

## Kim's Journal

On Friday, October 9, 1981, a new tumor was discovered on Kim's left pelvic bone. She decided right away that she would keep a journal to record her feelings during the long treatment period that would follow. This journal would contain the notes necessary for her to write a book on the subject of teenage cancer with the assistance of her favorite teacher, and confidante, Mrs. Betsy Dyches at Irmo High School. Much of Kim's thoughts and feelings were expressed in her letters to Mrs. Dyches, and Mrs. Dyches has allowed us to insert these letters in proper date sequence in this journal. At the end of the journal, we have included poems and quotations by others that had particularly impressed Kim.

Kim's last entry in the journal revealed that she was very much aware of the seriousness of having become infected with a disease such as chicken-pox in her immunosuppressed condition. She rapidly became too sick to continue writing, and on the night of January 29<sup>th</sup> was placed in intensive care. The chicken-pox continued to worsen, and attacked her nervous system control. On February 4<sup>th</sup> it was necessary to heavily sedate her, and place her on a respirator to give her body a rest. Although there were brief signs of improvement at times during the next few weeks, her nervous system had obviously been damaged too extensively to allow her to regain consciousness. She died from pneumonia while in a deep coma on February 27, 1982.

We hope that those who share this journal with us will find renewed strength, and courage to face their own battles in life. If so, Kim's desire to help others with the knowledge she gained from her experience will be fulfilled.

**Tom and Sandra Curtis**  
May 20, 1982

## Saturday, Oct. 10, 1981

It rained all day today and it was cold. Kris and I went to the **Biltmore** Factory Outlet today but the prices were too high. I bought some eye shadow at the drugstore and she bought a few things.

In the afternoon, Frances and I went to see "Arthur." I laughed through the whole movie. After the movie we went to **K-mart** and she bought 2 toy boxes and I bought a make-up case for Kris's birthday and a purse for myself. After that, we went back to Fran's place and talked.

The family all came over for dinner. David brought Anita. They are upset over the news.

Kris and I went to the 9:20 showing of "Only When I Laugh." I also bought two tapes in **Richway**.

## Sunday, Oct. 11, 1981

Today wasn't very good. I tried to do schoolwork but ended up in tears because I can't concentrate and I feel "lost."

About noon, I left for the hospital and played with Danny and visited with Brett Collins and Penny Medlin. I saw Danny get his therapy and I had an open talk with Penny.

I left my purse in the playroom to go make a phone call with Frances and someone stole my wallet. It had about 40-50 bucks in it. Dad gave me twenty dollars. I felt awful anyway. I felt like everything was going wrong and I talked to Frances for a long time and cried. The talk and tears helped and I felt a lot better when I left.

Frank and Sandra came over to see us tonight.

Mrs. **Dyches** called 2 of my teachers so I can work things out with school.

## Monday, Oct. 12, 1981

Today was much better. I think I have everything under control now. I told my friends about it at school today. **Merrie** Lackey **didn't** even know I had cancer. **Omayya** almost cried. She's moving to Saudi Arabia next month. I'll miss her so much.

My teachers were very nice and understanding. Miss Anderson is going to tutor me. I talked to Mrs. **Dyches** during her lunch duty time. She was very nice and has been so good to me. I stayed at her house Fri. night after I found out. I gave her some stuff to read about cancer.

Kris and I spent time together and we ate at Zorba's with Frances. Mrs. Shaw just found out about my tumor today and she gave me 3 gifts. It was so nice. Judy Bryson came on behalf of the Candelighters and gave us \$200. Some of the other mothers called Mom. It's been a busy day.

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 1981

Mom and I got up this morning and left for Gainesville at 6 o'clock. The trip was fine. I slept most of the way. We arrived about 1:30 P.M.

I saw someone named Dr. Foster and he said the CAT scans look like Ewings Sarcoma. I will have a bone scan and lung tomograms tomorrow and probably a biopsy Thursday. I went down to see Chuck. He was shocked and concerned about how we were taking it. He said he would stop his research project to give me radiation.

I got to use the WATS line so I called Frances and Linda. Frances is gonna call me daily she said.

I've been in good spirits. I think all will go well.

I'm in room A6-16. My roommate is Rosalie Keane. She's 14 and in for breast surgery.

Wednesday, Oct. 14, 1981

Today was a super yucko day. A ton of doctors came by and they all had bad things to say. My chemotherapy might be given in one or two huge doses. I'd be in isolation for 4 to 6 weeks. Even then, we have no promises. If it's osteogenic sarcoma, I'll most likely have my leg amputated. I've thought about it and that's okay with me.

I was upset and I cried when everyone left. I snuck down to the Wats line and called Mrs. Dyches. I felt much better after that so I called Kris and Kathleen. Frances never did call me today. I'm kind of mad about that. Mrs. Dyches said she would call her. Also, Mrs. Dyches is gonna call me tomorrow evening after surgery.

I feel like I'm okay now. I just want to get this over with. I want to get the biopsy over with so we will know what exactly is gonna happen. I'm gonna try real hard to get up and going after the surgery so I can get out of here.

Thursday, Oct. 15, 1981 (written one day late)

I had the biopsy today. I threw up and felt crummy afterwards. Frances and Mrs. Dyches both called and I cried both times. I felt so afraid that I was gonna die from this cancer.

I have a new roommate named **Shandra**. She's 13 but very small. She's gonna have one hip operated on tomorrow and one next week. She's gonna be in plaster pants.

### Friday, Oct. 16, 1981

I felt much better today. I got out of bed first thing and got going. I was in good spirits all day and I called Frances from radiation. She always knows what to say and she helps me to straighten out my feelings about this whole ordeal. Dr. Graham-Pole came in this evening and told me he wants to do the 4-6 week chemotherapy. He said my chances on the 6 month or 1 year chemotherapy aren't good at all. Also, he wants to start right away so I can't go home. I was very upset and I cried but I perked right up. I'll make it through. I'll be in a room by myself. Dad came into town today and he was upset, I could tell. I think if I keep a good attitude, it'll be a whole lot easier on them.

I called Frances right after I found out the news. I was in good spirits and **sh&said** she's proud of me. I love her. I also called Mrs. **Dyches** later on. She has confidence I can do this. I also called Kris and she might get to come one weekend. I'm gonna swipe a scrub shirt for each of us.

I'm just gonna be brave and not feel sorry for myself, Life is too precious to waste.

Dr. Davis, called me tonight. I love him.

I can't spell the drug I'll be taking but it's called **melaphalan**.

### Saturday, Oct. 17, 1981

I got out of **Shands** today. Thank goodness! I get a two day vacation before I have to go back for the long stay. Mom and Dad got me a motel room all by myself which is great. I'm glad they understand my need to be alone for a bit.

I like **Shandra Baily** and her family. They know so much about God and they are so kind. Mrs. **Baily** said **Shandra** wanted me to have her Amy Grant tape because she liked it so much. I was so touched. I saw a Yes and Know Bible Quiz book in the motel lobby tonight and I'm gonna buy it for her.

I've been so tired and sore today. This cancer business is sapping my strength.

I cried tonight.

### Sunday, Oct. 18, 1981

Today was so-so. I'm very sore from the tumor and biopsy. Also, I'm tired all the time and I always feel like I need a nap. We went to the Oaks Mall today. I got all the little

piddling things I need before my long haul in the hospital. Mom and Dad also bought me some cassette tapes. That was very nice. They are being good to me.

I cried again tonight.

Mrs. Dyches,

Oct. 18, 1981

Hey! I'm finally out of **Shands** for a break before the long haul coming up. I have a lot to say so this could turn out to be quite a long letter. The thing is, I'm lazy. I hate to write but I have so much to say.

I'm in Lake City in a Holiday Inn. Today is Sunday and I got out of **Shands** yesterday. My parents got me my own room for last night. They understand my need to be alone sometimes and you can't have that in a hospital. There's two double beds for just me. I told them I had enough room for an orgy. I'm sure they slept well after, I said that. Anyway, it was just what I needed. One thing was nice. I got to strip down in a wide open room without pulling curtains around my bed and I got to use the toilet without fear of someone walking in on me. Real luxuries.

We went shopping at the Oaks Mall in Gainesville yesterday. I got my hair cut short. The girl was very nice. She gave me her phone number and said to call her if I needed it trimmed or even washed and blow dried.

Guess who called me Friday night from his own phone! My doctor, Dr. Davis. He wanted to try to explain things to me and tell me he approved of it 100%. He wanted to see how I was holding up emotionally too. In the course of the conversation he said, "I love you." How's that for a good doctor?

Since I started writing the last paragraph, we packed up and moved to Gainesville once more. We went shopping and I got so tired. I slept for 21 hours when we got back. I'm still very sore. I'll be glad when they shrink that tumor. It's making my gut swell like I'm pregnant or something. I'm already making a lot of friends here. Some are from the first time and some are new, My Mom has friends here too. I really like my second roommate and her family. They are such nice people. They prayed for me. The girl's name is **Shandra** and she's 13 but she's a dwarf. She had one hip operation and she's having another next week. After that, she'll have on plaster pants for 2 months. While she was in surgery, her mother gave me a tape of hers and said that **Shandra** liked it a lot so she wanted me to have it. It is religious music by Amy Grant. I was so touched there aren't words to describe how I felt. Oh, by the way, did I happen to mention(?) she has a very nice sixteen year old brother. He really is nice. The kind of boy I've been waiting for. We talked a lot the night **Shandra** was in surgery.

