

Part of growing up is knowing that life must go on.

At one time or another we have all been told, “life goes on.” What this means is that when something happens, we have to be able to realize that we cannot do anything about it, and we must move on with our lives.

I have not really ever fully understood that life goes on, until I got a first hand account.

Two years ago, my family and I learned that my Uncle John had melanoma, which is cancer of the skin. The tumor has spread to his lymph nodes. I thought that the doctors would find the tumor early so they would be able to remove it. I really believed he would be cancer free. That was not the case. They caught the tumor too late. My uncle ended up having type four cancer. The mutated cells were starting to invade other cells around the region of his lymph nodes. For two years, he sought various treatments. This spring, he found out that he had a short time to live.

I was busy completing my freshman year of college. My parents decided not to make me fully aware of his diagnosis until I was home for the summer. Of course I was sad and angry, but there was nothing I could do. I went to visit him at his home a couple weeks later and saw that he looked extremely weak and fatigued. My brother, father, and I said our last “I love you’s” and goodbyes that day. Two weeks later, he passed away.

My family and I went to his wake on a Friday. I realized that life goes on the very next day. My cousin and his wife had a beautiful, healthy baby boy the day after my uncle’s wake. Once one soul was taken away from the world, another one was brought into the world. My mother referred to this as the “Circle of life.”

I believe that life goes on. I will never forget my Uncle John. The memory of him getting ready to go to rest and my cousin’s baby being born on the same day will remain with me forever.