

blood, or a bald, frail middle-aged woman. I realized fighting cancer did not look the same for everyone. For some, it meant being unable to eat their favorite meal because it would burn their mouth, it meant popping analgesics every few hours to pacify their intractable pain. For others, it meant being bound to a wheelchair or walking around gingerly with their brittle bones.

I saw how dealing with cancer patients and their relatives can be overwhelming sometimes, but I couldn't be more thankful for the opportunity to do so. I recognized how important it is to handle patients and their loved ones with the utmost gentleness, compassion, and kindness, to sometimes think out of the box, to continuously learn and grow, and stay ambitious.

I saw my senior connect with patients on a personal level and be available to them whenever they needed him. From the energetic and positive "hello" he would say when the patients walked in, to cracking jokes during the session, to reassuringly holding their hands while breaking tough news, there was always an atmosphere of comfort in

that clinic for those going through the darkest moments.

I slowly appreciated that patients are more than just their diagnosis. Each one has a story to tell. I understood that when someone gets diagnosed with cancer, their whole family and everyone who loves them does too.

Some people I met during my time there became more than mere faces I recall from the past. There was this one young woman who stood as an inspiration to me. She was a beacon of positivity, her spirit illuminating the darkest of days. I was often confused by her enthusiasm for life that refused to be dimmed by adversity. Unfortunately, she did not make it to her mini vacation to the hill stations or watch her daughter get promoted to class 3 but I was moved by how she fought till the end relentlessly with a strong will to live and a heart full of hope and optimism. There was an older man, let's call him Uncle D, who left a lasting impression on me. His ever-present 1000-watt smile and adorable laughter and the way he battled the deadly disease as if it were nothing, left me wondering where he found the inner peace and joy he embodied.

The courage of these patients was not just about battling a physical ailment; it was a testament to the human capacity to endure, adapt, and find hope even in the bleakest hours.

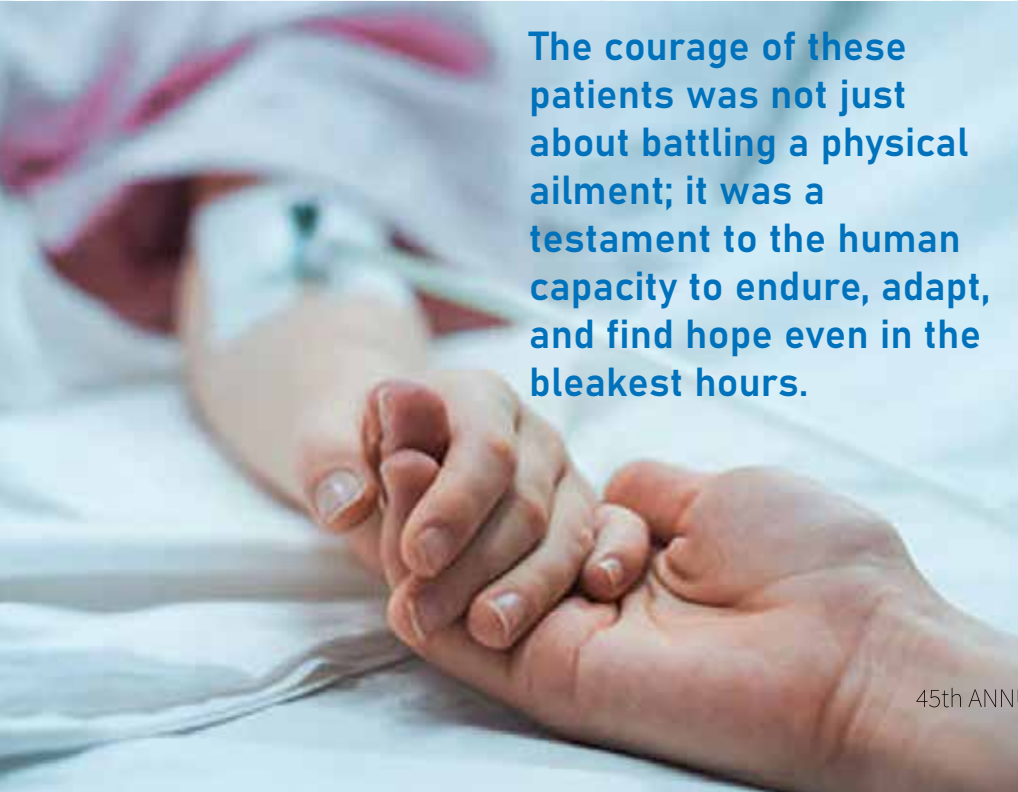
On the one hand, I had to witness a young man in his 30s be told he was not responding to any treatment, and on the other hand, I got to share the joy of going into remission with someone else. Sometimes, I watched as a family broke down. Other times, I caught glimpses of long hugs and little acts of endearment outside the OP. It was a reminder that, even amid adversity, human connections play a vital role in providing solace and understanding.

I was awed by the resilience and strength exhibited by these wonderful people. Through all the uncertainty and grueling treatments, I witnessed a remarkable spirit of determination. The courage of these patients was not just about battling a physical ailment; it was a testament to the human capacity to endure, adapt, and find hope even in the bleakest hours.

My time at the Oncology clinic brought me face-to-face with the disease I feared the most. Yet I looked at it a little differently this time. Yes, it is still a relentless predator, the thief of vitality and joy, but it is also strength, resilience, gratitude, and hope. As for me, I came out of this experience with a renewed sense of purpose and meaning in life. I was inspired to pursue my passions, love the people around me, and live with a deep sense of appreciation for life. To all the physicians and caretakers who hold on to these incredible fighters, you are the light at the end of their tunnel.

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