I heard what my mother said to you on the phone. I think that's nice and it should put you at ease. No, I didn't tell her to say it. See, she doesn't resent it, she's very thankful

that I have someone to talk to. I've made and strengthened a lot of friendships since I met you with people my own age but I .... I can't find the right words to end that sentence. I think you know what I'm trying to say. I thank you for it.

My Mother and I are becoming close again I guess that's why our bad times hurt so much, because we've been so tight in the past. It's easy to take out your frustrations on the ones you love because the love never ends. I still must protect her and Dad though because as the parents of me, they are especially delicate. You've helped me to understand that kind of love.

This hotel is so hot. The AC only puts out air, not cold air. I'll be glad to get back to **Shands** and stop moving around like a bunch of gypsies. Gee **wiz**. This is the Days Inn and it has a bedroom with two double beds, a bathroom, a kitchen, and a living room. We stayed in the same place the first time and at one time, we had eight people here. My cousins and family from Pensacola came to visit. I expect my Mother will be having company on weekends. **Senta** and her Mom are coming. Kris is coming. Frances is coming too. She went to school here and her brother lives here so she'll have plenty to do. Kris will stay in the **hsopital** with me. It'll be good for her. The night before I left, Frances and I were gonna eat at **Zorba's** and I asked Kris to come along. I figured it would make her feel closer if she was in on our conversation.

I wish I had brought my **polaroid** camera so I could take a picture and send it back so everyone can see my haircut. It's cute but I'd rather have kept growing my hair long. There will be plenty of time for that. Dr. **Graham-Pole**, (my **chemo** doctor) said my hair might not all fall out. It really doesn't matter to me. If some comes out, it might as well all fall out.

I'm keeping a diary this time. It just says what happens each day. It'll be something that everyone can read. I'm also gonna keep a journal that no one can read. I'll only write in that when I feel like it, not always everyday.

Well, I must be going,. Thank you for doing so much for me. It means a lot to me. It makes this **shit** so much easier to bear. I love you and God bless you.

Love,  
Kim

Last minute note: (Mon. 10-19)

I assume you will get this on Tuesday and I know what Tuesday is for you! It's Day #1 for you and Day #1 for me. Please call on Tuesday night. My surgery is early in the morning so I should be okay. I know you can do this.

Love again,  
Kim

## Monday, Oct. 19, 1981

Today was awful. I've cried way too much. I need to change my attitude. I was doing so good. I got checked back into Shands and I've seen a million doctors. There's a resident assigned to me named Dr. Clark - a girl.

I called Frances, and Kris. I also called Kathleen but she wasn't home. I intend to call Mrs. Dyches about 10:15 or 10:30. I've had a headache and I've just felt yucky all day. I hope I can get myself straightened out soon.

## Tuesday, Oct. 20, 1981

I had my surgery today. They put in a Hickman catheter. I call it a hicky. It hurts now but they say it'll get better and I won't even know it's there. I'm sure glad I have it so I won't get stuck so much. I also got 1 1/2 pints of bone marrow taken from the back of my right hip. That is quite sore. I was so sleepy and people kept coming into my room. I appreciate their visits but I felt awful and needed rest. Even though I wasn't sleeping I kept my eyes closed so I would not have to talk. I started perking up later on that night and Shandra's mother came in and read to me from the Bible and prayed with me. When I came back from surgery, there were flowers and a card from the Bailys. They are truly wonderful people.

I started getting a fever so they beat on me. I had to turn on both sides and sleep. Needless to say, I didn't get much sleep.

Mrs. Dyches called and she made it today without a cigarette. I'm so glad. This is her first day.

## Wednesday, Oct. 21, 1981

Today was great. I got up out of bed, washed and put on one of my gowns.

I met Eric. He has Ewings Sarcoma all over and will be going through the same treatment as me. We played backgammon. He got released for a long weekend.

I also met Rennie. She had some kind of neurological cancer and has been 5 years without. Dr. Barbosa is her doctor.

I talked to Mrs. Dyches on the phone. She didn't smoke today either. That makes two days! She said we're gonna write a book. I think I am gonna write a pamphlet for teenagers at RMH. I'll get some other teenagers to help me.

## Thursday, Oct. 22, 1981

Today started out awful. I threw-up four times this morning but I got a suppository and slept in the afternoon.

I got x-rayed and painted for radiation. Chuck is gonna do it. He came off a research project to do this for me. I'll be radiated two times a day for about 3 weeks. He said my tumor should stop hurting in a few days.

Kathy [Enfinger](#) is in for chemotherapy. It's good to see her. Her hair is gone and she has a Hickman catheter too.

I called Kris and she's coming down with Dad tomorrow. She said the car is absolutely loaded down with stuff. I can't wait, we'll have so much fun.

### Friday, Oct. 23, 1981

I was nauseated again today. I don't know if it's from the radiation or from nerves. I get the radiation to my rear end and I have hot pink ink all over it. It itches so much. Also, Kris and Dad got here about 3:30 today. When they came to the hospital, I suddenly felt so much better. They brought gifts and cards from home. I got a card from the [Shreves](#) and one from my whole history class. All the cards, letters, gifts, and phone calls mean so much to me.

I called Mrs. [Dyches](#) today. She's gone 4 whole days! She sent a Bald is Beautiful poster with a picture of Katie on it. It's so cute.

Kris met Steve and for once she met a person she didn't know what to say to. He's so crazy. I went into [Shandra's](#) room to see if she was back from surgery and she wasn't. The only one in the room was her grandmother. She was upset so I hugged her and let her cry on my shoulder. I really love her and the [Bailys](#).

### Friday, Oct. 23, 1981

Dear Mrs. [Dyches](#),

I didn't write yesterday because I was sick to my stomach all day. I am again today but I'm tired of just lying there feeling like s---. Maybe I'll feel better if I do things. I started getting radiation treatments today. I go twice a day. I lie on my stomach and get my rear end radiated. One of those times they do my spine because a suspicious area showed up on the bone scan and x-rays. So as Chuck said, "We're gonna "blast" it." Chuck is the very good-looking radiation resident. He's also my "friend." Chuck said I will be experiencing nausea, [diarrhea](#) (can't spell), and burning when I urinate. I won't be getting chemotherapy for another week or so.

I took the bandage off yesterday from where they did my bone marrow harvest. You wouldn't believe the holes they poked in me. There must be 25 of them. Chuck went in to watch them during the operation and he got so grossed out, he had to leave.

I got some mail yesterday! One of them was a ' grammar lesson.

Thanks, it's cute. I also got a letter from Kris with before and after pictures of the girl with the big **boobs**. Also, the library sent me flowers. That was so sweet of them. I'm gonna go now, I feel crummy.

I'm back now. It's Saturday morning now. Kris is doing some home work so I decided to write to you.

I've decided something. I'm not going to keep a journal that no one reads. I'll just write to you. Somehow, I want someone to know what I'm feeling when I write this stuff. I don't want to keep it in. When we talk on the phone, it can be mostly information type stuff and when, I write, I won't bother with a lot of "I did this or that today" type stuff. I'll write mostly feelings and heavy stuff like that.

I finished the book last night called Too Old To Cry,\_Too Young To Die. In the first part, nine teenagers tell their story. Some of these people are from **Shands**. Then in the rest of the book, they have sections on stuff like going bald, relapse, medical expenses, handling parents, etc. It has the person's name and what he said about the subject. It's such a good book. I found out that a lot of other teenagers have the same feelings as me and some have totally opposite feelings. Mom and I are gonna get us a copy and I'll let you read it when I get home. There was a case history written by one girl that I can really relate to except for one thing. She died in the end. I think I'll take some of the topics in the book and write to you what I think and how I feel.

By the way "Mrs. **Dyches**," if you happen to notice any grammar and punctuation mistakes, DON'T. That's not my bag at all. When we write the book, **that'll** be your department, Okay?

Later on:

Kris and I just went down to the cafeteria for lunch. She had cookies and **cheetos**. I had a pack of crackers and **cheetos**. Real nutrition. So what, you only live once. Whatever weight I gain over the weekend will be blasted off by radiation. Guess what! **Chemo** cures **zits**!

I have to tell you what happened last night. **Shandra Baily** was having her second hip operation and I went to her room at about 7 or 8 o'clock to see if she was back. No one was in her room except her grandmother. I could tell she was kind of upset so I asked her what was wrong. She said **Shandra** had a harder time since this was her second operation and she was so much weaker. Then I hugged her and she broke down and cried on my shoulder. I told her to go ahead and cry.

She's so short and petite and I love her to death. For once I could help someone else during a bad time.

