my doctor explained everything I needed to do and we got started. On my 51st birthday I had my mastectomy and the beginning of my reconstruction surgery. MY BIRTHDAY! I had taken leave from work so I could do this whole thing. I think that is where I first felt how it really is to be a survivor. Everyone wanted to help me with whatever I needed! Can you feel the love? I felt the love - I felt the compassion - and it made me cry out of gratefulness.

I had 6 rounds of chemo starting in October of 2009. I went back to work after the 3rd treatment. I felt good and I had watched all of the Golden Girls I could. During my treatments I walked my dog Taylor everyday no matter how I felt. I had to get out. Remember you can go out but you have to get back too! My first 3 rounds were not too bad but the last 3 - whew! I had my husband by my side during every treatment and when the 6th round finally made me cry he said to me "No Cindy don't let this do this to you." There are many reasons I love this man and this is one of them. Chemo done!

Then the radiation April of 2009 - 28 days! I was glad when they were done. I wondered - is any of this working? My doctor told me "there is no report card. We just have to wait and see." OK - more tears. Let's move on from all the science experiments shall we!

After my treatments were all over my husband decided that we should train for a 40 mile organized bike ride on our tandem (another reason he is so wonderful). I felt great and I think it shows in my picture. I had so much fun.

I can say I have tried not to look back at the treatments but that's not true. I think about them every day. They are a part of me that I will never let go but they are over. I think anyone who has been through them knows what I mean. I think about this whole thing a lot and go on after about 5 minutes of serious thought. My breast cancer is a part of me and I embrace it and what it has led to. I have new friends because of the cancer and even learned how to fly fish at a survivor's camp. FLYFISH!

So that's my story and how my life is so good now. I am strong and happy. Not because of breast cancer but not in spite of it either. And boy you should see my hair - awesome!

Love all of you!

Cindy Smith