

My Advice

Speak up for yourself
if you are feeling pain.
Don't let others speak for you.

Learn to be in tune
with what your body is telling you.
Rely on the nurses.
The doctors won't always be there,
but the nurses will be.
Befriend them.
Be kind to them.
And have a modicum of *patience*.

Keep a journal.
Written, digital, voice memos,
something you can put your thoughts
and feelings down on.

This may sound harsh:
don't rely on family alone.
Reach out to friends,
family friends.
You never know
who will truly be there for you.

Some will treat you differently
some will stay the same.
Keep things real.
Don't sugar coat it
to make others feel better.
Say what you really feel,
and don't give a crap about their reaction.

You might think
you don't need support groups.
Try one anyway.
See how you feel.
You might enjoy it,
and find community and friends.
They will understand the dark humor
you so desperately try to find in the darkness
because they are there too.

I know you might think
this diagnosis means your body has failed you,
and maybe you're right.
But you don't have to keep thinking that way.

You can fight.
Not always physically—
can't fight blood.
But there are other ways
you can take back control.

There might be a time where you are so weak
you can't even get out of bed,
but once you *can* again: **run**.
You might not be able to drive yourself for a while,
but once you can again: **drive like the wind!**
You might be hooked up to tubes,
pumped full of literal poison in a little cubical,
but when it's over: **go outside**.

You may be limited
for a while,
but a while is not forever.

It might sound cliche or cheesy,
but it's okay to just *feel* your feelings.

Let them out:
in the car,
in the doctors office,
in the mall,
in the quiet of the night
while the entire house is asleep,
Let yourself feel.

