My Organ Donor

November 17, 2016 By Karen Hoyt

Karen Hoyt is a blogger who has a story about hepatitis C, cirrhosis, end-stage liver disease, liver cancer, and liver transplantation. This excerpt first appeared on Karen's I Help C blog.

This is my 143rd attempt at writing about my organ donor. Now, I've got a second sentence in here. I think it's going to happen…… because – I've received a letter from his aunt. My transplant social worker called to ask if I wanted a letter from my donor's family. Of course! I was overjoyed – and cried all day. Then I called my family. One phone call at a time, we cried.

That crying thing, along with the joy – it's something you learn to live with. I'll go so far as to say that I embrace it. At first, I didn't want a liver transplant. At the end of my days, someone passed away. After the 3rd round of tumor shrinking, our lives joined. He slipped into heaven and his body saved people from dying. That's emotional stuff, but I'm a huge fan of feelings.

Emotions are a vital part of living: It's the heartfelt piece of us.

His aunt was heartfelt in her description of a loving family who lost their sweet teenage boy. This is where it gets hard to keep typing because I'm a mom. IDK if I could read these words if it were my daughter we were talking about. His mom was not ready to write. Ok, I'm going to quit writing now too.

So, a 30 minute break and a bowl of watermelon later, I'm back. It's strong stuff, loving someone. That's what this is about, you know. I'm just figuring it out. I've known all along how grateful I was for my donor. He's part of me. I've got his DNA. He's the reason I can walk and talk. His liver – I still think of it as his – is filtering my blood right now. I have him nestled under my heart. I pat him and thank him all the time. All the time.

We're not aware of our heart beating, our liver and kidney filtering, or our lungs breathing until we hear that diagnosis. When we wake up after a transplant, we're aware of that organ. We love it, and we love our donor.

Click here to read the rest of Karen's thoughts and gratitude about her organ donor and his family…

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