

people

Zest for life helps her stay strong

By Ang Yiying

MADAM Rani Muniandy, 39, who was diagnosed with breast cancer in May 2008, quit her job as a machinist working 12-hour shifts at hard-drive manufacturer Seagate last month after a relapse.

She needs the income, but is growing weaker. Yet she says she feels blessed and is grateful to have seen her only child, Rohan, 15, grow up into a responsible young man. The once-playful Secondary Three student is staying home these school holidays to spend time with Mum at their four-room flat in Woodlands.

He prepares toast and coffee for her breakfast, and is unabashed about hugging and holding her hand in public, she told The Straits Times. Her mother cooks vegetarian meals for her, and her courier husband labours hard to pay the bills.

Though she is going through chemotherapy for Stage Four cancer, her zest for life impresses her doctors and nurses.

Ms Amy Lim, 44, her home care nurse, said Madam Muniandy has encouraged cancer patients at Singapore General Hospital or phoned them at home.

'Life has never been smooth for Rani. Sometimes she cries her heart out. But she bounces back. Her attitude is amazing. She says as long as she lives, she wants to encourage others,' said Ms Lim, a nurse at HCA Hospice Care who has visited her patient regularly for one-and-a-half years now.

Last week, Madam Muniandy rode in a taxi with her family - walking would have sapped her strength - to revel in the Orchard Road light-up.

'The blue lights gave me a good feeling,' she said. 'I am also very thankful for my family. They don't treat me like a patient but motivate me with positive thinking.'

A Hindu, she prays and meditates every morning.

'I am already prepared for anything. My heart and willpower are strong,' she declared.

Her warm voice turned fleetingly wistful, however, when she thought about leaving Rohan.

'I want to leave a good memory for my son. I tell him, when Mummy is not with you, you still have to be good to people.'

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