

I believe things come to you when you least expect them and you have to handle them day by day to truly be happy.

During my most difficult semester of my college career, spring of my sophomore year, my mother was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. My mother came home from the hospital after a full hysterectomy and told my brothers and I that she had ovarian cancer that had been fully removed and would begin chemotherapy soon. Like so many things in life, my mom's diagnosis was unexpected and difficult to move beyond. Time that should have been spent studying or working turned into time sitting on the couch doing absolutely nothing productive. I failed my first Organic Chemistry II test because I realized there's more to life than constantly studying and trying to be the best. I also realized that if I didn't work hard enough, I wouldn't be happy, I needed to reevaluate how to spend my time. Instead of spending my entire weekend working two jobs and doing homework along with tutoring during the week, I decided it was worth it to spend less money and take a few days off to spend with my family and see my friends more. My mom's diagnosis was a major culture shock that made me reevaluate my life.

After what felt like endless chemotherapy treatments, my mom had her post chemo PET scan and was cancer free. After months of battle, my mom was hair free, depleted of energy most days and cancer free. Once my mom's hair was finally growing back and baby soft, she had gone back to work (part-time), another bomb dropped. The cancer had metastasized. I felt like I couldn't handle anything, how was I supposed to focus on school and work when my mom, the glue of our family was falling apart. I joined a research lab my junior year, and finally something unexpected happened that was good in my life. Besides finding a new possible career path, I found someone to help me get through my rapidly changing life. I had to choose to get over my ex-boyfriend and accept someone new despite some doubts. Choosing to accept someone new was instrumental in being able to process all the unexpected changes and face them head-on.

Things happen when you least expect them, good and bad. You need to accept the help of those around you and be open to change to be truly happy. Even when life hands you things you can't handle alone, if you admit you need help you can always find the help you need and learn who will stick with you through thick and thin.