Later on again:

It's now Saturday night and I'm gonna finish this letter tonight or tomorrow morning so I can send it through Kris and Jimmy. I had Kris take a picture so you can see my

haircut but the picture is so gross. Send it back to me, okay? It's so gross. Kris being here this weekend has really been good for me. Physically I have felt much better and she keeps me laughing. Today, we went back to my mom's little apartment. I went to the bathroom and stayed kind of long so Kris stood outside the door reading a magazine article about constipation. I laughed so hard.

They paint hot pink lines on you to map out your radiation field and I've been leaving pink everywhere. Now my mom's potty has permanent pink ink on it. Oh Lord! Not to mention my underwear, bra, nightgown, and the hospital bathtub at the end of the hall.

Oh yeah, I was just gonna write "feelings" in my letters. Sorry I got off the track a little. I'll be throwing in a little humor every now and then. I'll pick a topic out of the book and write my feelings about it. Hopefully, by the time I get home, I will have written about every topic. The chapter I'm gonna start with is called "The Hospital Scene: Take a Walk in the Zoo." The first topic is "On the Inside: Night **Stalkers**, Nurses, and other Goofs." The staff on six west is very nice. Almost all of them seem to understand that you are going through some trying times so they are **friendly and let you talk** to them. On the other hand, when you want to be alone to rest or think, there is always someone coming in with medicine, to take vital signs, to take you down for tests, or whatever else they can dream up. The first day I came in for my long stay, I cried all day and I don't know why. Some people patted me and said, "Don't cry." That's wrong because it's okay to cry.

I've met some very special people inside these walls. Knowing them makes me feel special also.

It's funny to be in a hospital for a long time, observing people with special problems, handicaps and the wonderful way in which they deal with these things, then to walk out into a normal world. It's very strange and fascinating.

Well, that's it. I hope you like this one too! It'll help our book.

I love you,  
Kim

Saturday, Oct. 24, 1981

Today was GOOD. Finally, a morning where I didn't get up and feel like puking. It was fun having Kris spend the night. We got up this morning, got dressed and roamed the halls. Then we went shopping. I was so out of energy. When we went to the Days Inn, I took a nap. Then we went to Nero's for pizza and cheesecake. Kris was so crazy.

Mom and Dad were going out and Mom looked so pretty. I almost didn't recognize her when she came to pick us up from the Mall.

I can really see a change in Dottie from worrying about **Shandra**. I went to take **Shandra** a present and she was crying so hard she couldn't stop. I feel so sorry for her. I hope things get better for them quickly.

I'll be sorry to see Kris go tomorrow. Her being here has made me feel so much better.

### Sunday, Oct. 25, 1981

Most of today was the pits but it is ending quite well.

Kris and Dad left town about 10:30 this morning. After that everything just seemed so quiet and dull and I got to feeling low. I guess I shut myself off and started feeling a tiny bit sorry for myself although I tried very hard not to. Frances called and she seemed to understand a little but I feel like I have to say the right things to her. I don't want her to leave me because I love her and I need her support so much.

I finally got a chance to use the WATS line in privacy so I called Mrs. **Dyches**. I ended up really crying hard and that felt good. I only wish I wasn't so far away from home.

For the second time today, they sent me the wrong things on my tray so a nurse named Anne took me out to **Wendy's**. She was so nice. I really enjoyed meeting her.'

**Shandra's** grandmother, "**Nannie**", went out and bought me a gift and it was sitting on my bed when I got back from talking to Mrs. **Dyches**. It was a plaque and a devotional book for teenagers. That was one of the best gifts I have gotten. I love her so much. I love the whole **Baily** family, They showed me Jesus and an unexplainable peace of mind. I will really miss them.

I wish I had written down the day I asked Jesus into my heart so I could remember. He is becoming so very important to me. The **Bailys** have changed my life.

### Sunday, Oct. 25, 1981

10:31 A.M. - I am reading "Sunshine" right now. I read it after I had cancer before and I thought Kate was selfish to die and leave her baby behind just because she didn't want her leg amputated. Now I see that she had very good reasons for her decision and it doesn't matter what I think. I have no right to judge her and I hope people don't judge me too much. She seems to be a very together person and I admire her.

11:25 A.M. - The time that my cancer hurts the worst is when I think about how much others are hurting because of it. My parents and others that love me are hurt by it. I can make my hurt stop but I can't make there's stop.

10:00 P.M. - Life is so beautiful. There is so much to experience, so much love, laughter, tears, and sunshine to experience. I am truly going to try to improve myself so I can experience more of **t'he** qualities life has to offer. The first thing I am going to work on is trying to be kind to people and considerate. I will try to help in any way I

can and I'll try to think of the other guy instead of myself all the time. That is a very important trait.

Oct. 26, 1981

Today was a good day. I stayed pretty busy all day. The radiation in the morning made we want to puke but the one in the afternoon was okay. In the morning they do my back and that must hit my stomach. I bet that stuff will burn!

I went to the dental clinic and saw Frank Friedman. He's so cute. I see why Frances is so crazy about him. They are probably gonna take off my braces and give me a retainer.

I got some mail today and I love it! I love getting mail.

Mrs. Castles sent me some work and I'm gonna work real hard on it tomorrow morning. I want to practice working while I feel **yuck**.

I got a letter from Mrs. Allen of all people and it said to call her, so I did.

Frances called tonight. She's so sweet. I told her I was worried about Mom and she said to worry about me first. That was the first lecture. The next one was to get out and find someone to help tomorrow. The only other one I can think of is when you are feeling physical pain, think positive things. I'll save that for later.

12:00 P.M. - The **Baily's** just gave me an album they made. It has a picture of Dottie and **Shandra** on the cover. I can't get over how nice they have been.

7:05 P.M. I decided that I'm going to write a book this time instead of making a scrapbook. I'm going to write in this is journal as much as I can and try to get "all the facts." When I can't write, (when I'm too sick) I'll get Mom to write for me.

Right now, I'm listening to my "Endless Love" tape. I got a letter from Mrs. Allen today and it says to call her collect but I think I'll go down to radiation and call her on the WATS line. The letter she wrote was very nice. She sent a picture of Jennifer., If I get a call through to her, I'll write about it.

Nanny is going home today. I'll really miss her because I love her so much. They said we can stop and see them in **Cobbtown** on our way to or from Gainesville sometime. I know I'll keep in touch with the **Baily's**. I'll see them later on in life sometime.

8:00 P.M. - I called Mrs. Allen. Nothing special was said.

Tuesday, Oct. 27, 1981

Today was a good day. Each night I go to bed, I feel like I've really come a long way in just that one day. I love that feeling. I got nauseated from radiation again today and about 10 o'clock A.M., I felt drugged, not just sleepy but drugged. I slept for about 11 hours and had some horrid dreams. It was weird.

I tried to do some latin today but I didn't get much done. We are supposed to make a coat of arms with symbols about our life and it gives me a yuck feeling when I think about it.

Mom and I went shopping today but we didn't buy anything.

Steve Adashkek and I had a nice long talk this evening. We started talking about religion and then we got into other things. I learned a lot and I'm sure I will learn more from him.

After my talk with Steve, I played cards with 3 guys with Cystic Fibrosis. They all seemed to be so nice and have a good attitude.

When I came back to my room, Mrs. Dyches called. She said I am president of the Media Club. That's super! I'm really gonna put forth effort to be a good president. They won't be sorry.

9:16 A.M. - Frances called me last night from home. I hate for her to call me from home and have to pay for it but if I mention it to Fran, she might get mad. She hates to talk about money.

I'm working on latin right now. Since it's my only subject now, I can really learn it well for when I go back.

5:40 P.M. - Dr. Davis just called me and I'm so glad. It's good to talk to him. He said Mrs. Dyches called him and asked him a bunch of medical questions.- I don't mind. I was just surprised.

I have a student nurse named H ----- that is driving me crazy! This is the second day. She seems to just "hang" around in here. it bugs me to death. I don't like people staring at me while I'm trying to eat my breakfast. I guess it's wrong of me to not like her because she's trying to be nice but I just can't help it. -She bugs me!

This journal is turning out kind of hap-hazard. I need to write in it as if I was writing a book.

7:25 P.M. - I just had a long talk with Steve Adashkek. He's so much like Frances. It's amazing. They both know where they stand on life. Steve said he takes his talents and does his best to be the best person he can be. I'm going to do that. He does it to benefit others as well as himself. I feel that if I do that, it won't be so bad to die. I can be proud of each day and know I've done my best. That's what living life to it's fullest is all about.

Dear Mrs. **Dyches**,  
Tuesday, Oct. 27, 1981

I've picked up little **tid-bits** about life since I got cancer but I've finally put it all together somewhat. I know what living life to it's fullest is all about now. It is using your talents to be the best person you can be. It is being open minded to new things, experiences, and possibilities. It is always striving to learn new things so that you can better yourself and in turn, benefit others. There is no ultimate goal in life. If you ever stop growing, changing, and **learning**, you have stopped living. No one is better than the other guy. We always have things to offer and things we can benefit by from others.

To know how precious life is, you must face death or experience the death of someone close to you. I am sorry I spent time being depressed but I think it made happiness so much sweeter. There is good in everything. Sometimes it isn't so easy to see but it's always there.

