



Persistence & Hope: A Winning Combination

by Lori Hartwell, RSN President



Anyone who has ever gotten anywhere in life will tell you that they exercised a lot of stiff-lipped persistence. When

recalling the early days of their career, few successful entrepreneurs can forget the rejections they endured, along with plenty of nail-biting and toe-tapping.

Likewise, every person who is living well despite chronic kidney disease is doing so because of stubborn persistence. It is that

refusal to give up despite some very rough going—along with hope that things will get better—that characterizes the achiever.

The area of personal strength in which I take the most pride is my persistence. In managing my chronic illness, I've found persistence to be key in allowing me to feel a sense of control over my destiny. As my healthcare workers will tell you, I never quit! When I have a question, I don't give up until I get an answer. If one doctor doesn't give me the information I need, I go to another one, or I'll look something up on the Internet, or I'll find a nurse or some expert who is willing to help me.

I am also unyielding where my dreams are concerned. I learned early on that if I did not nurture the hope that I would fulfill my dreams, I would not want to take care of myself.

Just as winners must exercise persistence, in most cases they must also wade through a sea of negative feedback. The world has no shortage of people who will try to convince you that your dreams are silly. They might not say it in so many words, but they imply it by saying, "Are you sure that's realistic?" or "Gee, that seems like an awfully big challenge!"

My dream was to find a way to provide hope to those who have kidney disease and those who

care for them. I have certainly encountered many obstacles over the years, but I just kept pursuing my dream anyway! Now I can proudly see the tangible results of my persistence.

After more than 12 years, the Renal Support Network (RSN) continues to serve the kidney community by instilling health, happiness, and hope through education, advocacy, and awareness... one person at a time. RSN fulfills this mission by offering many

unique programs such as *KidneyTalk*, *KidneyTimes.com* (RSN's new health information website), PEPP, weKAN, the Renal Teen Prom, and Patient Lifestyle Meetings. You are holding one of the dreams—this newsletter!

Fred Astaire was told he couldn't dance. Walt Disney was admonished for lacking creative talent. The next time someone tells you that your ideas are silly, unrealistic, or overly optimistic, use that feedback to fuel your determination. Then put your nose to the grindstone and start chipping away at the obstacles.

Whether the issues involve daily choices related to your illness, lifestyle decisions, your career, or your relationship with your family or friends, remember the vital keys to success—persistence and hope.

Chronically Yours,
Lori Hartwell
President & Founder
of the Renal Support Network

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weKAN Live & Give is a publication of the Renal Support Network, a patient-run nonprofit organization whose mission is to identify and meet the non-medical needs of those affected by chronic kidney disease.

weKAN Patient Activists serve to mobilize, educate, motivate, and empower fellow chronic kidney disease survivors to advocate for themselves and for one another. Together we *can* make a difference.

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