

Life

February marks two years since dad was diagnosed with stage-IV lung cancer. I could see the tears building up in my mother's eyes as the doctors explained the prognosis, but the noise surrounding my family and me had disappeared. It felt as though I had earmuffs on, muffling every noise, but could see the doctor speaking and could vaguely make out the words "a few months."

The night felt as though a whole day had passed, but in reality, it had only been a few dragging hours. As mom, dad, and I were still in the emergency room, doctors were flowing in and out like at a factory. Everyone was still in motion like nothing had happened; yet something did happen. Our world was flipped upside down and seemed to be at a standstill, while everyone else kept on moving. Life doesn't stop, even though in that moment all I wanted it to do was stop to hold onto all the precious moments. I feared the next few months and/or years would never be the same. It turns out, I was right. It was never the same.

Over the next two years following dad's diagnosis, I watched him wither away. His courage was contagious as he fought and fought through several chemotherapy treatments and radiation. Eventually that got tiring, and the doctors continually told us they were only maintaining where he was at, but it wasn't helping. Two years later, dad is on hospice. He is no longer the dad I grew up with to play ball, or chase my son around, instead he lies in his hospital bed covered up and sleeps most hours of the day. He is no longer this strong athletic man, but one with frail thin skin, arms and hands that are atrophied, and legs that are so thin you can see the bone. He is still fighting, because he does not want to leave this world, he wants his quality of life back and to be healed.