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 1981

This is after my phone call to you. A nurse came in to my room and told me she wanted me to go talk to a sixteen year-old girl that just came in. She has **osieogenic sarcoma** in her knee and she's only known since Friday. I think she just found out today that they are thinking about amputating her leg. Anyway, I talked to her and her parents for a while, then they left the room and she started crying about her leg. Sometimes I think this is a bunch of **shit**. I mean, I think she'll adjust to it and all but why should she have to. I know her and her family are in shock now and going through a very traumatic time. It's just a bunch of crap.

But then again, what was I just saying about there being good in everything? Well, that's true for me but maybe not for her. I don't exactly feel anymore that I've gotten a **crappy** deal. Although sometimes, times are very hard. I'm not saying I enjoy this. I'm saying a lot of good has come from it and if I could go back to April 1979 and change my future, I wouldn't. I feel special I guess. Like God chose me because he knew I could do it and He chose me for all the good things that have come from it. Without suffering and crap, there would be nothing special about this. Oh well, I can't change things for that girl. I can only try to help her. Now that I've gotten that off my chest, I feel better. Thanks!

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 1981

Today was also good. I got a lot of **latin** done this morning and my nausea didn't hit me until later on but it did hit and it stayed a while. I guess if I just let it come and get it over with, that's better than fighting it.

**Shandra** left today. I'll miss them but they'll be back in two weeks. I'll be right in the middle of my chemotherapy. Before they left, Mom asked Pete to pray.

Mom and I went out to eat at **Nero's**, then we went shopping. I got some little **X-mas** ornaments to make for my friends. We talked some and it was nice.

I called Fran and Mrs. **Dyches**. Fran said she's "proud" of me.

I met a girl today that just found that she had **osteo** and will probably have her leg amputated. She started crying when we were alone.

I got a roommate today named Sharon **Tereo**. She's 20 **yrs.** old, has **Ewings**, and looks like a concentration camp victim.

8:05 A.M. - I just finished bathing, washing my hair, and dressing. I feel great! Today will be good, I know. In my devotional this morning, I learned that you must be willing to give up anything to follow Jesus.

This journal is still **yucko**. I write much better when I am writing to Mrs. **Dyches**. I guess I need to write to her a lot so I'll have plenty of material for my book. She wrote to me and she's gonna send it to me by way of Dad. That means I'll get it Friday. I'll mail her a letter every Saturday. I'm not going to call her any more either. The WATS line is getting hard to use. She called last night and said I'm president of the Media Club. I'm glad but I wonder if they picked me because I've got cancer. Well, I'm gonna be a damn good president anyway.

### Thursday, Oct. 29, 1981

Today was **crappy**. My main problem is Sharon. She wants the door shut, dark, and no noise. The nurses are going to try to move her out. Nancy said she didn't think I needed a depressed person around me and she's right. I'm really struggling not to get that way since Sharon came. Towards the end of the day, I decided that some things were going to change. The door stays open, I stop tiptoeing around, and I get to play my radio softly. I wish I could have talked to Frances tonight. I know she would have gotten me on the right track.

**Dondra** met Rennie and decided to get her leg amputated. I'm so relieved to hear that. **Dondra** is so nice.

Today, Sandy Callahan came up. I didn't even recognize her at first, her hair is so long. She said she had a lump in her stomach and was fixing to have a CAT scan. She's been off **chemo** for three years. It turned out to be a muscle. She was angry though, before she found out what it was. She kept saying, "Why do we have to go through it again?" "Why us?" I felt funny because I accept mine. I don't think, "Why me?" I think it's okay. I trust God for his decision.

I cried and cried tonight. I didn't even read the Bible or pray before I went to sleep.

8:15 A.M. - When I get home, I'm gonna really take care of my health. I'm gonna eat a good balanced diet of highly nutritious foods I'll take vitamins, and I'll jog. I hope I lose enough weight here so I won't have to diet when I get home. I'm going to set a goal weight now of 105 **lbs.** **If;** I weigh that, or below, I won't have to diet when I get

home. I'm not going to force feed myself. If I'm not that hungry, I'll only eat a little. And I won't gain weight!

4:40 P.M. - I am so bored and depressed right now. Today has been lousy. I didn't do any schoolwork, writing or much reading today. I just feel in the pits. I hope no one calls so no one will know because I know I can't hide it if someone does call. Maybe I'll feel better if I talk to someone. I don't know. I just don't feel like doing anything.

6:00 P.M. - I'm gonna stand my ground with that girl Sharon. I'm not gonna leave the door shut all the time. I feel so shut in. Every time I hear someone out in the hall, I just wish it was someone coming in to me. I wish Cyndi would come in and talk to me. I want someone to talk to so badly. I'm not keeping this room all shut up tomorrow. I'm too susceptible to depression and I won't let that screw things up. I need my good attitude more than ever right now.

7:30 P. M. - Dondra feels a lot better now. She's accepted the fact, they they are gonna amputate her leg. She says take her leg off, not amputate. She's so sweet, I know she'll be a fighter.

I just turned my radio on and Sharon asked me to turn it down because she's gonna try to sleep. Good gosh, that's all she does. I hope someone kicks me in the ass good if I ever get that way.

I wrote some stuff to Mrs. Dyches but I don't know if I'll send it. Maybe. I seem to write so much better when I'm writing to her so from now on, I'll write everything "to" somebody. My writing is so haphazard that my book will be hard to write.

October 29, 1981

7:05 A.M.

Dear Frances,

I was depressed last night. I wish I could've talked to you because I know you would've straightened me out. I wanted someone to talk to me and hug me. Steve came by and that helped but later on, I cried and cried. I wanted someone to find me so they would help me. I guess it's all for the better. If I talked to you, you would've known I was depressed and I guess it's better if you didn't know. I want you to keep being proud of me.

Friday, Oct. 30. 1981

Today was much better. Sharon felt better so she was awake more and wanted to talk.

**Dondra** had her leg amputated today.. I pray to God that she comes through it okay emotionally.

I got my braces off today. The orthodontist was a woman and she was so funny. We had a good time. My teeth feel funny. It feels great. No more metal digging into my gums.

Sandra, **Senta**, and Lori came today with Dad. I was so happy to see them. We went out to eat at "**Nero's**." They brought so many gifts. I feel like I don't deserve them. But then again, it's nice to be thought about. Sometimes, I feel so homesick.

Someone up here died today. The emergency alarm went off and everyone went running down there. Even though I didn't know him, it disturbs me.

Saturday, October 31, 1981

I kept forgetting it was Halloween today. It was my second Halloween the hospital. I was in in 1979.

I had fun today. **Senta**, **Lori**, and I went shopping at the Oaks Mall. I bought a **Gator** shirt. Then we saw a movie called "Night School." It was really gross. After that, we went back to the motel and told dirty jokes. Then we went out to eat at the "Red Lobster." Everyone except Dad got shrimp but I couldn't eat very much of mine at all.

I've decided to live it up and eat what I want this weekend: Monday, I'll start watching it. Besides, my stomach hurts when I eat.

I came back to the hospital and walked outside with Bill and Rennie. Bill is a real nice guy. He has CF.

Dear Mrs. D.,

Saturday, Oct. 31, 1981

I love it. It's so cute. Which one am I???

I got your letter on Friday morning so it got here quicker than my Dad. Don't feel like my letters are better than yours. That's not true. Your's being "grammatically incorrect" makes me feel better. Personally, I think grammar and punctuation is a pain in the rear end.

The girl with **osteogenic** sarcoma in her leg (**Dondra**) got her leg amputated yesterday. I haven't seen her because she did a lot of sleeping and I went out on a pass last night. At first, she wasn't going to let them but I got this 18 year old girl to talk to her (Rennie). Rennie had her leg amputated 5 years ago and has had no cancer since. I couldn't talk

her into it because I've never had it done. After her talk with Rennie, she felt a lot better and decided to have it done.

Oh yeah, I love the picture you sent. Such a lovely bunch. I have a third bald baby picture to add to my collection but guess who's I love the best! These other two are 3 and 4 months. They are supposed to be bald. But Kate??? She's adorable.

Well, I'm about done for now. Write me again because I love getting letters too! When I feel low and can't call, I can read your letters. The WATS line is getting increasingly hard to use. Goodbye! I love you.

Kim

**P.S.:** I love your "lay" card and the "T.L.C." card. However, my Mother took me into a dirty card shop last week and I saw those very cards - and more. What are you doing shopping in places like that? Clean up your act Ms. D.!

### Sunday, Nov. 1, 1981

Today was the typical **blah** Sunday for a while. Dad, Sandra, **Senta**, and **Loi** came by to visit for a bit before they left. I am so glad they came. **Senta** found my empty syringe at the motel so **Loi wanted one** also. I gave her my squirt gun.

After they left, my "blah" mood came on so I broke down and called Mrs. **Dyches**. We talked for 10 minutes.

