

What Do You Do When You Have Absolutely No Idea What to Do Next?

You have, no doubt, heard the saying, "When it rains, it pours." Well, my daughter, Paige, would say that last summer for me was more like a hurricane. What do you do when you have absolutely no idea what to do next?

The summer of 2010 started with some challenges. My precious father was hospitalized with advanced-stage congestive heart failure, and one of my best friends since the 5th grade, Jama, was hospitalized with late-stage ovarian cancer.

My law firm had been extremely helpful by setting up a computer system to allow me to work part of the time in Evansville at my parents' home in order to help my mom and dad. I had spent five weeks in Evansville, while we brought my dad home with hospice care. Jama's condition was worsening in the Simon Cancer Center in Indianapolis. Many clients who needed to see me were pushed into appointments back-to-back upon my return to town. As my week started, a call came from my daughter about 3:00 a.m. on that Tuesday morning. She was doubled over in pain. Knowing that she has a very high tolerance to pain, I knew something was very wrong and offered to come to her apartment and get her. She said she would try to stick it out there. When she called again at 4:30 a.m., I was on my way to get her. The pain was increasing and was severe. My day was booked with clients who had waited for weeks to see me. I was scheduled to return to Evansville the next day to help my mom and dad. Jama's family had also communicated that I needed to come soon if I was going to get to say goodbye to her. All of these things were flying through my mind as I raced to pick up Paige.



Lisa Adler

Knowing that Paige's doctor, Dr. David McLaughlin ("Dr. Mac"), was a doctor who would truly listen, I told Paige that instead of going to the emergency room, we would go to the Starbucks parking lot and wait until 8:00 a.m. when Dr. Mac's office opened. (We had already been to the emergency room six months before and seen two other doctors over this time regarding the abdominal pain.) I also knew I needed time to think about my next

step when so many dire emergencies surrounded me.

I bowed my head in my car in that Starbucks parking lot and prayed that God would show me the next step to take because I had absolutely no idea what I should do. It became clear. I called my office and moved the appointments, called my mom and told her my trip would be delayed and contacted Jama's family to say I would do my best to get there as soon as I could. Fortunately, Dr. Mac saw us right away. He was going to treat her excruciating pain conservatively, thinking (as everyone had) that it was endometriosis (painful, but not an emergency), until I just happened to mention to him her HIGH tolerance to pain. He then scheduled surgery for the next afternoon. This allowed me to go see Jama that next morning before I took Paige to the hospital. After Paige's surgery, Dr. Mac took Paige's fiancé and me to the consult room where he looked at me and thanked me for changing all of my plans and getting Paige directly to him. The surgery was, in fact, an emergency, as Paige's appendix was ready to burst. The infection had caused a number of other serious problems in her abdomen, and the surgery may have saved her life.

Jama died while I was with Paige in the hospital, but I had gotten to say goodbye that morning before Paige's surgery. My dad lived another 2 ½ months, and I had many wonderful talks with him at his bedside over that time. My clients, of course, understood and came in later to see me. I had no idea what to do next that day, but I am grateful for the guidance of a Sovereign God who did.

By: Marti Starkey

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