Mom's car broke down so she came to the hospital about 4 o'clock with Eric's family and I rode back with them to the Days Inn. Eric and I played backgammon, ate pizza, and watched "Every Which Way But Loose" on **T.V.** I'm glad to know him because he's so nice. It feels good to not be going through this alone. Also, it's good for Mom to have some friends through all this.  
We came back at about 10 o'clock.

### Monday, Nov. 2, 1981

Today was busy. Catherine Williams came back today. She's my favorite nurse because she's so nice, cheerful, and **CRAZY**.

I threw up from radiation this morning. I didn't eat at all until 5 o'clock.

Rennie came in and played backgammon. I beat her 3 times straight.  
Eric came in and we played tapes on my player and played a little bit of Rummy. While we were playing, they came and got me for a heart scan, then I had radiation, and then a Pulmonary function test. I didn't get back to the room until 5 o'clock.

**Dondra** moved in today and I'm glad. I don't mind having her for a roommate at all. Her family is nice.

Right now I'm waiting on them to start my **I.V.** then they will wait 4 hours and give me my **cytotoxin**. They said I'll probably be getting sick from it. It's already 7:30 so I hope they get on with it soon. I'm getting closer and closer to the big stuff. I hope I lose lots of weight I want to get down to 105 **lbs**.

**Dondra** said her stump looks like an overgrown **boob**. I'm glad she has a sense of humor and a good attitude. She told the doctor to go find her leg and scratch it.

### November 3, 1981

I got the **cytotoxin** at 3:00 this morning and it felt as gross as it always did. I felt okay when I woke up but after radiation, I felt horrible. I threw up twice and slept most of the day. I didn't eat anything at all until after 6 o'clock, then I ate plain yogurt.

**Cyndi** and Cathy were off today but they had a meeting here so they came up to see me. They were so crazy. I laughed so much.

**Dondra** has so many flowers and I said I was so unloved that no one ever sent me flowers. So **soon** after

**Cyndi** and Cathy left, I got some roses from **Cyndi**.

I hope someone calls me tonight.

I ended up calling Mrs. **Dyches** on our phone bill.

### Wednesday, Nov. 4, 1981

I really got depressed today. **Cyndi** was on the morning shift and I got Laura to assign her to my room. She had some pictures of her boyfriend, Tim. He is good looking! Anyway I was so depressed that I kept feeling like I was gonna cry and I almost did with **Cyndi**. She said Cathy and her wanted to take me out and get me drunk! She was nice and asked if there was anything she could do. I got back into a good mood and I was looking forward to Cathy coming on so I could talk and damned if she did get assigned to me. I was so mad and she knew it. We at least got to go down and eat together. We had a nice talk then. After that, **Dondra** and I played "**Uno**" with Bill and Craig in the conference room. We laughed so hard and had such a good time.

I had called Fran earlier at work and she couldn't talk so she made me promise to call her collect late that night. I did and she said she was surprised I called. She didn't think I would. She also said Tina and her didn't think I would be seen bald. I'll show'em! Anyway the day ended up good. I guess I'll have to put up with a bad day here and there. I'm thankful Cathy and **Cyndi** care. It's good to have Mrs. **D** and Fran, but they aren't here.

## Thursday, November 5, 1981

Today was much better. I went to Steve's apartment with Rennie and baked a cake. We botched up the glaze so she had to go out and buy more chocolate chips.

It was raining and **yucky** outside but it was good to get out with someone besides Mom.

I had to say goodbye to Miss Judy today.

**Dondra** is leaving tomorrow.

## Friday, November 6, 1981

**Dondra** went home today. She was so happy and excited. I am glad for her but I sure do miss them. They are gonna come back Tuesday to see me.

I had **Cyndi** for this morning and Cathy again this evening. **Cyndi** is so nice. I just hate it that she has other patients sometimes. I wish we could just talk and talk for a while. I don't feel the urge now to talk or write to Mrs. **Dyches**. They are there and I am here.

We sent out for pizza tonight. I forgot my promise that I was gonna not eat junk stuff. It's no big deal because I've been losing weight anyway, but starting tomorrow, I'm gonna be strict. I can honestly say my stomach feels burnt from radiation because it does. It hurts when I eat.

## Saturday, Nov. 7, 1981

I am writing this on Monday, so I don't really remember what happened.

They moved in an 8 year old girl named Penny that just had a kidney transplant. I was gone all day so I wasn't around her much. She's from Myrtle Beach, S. C.

The Butcher's came up from Tampa for a while. Amanda looks like your typical Korean. She's very nice. Mary has grown **alot**. She's 11 and as tall as Amanda. We ate lunch at the Red Lobster.

I went back to the hospital and got another pass and Eric and I spent a good deal of time together. He's feeling great and has been stuffing in the food all day.

Today was my 2 yr. anniversary off chemotherapy.

## Sunday, November 8, 1981

Today was fun. I got out on a pass and went to-the Days Inn. Rennie and Steve came too and Steve showed slides from their camp. After that, Rennie took me back to the

hospital so I could get ready to go out with Cyndi and Cathy. Cyndi didn't get back from Lake City so Cathy and I went to a movie. It was called "French Lieutenant Lady" and it was awful, but I don't care. We still had fun. After the movie, we went to Cyndi's apartment. When I came back to the hospital, Eric was still up (1:30 A.M.) and I stayed up with him until 3 A.M. I had a little bit to drink so I was feeling good. I was gonna try to stay up all night but when the alcohol started wearing off, I had to crash.

### Monday, Nov. 9, 1981

I didn't get my chemo until 4:30 today. It was a rough day. I just got tense and all. Maria stayed late to help me. Cyndi was my nurse. Cathy was there to hold my hand when I cried.

I only threw up once.

### Tuesday, November 10, 1981

I was bored today. Cyndi and Cathy didn't work but they came up to see me.

They made plans to meet at the Holiday Inn for Happy Hour. Cathy and Cyndi said if I don't like someone, I can really get hostile and intimidating. I'm going to work on that.

I had Cindy Depka for a nurse this evening. She was nice and came in to talk a couple of times. She knows I need it.

### Wednesday, Nov. 11, 1981

Eric went on isolation today. He feels bad.

I still have the two I.V.'s. I wish I didn't have the one in my elbow because I want to take a shower.

### Thursday, November 19, 1981

Mrs. Dyches called.

Bad day - took 6 times to start I.V.

### Friday, Nov. 20, 1981

Much better day. Susan, Kris, her Mon and Dad came. Cyndi washed my hair. 5<sup>th</sup> day of confinement. Frances called. Hair is beginning to fall out.

1. Get down to 100 lbs.
2. Build up jogging to 2 miles a day.
3. Learn a foreign language.

4. 4. Learn to cook.

### November 29, 1981

8:15 A.M. I am still in **Shands** and I'm gonna start over today. I've been acting like a spoiled brat and I'm tired of myself. When I go home, I'll be a completely changed person.

### Monday, Nov. 30, 1981

7:40 A.M. - Cathy just left. She worked the 7 P.M. - 7 A.M. shift last night and it was her. last day on **6-West**. I was at a loss of words to say how much I appreciated her help and friendship. She and **Cyndi** are something special. I'm only sorry they had to see the brat side of me. I'm ashamed of that and I've learned my lesson. From now on, I'm going to be thankful for my blessings, think of others instead of just me, and I'm gonna be a strong fighter and work for what I want.

When I get home, I'm gonna be faced with another difficult challenge. I'll have to relearn how to live a normal life with normal people. I can do it, I know I can. God will give me the strength to do and endure whatever I must.

12:10 P.M. - Mom just held my hand and told me that Kathy **Enfinger** is terminal. I can't stop crying. She's such a beautiful person. I guess that's why God wants her with him.

6:25 P.M. - I'm all alone at Mom's apartment. Tomorrow I'm gonna start going through all my tests to see what my hip looks like. I can't wait to go ahead and find out if the chemotherapy worked or not. My legs hurt me a lot. I can't help but wonder if it's the cancer on my spine, or not. Being alone feels good. It's been so long since I've had a chance to be alone with my own thoughts.

Life is precious. I have to do my best from now on. I have to be smiling and happy through my own personal suffering. I won't put up a fuss anymore when I have to have **I.V.'s**, bone marrows, or other painful things done. I won't complain or tell people how bad I feel or how much pain I'm in. I'll **co-operate** with the doctors and nurses. I'll always be nice to them. I'm not gonna complain anymore and expect my way all the time and be selfish. I'm going to make the best of all the time I have.

### Tuesday, Dec. 1, 1981

1:10 P.M. -I was supposed to get tests done today to see if the cancer is still there but one of the doctors decided to wait until Thursday-and Friday. I'll get my bone marrow biopsy on Friday afternoon. If I get it on the first shift, I'll get Eva to go in with me. If it's the second shift, I'll get Cindy **Depka**. I think **Cyndi** Woods has the day off. I'm gonna be brave and not put up a fuss. if I cry, I'll do it quietly.

### Wednesday, Dec. 2, 1981

7:00 P.M. - It looks pretty certain, I'm going home on Saturday. I get a bone marrow biopsy on Friday afternoon then I'll get discharged. I'll be so glad to get home. I'll have my own room back, cleanliness, privacy, friends, everything. I'll be sad that I won't see my friends here for a while but it'll be great to get home.

### Thursday, Dec. 3, 1981

9:15 A.M. - Today I'm going to be as nice and as uncomplaining as I can. I just finished reading "Michelle" and it was so good. I want to be like her. It's very simple. It's called believing and trusting in God. From now on when I find myself getting angry, scared, frustrated, or lonely, I will pray to God for peace and strength. He is there.

### Saturday, Dec. 5, 1981

9:30 P.M. - I have been home for 71 hours and I still can't believe it. I'm home safe and it's wonderful. I am so happy and I love home.

### Tuesday, Dec. 8, 1981

6:58 P.M. - Well, I've been home for 3 nights now and I'm getting pretty used to it now. Tomorrow, I've really got to buckle down and get things done. I can't have idle moments. I want to be able to get a lot of things done at one time. I have to make the most of my time at home.

Mrs. [Dyches](#) wrote an article about her quitting smoking and it's going to be in The State paper in February. I think that's wonderful. She even mentioned me in it. I think knowing me has made it easier for her to quit. That makes me feel good. I want to talk to her more about her smoking. We always talk about me so it's time we talk about her some. I want to write an article or book or something on the subject of my cancer. I'm gonna ask Mrs. [Dyches](#) how she went about it.

### Thursday, Dec. 10, 1981

8:30 P.M. - I talked to Arlene on the phone for a pretty good while tonight. At one point, I wanted to cry. I have learned to take it easy, not worry so much, and to enjoy life. I know things now that I never knew before. I only wish others could know too. Even my own father hasn't caught on. It makes me kind of sad and angry way down deep. Mostly sad. I guess people just don't stop and think. I don't know if I would if it happened to someone else in the family besides me. I hope I can grow up and find me a man that thinks more like me. I really envy people like [Cyndi](#) and Tim who are so very much in love.

## Sunday, Dec. 13, 1981

9:10 P.M. - I'm in the hospital.. I checked in **RMH** yesterday because I was running a fever of 102.7 degrees F. I was so scared and nervous yesterday because all they want to do here is pull my central line. There is no way I'll let them do that. I feel okay now because I know that if they act like **assholes** around here, we can leave and go to Gainesville.

## Monday, December 14, 1981

10:06 A.M. My fever has been gone for 34 **hrs.** now. I have a feeling my blood cultures are negative. If they aren't, I'll have to muster up every bit of strength I have to be able to gracefully stay in this hospital. I want very badly to be out in time for the Christmas Holidays. Christmas this year will be very meaningful because it'll mean being home with my family and friends and hopefully, no sickness for a while. I will truly thank God if he allows that to happen.

## Tuesday, Dec. 15-, 1981

3:06 P.M. - Last night about 9:30, I got really angry about having to be in the hospital and I started crying. It was one of those times that I knew if I didn't talk to someone, I'd cry forever and I might have started getting depressed. So I called Mrs. **Dyches** and luckily, she could talk then. I cried and told her how mad I was. We talked and she told me that she believed I'd get it all out tonight and the next day, I'd be okay and I'd think of good ways to spend my time. She's right. I'm okay now. I got all my anger out so now I can get on with life, a happy life. I think while I'm here, I'm gonna concentrate on 2 things, my personality and my writing. Also, I'm gonna do school work, cross stitch, and read. I need to get back into reading a lot. I'm so out of practice that I'm slow. I'm gonna read some **christian** books, fiction, and non-fiction. I might start reading about psychology or some other subject. I need to learn.  
Laura Brown sent me a Christmas card. She was my night nurse on **6-West**. That was really sweet of her so I'm gonna write to her.

Well, I'm gonna go now. Frances wants me to write an essay on the Surprise Box.

9:00 P.M. - I feel so good. I just talked to **Cyndi** Woods on the phone. I called her, She's been throwing up and having **diarrhea**. **Yucko**. I told her about All the bullshit that's going on. I've decided that I want them to just take the damn catheter out and let me go home. I need to clean up my language a little bit.

## Wednesday, Dec. 16, 1981

8:35 A.M. - Well, it's a new day and I'm not going to waste it. I'm going to get the most out of it that I can. I'm going to work towards some goals and get things accomplished. There is no time to waste feeling sorry for myself.

11:00 P.M. - I've decided that I must get down to some serious, positive thinking and fighting. I have to stop thinking about dying. I thought about it long enough to decide that I can handle it if it comes. Meanwhile, I'm gonna think positive, take care of myself, make the best of my life now. I'm going to start tomorrow on a new program to form the good habits I need.

### Friday, Dec. 18, 1981

11:45 A.M. - Dr. Davis came by a little while ago and he said the spot on my lung is most likely a tumor.

The other night, I started wondering, Frances believes that if you think positive, you can get it beat. I believe that too, but sometimes I **can't help** but wonder if I am gonna die. It's a very real possibility. Now, with this new tumor, if it's a tumor, it seems that the **melphalan** didn't work. The tumor is about half the size it was originally. That could have been accomplished with radiation.

Saturday, Dec. 19, 1981

5:50 PM – I had a talk with Frances today. I told her that I, believe in thinking positive yet I still can't help but believe that I might die. She said that is okay. You must think positive and always have hope but you must be realistic too. She is so right. I will always think positive and I won't give up hope on the treatments. Also, from this day forth, or actually, yesterday, I will live each day in the best way I can. I will make the most of each day and each moment because tomorrow might not come. No one has the promise of tomorrow. I'm going to get myself involved, have fun, improve myself, and I'll try to help others. Next time I go to **Shands**, I'll try to make friends with little ones and with new cancer patients. Maybe I can help them in some way. I'm going to pray to God now to keep showing me ways to help others for the rest of my life.

### Sunday, Dec. 20, 1981

9:55 A.M. - I have to figure out how I'm gonna spend today. I think I'm gonna try to get a lot of schoolwork done. I'll also try to follow my personality guidelines. As soon as Christmas is over, I'm gonna start thinking seriously about my article.

I just read the part I wrote on Dec. 16 **th**. I said that I was gonna think positive and not think about dying. Well, I'm gonna change that a little bit. I'm gonna think positive, keep hoping and fighting, yet I'll make the most of my days now. It's okay for me to think about dying because that's being realistic. It's simply a fact.

### Monday, Dec. 21, 1981

10:35 A.M. - Nothing new is going on and I don't have any big feelings to write down. I've gotten used to the tumor in my lung. Whenever something new is presented to me

like that, I'm kind of in shock for a few days but I'm okay now. I'll be glad to find out tonight what Dr. Graham-Pole has decided to do about it.

### Sunday, Dec. 27, 1981

11:06 A.M. - Sometimes it is so hard to understand why some people with cancer die young and others are allowed to live on, wasting their lives. You hear all the time about drug addicts, child abusers, and high school hoodlums. It makes me sick to see people throwing away their lives, worrying about little things, and complaining all the time. Life is just too precious to waste and abuse. Maybe good people die young, because God doesn't like what the world is coming to and he wants to protect them from it. Last night, I went to the Diamond Disco with Senta and two other girls. I just didn't feel like I fit in. I don't even fit in with kids from school because I've been away so long. The guys at the Diamond are either freaks or stuck on themselves. I want so bad to find my type of guy. One that I can love and he'll love me back. I'll just have to look around and be patient. I really like Derek Baily but I'll probably never see him again.

### Tuesday, Jan. 5, 1982

9:30 P.M. I've been acting dumb lately. I've been worrying too much about school, working on schoolwork too much, and not even getting much accomplished. I don't want to feel like I'm doing schoolwork all the time. I want to have fun too! From now on, I'm gonna work on schoolwork for a certain amount of time each day. During that time I'll get a lot done and not worry about the rest. For now, I'll work during school, but when I come home - that's my time. I have so many more things I want to do in my days. I want to read books, cross-stitch, go out with people, write, learn to cook, and learn to sew. That's only a few things. I want to get "involved."

### Wednesday, Jan. 6, 1982

I am going to live my life to it's fullest and I'm going to live as if I'm going to survive this disease. I'll try not to think about dying very much.

Today

Today is a brand new day. It has been given to me to live as I please. I will try to live it to its absolute best. I won't waste today by worrying about the small problems in life. I also won't waste it by worrying about yesterday for yesterday is gone forever and worrying can't change it. Nor will I waste this day by worrying about tomorrow because tomorrow has not yet come and I have no guarantee that it will. So I will live for today and thank God for giving it to me.

Everything that I do today I'll try to do my best. My best is all that I or anybody else can expect from me and my best is something that I am proud of. When things look tough or impossible, I'll keep going and keep trying. For I've only failed when I've failed to try.

Today I'll keep my eyes open for someone that could benefit from my help. For God has given me certain strengths and talents so that I may use them to help others and maybe in turn, they can help me. I'll use my talents today to be the best person I can be.

I'll try not to complain today because the qualities of life far out weigh the difficulties. Complaining is useless because it changes nothing. Only action changes things. The things I cannot change, I will try to accept.

Today I will take some time out for myself. I will use this time to be alone With my thoughts and dreams. I will think of all the things I have to be thankful for and all the things I have to be happy about -for it is truly a lot.

Soon I will grow tired and my day will be over. When it is, I want to look back and be proud of how I used it. For this day will never come again.

Kim Curtis  
Jan. 6, 1982

### Monday, Jan 11, 1982

7:44 P.M. I checked into **Shands** this morning and so much has happened since then. For one thing, I don't even have a tumor in my lung. I can't believe it. At first I almost started crying. Nancy Murphy thought I was crazy. It's just that I don't have a good feeling about it. I don't know exactly why. When Dr. **Enneking** told me I didn't have a tumor in my hip - look what happened. Anyway, after the bone scan tomorrow, Dr. **Graham-Pole** is gonna decide whether he wants to go ahead and give me some **melphalan** now or wait or whether he's gonna give it to me at all. I hope he decides not to give it to me. I don't like it or have much confidence in it. I haven't even called anybody at home yet to tell them. I'm just gonna wait until tomorrow when I know something more. I'm just gonna have to accept the fact that things can change drastically from day to day. It's hard to get used to.

### Tuesday, Jan 12, 1982

4:00 A.M. - I've been up all night. I'm losing some of my positiveness about this whole deal. I hate-to lie to people but I must start faking positiveness because I don't want people to think I'm a negative person.

6:35 A.M. - I'm so tired, I feel like a zombie. But I want to stay up until the next shift comes on., I also want to be up 24hrs before I go to sleep. I can't believe I've stayed up this long without any coffee or anything. For some reason, I just didn't want to go to sleep and be alone in bed. I'm weird I guess. I can't tell anybody that because I have to put up a false positive front. I hope people start coming in soon. I'm so sleepy. I'm going to keep writing until it gets busy in the conference room here. I got a lot done tonight as far as schoolwork is concerned. I did three chapters in my grammar book.

That **leaves** only six more to do. Maybe that's the way to get stuff done, because it's so noisy during the day and people always come in to chat. I guess I like company. I hate to be left alone. But now that I have to put up a false front, I won't be as eager to talk about my feelings,. Why am I changing so much now? Is it because of all the strain I've been under for the past few months? I don't know. I just hate for anyone to know I've been feeling so negative.

Gosh, look at all I've written and people still aren't coming to work yet. Oh, I just heard Eva. They should start coming in pretty soon now. This is kind of neat. It would be better if I could get stuff out of my room without worrying about disturbing my roommate and her Mother. I went in once to **pee** and to get my schoolwork out. The toilet was so loud I'm sure they woke up. Now doctors are starting to roam the halls. I got to see **NICU** last night. It was so neat and not at all what I expected. Some of the babies are so tiny. There's one named Amanda that I'm gonna go see today.. I only wish I could pick her up. It's hard to believe a human being could be so small. Cathy picked up Amanda and goes, "Meet Amanda, the fetus." It was funny but true.

### Wednesday, Jan. 13, 1982

9:55 A.M. - I found out yesterday that Kathy **Enfinger** died. She died one week ago on Jan. 6. I was so shocked. I didn't know it would happen so soon. I don't want to talk anymore about the details of her death or how upset I was. I just want to say how I feel now. I want to live better now. I want to totally devote myself to improving myself and my life. I want to learn a lot more about God. I want to work at serving God. I'm going to live and I'm going to live **magnificiently**.

### Thursday, Jan. 14, 1982

7:30 P.M. really truly accept Christ as my personal Savior, and I really want to do all that I can to serve Him. It's true, I can't wait to get all done with this chemotherapy so I can improve my health and get on with being free and normal, but I will make the best of my hospital stay. I can enjoy the free time away from the hustle and bustle of life. I'm going to read my Bible, read other Christian books, do my schoolwork, cross stitch, write, talk to other patients, maybe make friends with little kids, and just plain be happy and work on getting along with other people and enjoying life.

### Friday, Jan. 15, 1982

10:25 A.M. - Mom and Grandma just left for Pensacola. I guess I'm sort of glad. I don't like them hanging around all the time.

Maria is gonna come get me in an hour. I'm not sure what we're gonna do but it doesn't matter. Anne took me shopping yesterday and it was fun. I really liked getting out. She's gonna take me to her house a week from Monday. I can't wait. I really like talking to people who know a lot about religion. I've been thinking about the things I'm

gonna do when I get home and through with chemotherapy. This is what I want to do when I'm well:

- (1) Go to Church and Bible study.
- (2) Continue to eat right and lose weight.
- (3) Exercise and jog.
- (4) Work hard in school,

My goal weight is 105 lbs.

### Sunday, January. 17, 1982

11:50 A.M. Anne came in and talked to me some this morning. She asked if there was anything they could do to make things easier on me. because I feel so bad about what is happening to Missy Sinclair and Jim Blair. I'm just gonna do what I can for Missy and that is to be her friend and talk to her and help make things easier for her. The same with Jim. That's all and the best I can do so I will do it and be satisfied with my part.

### Monday, Jan. 18, 1982

9:17 A.M. Well it's Monday. A whole new set of nurses come in today. I've got one named J---- that I don't really like very much. She's kind of old and I just don't feel like having a stranger. I'll of course have J--- again today and every day. I don't like her very much either. I'll have Cyndi Woods though every night, because she took Gayle's place as my core nurse for the week. I like having Cyndi, but I wish she wasn't working nights. I might stay up again this week and sleep late in the morning. I'm gonna ask Laura tonight to give me Sharon tomorrow. I at least want someone that knows what she is doing during my three chemotherapy days. Those are Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

### Friday, January 22, 1982

11:00 A.M. - I have a lot to write about over the next few days since I couldn't write yesterday or the day before because I was so sick from my chemotherapy. I haven't gotten my drug for today yet. I didn't get Sharon this week except for Thursday. She hasn't been taking care of patients because Nancy Jones is sick so Sharon's been running the floor. I hope they don't decide to do that with Anne next week.

My chemo made me very sick

### Saturday, Jan. 23, 1982

10:20 A.M. I'm breaking out in these awful red sores. I'm kind of scared that I have shingles or something awful like that. My temp this morning was 100.6F. I don't feel so hot so I doubt I'll get any more passes for a while. If I get one today, it'll probably be the last one. That means I won't be going home with Anne on Monday. Oh well, maybe I'll get to another time. She didn't come to see me yesterday like she said she would. I wonder why.

I'm so glad my chemo is over. I got sick again yesterday. Real sick. Mrs. Dyches called right after I threw up

Monday, Jan. 25, 1982

6:15 PM - I keep having to stop writing because I've been so sick. I'm feeling better now because I've gotten some blood today. I have chicken pox! I'm on very strict isolation. Also, all the other kids on the floor who haven't had them are on isolation. I bet the nurses just love this. Of course, I didn't get Anne this morning and Anne didn't even come in to see me. I had Eva. I like Eva but Ywish I had had Anne. I wanted to switch down to Cindy Depka's end of the hall a while back but they would not let me so I figured God wanted me to stay here so Anne could be my nurse and talk to me about God, but that isn't working out too well. I need to read the Bible more and pray more anyway. But I really like to talk to Anne about God.

Dr. Graham-Pole thinks I'm depressed but I'm not. I only appear depressed when I'm physically down. He wants to send a psychology student to see me but all I really want-is some of the nurses to come in and sit down and talk to me. There's nothing wrong psychologically with me. I hope Cindy Depka comes in tonight and I really wish Anne would come in without me asking for her to do it. I just can't wait to be done with all of this. I feel that God has great plans for me.

Sunday, Jan. 24, 1982

Dear Mrs. D,

I can't believe it, I'm finally writing you a letter. I was just thinking about calling you but I'm not allowed out of my room. I have what they think are chicken pox - they'll be sure tomorrow. And wouldn't you know my med. student and senior resident are both pregnant so now they have to stay away from me. It's a shame because I really like the med. student (Mary).

I'm sending Katie a birthday card. I know it's late, but I've been feeling pretty bad lately. I need a blood transfusion but they have to wait to the very last minute to give it to me because I'm developing a resistance to the blood and it's hard to cross match me.

Later: I'm sorry. I can't finish this letter. I just don't feel good at all these days.

Love you,  
Kim

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests. (Luke 2:14)

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. (John 5:12)

Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. (John 17:3)

Because you have seen me , you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. (John 20:29)

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have a life in His name. (John 20:31)

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. (Peter 5:7)

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. (John 8:12)

I tell you the truth, if a man keeps my word he will never see death. (John 8:51)

I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness. (John 12:46)

Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. (John 13:34)  
Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:11)

I asked Jesus, "How much do you love me?" And Jesus said, "This much \_\_\_\_\_".  
Then he stretched out his arms and died.

### Improvement Plan

1. Eat only nutritious foods - so you'll be healthy for the surgery.
2. Don't eat junk ever again because it'll make your face break out.
3. Take vitamins and all your medicine.
4. Try to get some form of exercise every day.
5. Keep a scrapbook; keep a diary and write so that people can read it; keep a journal; keep track of health in date book; keep Bible verse notebook.
6. Take good care of your skin, complexion, nails, clothes, etc.
7. Be very thrifty with your money.
5. 8. Start making things for other people And writing more. Make things for yourself too!
6. 9. Work hard at your schoolwork.
10. Be very good to Mom and Dad and treat them with respect.

11. Smile, be happy and pleasant.
12. Love others and show it.
13. Be considerate of others.
14. Never be shy.
15. Never complain.
16. Talk about your feelings.
17. Be open and honest.
18. Be constructive with bad feelings.

Improvement Plan    10-10-83.

1. Cut out junk food and eat more healthy food.
2. Take one multi-vitamin, iron, iodine, and four calcium pills daily.
3. Take as many long walks as you can (1 a day).
4. Ride your bicycle when you can.
5. Take 2 Tylenol every 4 hours.
6. Twice a day - wash your face with **Phisoderm**, alcohol, then Tridesalon.
7. Do a facial on Wed. and Sat.
8. Shave legs 3 times a week, then use **babyoil**.
9. Keep lotion and **Tridesalon** on your hands.
10. Wash your hair every other day.
11. Do a complete manicure and pedicure over the weekend.
12. Always try to look your best, use good posture and body language.
13. School:
  - (1) Always comes to class prepared.
  - (2) Try hard and put forth your best effort.
  - (3) Have a good attitude and enjoy each class.
  - (4) Do what you are supposed to in class.
  - (5) Use your time wisely for getting schoolwork done.
  - (6) Do an excellent job on projects.
14. Read the newspaper daily and keep up with the news.
15. Read fiction books. One "good" book to every 3 books.
16. Read non-fiction books.
17. Keep a vocabulary notebook.
18. Have a devotional every morning.
19. Read the Bible and pray before going to bed.
20. Personality:
  - (1) Live by God's word so you will be at peace and have a clear conscience.
  - (2) Do our best at everything.
  - (3) Don't be afraid to be yourself. Be proud of yourself, your ideas, and your opinions. Don't be shy or feel inferior to anyone.
  - (4) Don't waste time. Try to make use of every waking minute.
  - (5) Have a happy, positive attitude.
  - (6) Show a lot of love to other people.
  - (7) Bend over backwards to help others.

- (8) Be a good friend.
- (9) Smile a lot.
- (10) Never complain.
- (11) Talk out things with people.
- (12) Don't get angry unless you have a good reason.

From: "A Shining Season"

The time of my departure has come. I have fought a good fight. I have won the race.

From: A sticker on a letter from Mrs. Parker

### Kindness

I shall pass through this world but once.  
If, therefore, there be any kindness I  
can show or any good thing I can do  
let me do it now  
let me not defer it or neglect it  
for I shall not pass this way again.

Grellet

From: New Woman Magazine

Anyone who is always worrying about what other people think of them would be surprised to know how little people do.

John C. Vivan

Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadows.

Helen Keller

The three great requirements for life are: something to do, something to love, and something to hope for.

In God's kingdom, there is no such thing as bad. Everything, good and bad, works together for the best.

Kimberly Curtis

From: The count of Monte Cristo (part of a letter from him to Maximilien)

As for you **Maximilien**, here is the secret of my conduct toward you: there is neither happiness nor unhappiness in this world; there is only the comparison of one state with

another. Only a man who has felt ultimate despair is capable of feeling ultimate bliss. It is necessary to have wished for death, Maximilien, in order to know how good it is to live.

Live then and be happy beloved children of my heart, and never forget that, until the day God reigns to reveal the future to man, the sum of all human wisdom will be contained in these two words: wait and hope.

From: Ann Lander's Column

Test Prayer

Now I lay me down to study,  
I pray the Lord I won't go nutty.  
If I should fail to learn this junk,  
I pray the Lord I will not flunk.  
But if I do, don't shed a tear  
Just put a rose behind my ear.  
Tell my teacher I did my best  
Then pile my books upon my chest.  
If I should do before I wake  
That's one less test I'll have to take,

Suffering Student

I know that when you see me  
You may think that I seem strange.  
My hands do shake, I have a twitch  
And I look like I'm deranged.  
I know that just this morning  
I put chalk dust on my nose,  
I danced a jig, I sniffed a book  
And then I ate a rose.  
I found an old protractor  
That I stole from my math peers  
And there, before my student's eyes  
I sat and pierced my ears.  
My jaw is slack, my tongue hangs out  
I sit and strum my lips  
And when I'm bored, I take my shears  
To cut my clothes in strips.  
How if you say, "That lady,  
surely should be put away"  
You're right my friend, I should  
I'm a teacher and it's May!

Judy Horne

May 1981

### One Night I Had A Dream

I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord, and across the sky flashed scenes from my life. For each scene I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand, one belonged to me, the other to the Lord. When the last scene of my life flashed before us, I looked back at the footprints in the sand. I noticed that many times along the path of my life, there was only one set of footprints. I also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in my life. I questioned the Lord-about it. "Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you would walk with me along the way, but I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints.

I don't understand why in times when I needed you most, you would leave me." The Lord replied, "My precious, child, I would never leave you during your times of trial and suffering. When you see only one set of foot prints, it was then that I carried you."

Author Unknown

When I Must Leave You  
When I must leave you  
For a little while,  
Please do not grieve and shed wild tears  
And hug your sorrow to you through the years.  
But start our bravely with a gallant smile  
And for my sake and in my name  
Live on and do all things the same.  
Feed not your loneliness on empty days,  
But fill each waking hour in useful ways.  
Reach out your hand in comfort and in cheer  
And I in turn will comfort you and hold you near,  
And never, never be afraid to die, for I am waiting for you in the sky.

Helen Steiner Rice

This is the-beginning of a new day. I have been given this day to use as I **will**. I can waste it ... or use it for good, but what I do today is important, because I am exchanging a day of my life for it! When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever, leaving in its place, something I have traded for it. **I want** it to be gain, and not loss; good, and not evil; **success, and** not failure; in order that I shall not regret the price I have paid for it. I will try just for today for you never fail until you stop trying.

Standing on the Shore

The waves gently stroking the shore tickling my toes as they sink farther into the sand.  
The sun showering my body filling my hair with its color and splashing freckles over my nose.

Kim Curtis  
June, 1981

Cinquain

Friendship  
essential, warm  
makes life complete  
offering to all, her  
speciality

Kim Curtis  
May 8, 1981

Solitude:

A state solitary, peaceful  
soothing, enriching, contenting  
Everyone needs it

Kim Curtis  
May 8, 1981

Colors of My Life:

If I could paint a picture of my life,  
I'd have to paint it green.  
Green would be a mixture of the blue times I've had  
And the bright yellow happy times I've had.  
For a while there,  
The blue was choking out the yellow  
And things were looking bad.  
But now the-yellow is coming back  
more bright and fierce than ever.

Kim Curtis  
May 1981

Heaven's Very Special Child  
A meeting was held quite far from earth.  
"It's time again for another birth',  
the angels to the Lord above.  
This special child will need much love."

His progress may seem very slow  
Accomplishments he may not show  
And he'll require extra care

From the folks he meets way down there.

He may not run or laugh or play  
His thoughts may seem quite far away  
In many ways he won't adapt  
And he'll be known as handicapped.

So let's be careful where he's sent  
We want his life to be content.  
Please Lord, find the parents who  
Will do a special job for you.  
They will not realize right away  
The leading role they liked to play.  
But with this child sent from above  
Comes this stronger faith and richer love.

And soon they'll know the priviledge given  
In caring for this gift from heaven.  
Their precious charge so meek and mild  
Is heaven's very special child.

Author Unknown

### My Friend

She laughs with me  
She crys with me She is my friend.  
I share good times with her and ever a few bad  
She is my friend.  
I have no secrets that I keep from her  
She is my friend.  
She always forgives me  
When I do her wrong  
She is my friend.  
Without her, I would have no happiness  
She is my friend.  
Without her, I could not be.  
She is me, my friend.

Kim Curtis  
May 1981

I saw you in Sears  
You were with your Mom.

Your eyes were wide with wonder  
Watching the crowd go by.

You were clutching a Teddy Bear  
I bet he is your best friend.

You had jelly on your dress  
And your shoelace was untied.

But none of those things mattered  
You were as beautiful as the sun.

I envied your sweet innocence  
Your heart knew-only love.

As your mother started to leave I caught your eye.  
You smiled at me  
You made my day.

Kim Curtis  
May 7, 1981

### One of Those Days

I didn't set my alarm.  
overslept an hour.  
Could tell already,  
this day had gone sour.

My clothes were all dirty  
I had nothing to wear.  
That was just the beginning  
of this day's despair.

I fell down the stairs,  
tripped over the cat.  
But I couldn't help it, he's just too fat.

The Math test was hard  
I made a **D**,  
broke two nails,  
and scraped my knee.

And to make matters worse  
I was late to class,  
and I lost my purse.

And then when school was over,  
my troubles didn't end.  
I lost all my notes.

They blew away in the wind.

Then I got home  
only to hear Mom say,  
“DEAR, did you have a nice day?”

Kim Curtis  
April 29, 1981