

# Words to Carry with You

Affirmations drawn from themes in Stronger Than Chemo

“I don’t have to understand everything today; I just have to take the next small step.”

Diagnosis: The Day Everything Changes  
(Chapter 1)

“I am not walking into this alone; a whole team is walking in with me.”

Building Your Oncology Team  
(Chapter 2)

“Comfort is not the opposite of courage; it is one of the ways courage shows up.”

The Importance of Self-Advocacy  
(Chapter 3)

“These medicines are tools, not my identity; they work for me, not the other way around.”

Palliative Care vs. Hospice  
(Chapter 4)

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Understanding Your Treatment  
(Chapter 5)

“It’s okay if my hands shake; showing up anyway is its own kind of bravery.”

The First Day: What to Expect  
(Chapter 6)

“Numbers and images describe my cancer; they do not define my future or my capacity for joy.”

Decoding Tests & Scans  
(Chapter 7)

“ Every symptom I report is not complaining—it’s caring for the only body I have.”

Side Effects Made Simple  
(Chapter 8)

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“Taking my medicines on time is not a chore; it’s an act of protection for my future self.”

Medication Basics  
(Chapter 9)

“We are learning how to do this together; perfection is not required, only honesty and love.”

Family, Friends & Caregiving Dynamics  
(Chapter 10)

“My identity is not up for debate; I deserve care that sees me exactly as I am.”

LGBTQ+ Considerations in Cancer Care  
(Chapter 11)

“Asking for financial and workplace support is not weakness; it’s wisdom in a hard season.”

Work, Money & Navigating Insurance  
(Chapter 12)

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“Hope can change shape and still be real; I am allowed to redefine it as I go.”

When Treatment Doesn't Go as Planned  
(Chapter 13)

“I don't have to ‘go back’ to who I was; I'm allowed to grow into who I am now.”

Survivorship: When Treatment Ends  
(Chapter 14)

“Every sip and bite I manage is a quiet vote for my healing, not a test I have to pass.”

Nutrition & Cancer Care  
(Chapter 15)

“Three careful steps still count; forward is forward, no matter the speed.”

Exercise, Movement & Rehabilitation  
(Chapter 16)

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“Choosing a trial, or not, I am still a partner in progress—not a test subject.”

Clinical Trials Demystified  
(Chapter 17)

“Curiosity is welcome; I can explore new options and still center safety and evidence.”

Complementary, Integrative & Alternative Therapies  
(Chapter 18)

“My roots, my rituals, and my beliefs belong in the room with me.”

Spiritual & Cultural Care  
(Chapter 19)

“Having a plan is not living in fear; it’s building calm into the chaos before I need it.”

Emergency Preparedness at Home  
(Chapter 20)

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“Grief is love that has nowhere to go yet; I am allowed to carry it at my own pace.”

Bereavement & Life After Loss  
(Chapter 21)

“I am more than what I’ve lost, more than what I’ve endured, and more than this chapter of my story.”

You Are Stronger Than Chemo  
(Conclusion)

“We did not choose this road, but we can choose to meet it with tenderness for ourselves and each other.”

Final Letter to Patients and Caregivers

“My worth is not measured by my hormones, my body parts, or my relationship status.”

Fertility, Menopause, Sexuality & Intimacy

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“Even when my disease is invisible, my effort, exhaustion, and courage are not.”

Blood Cancers: Unique Challenges

“My age and life stage matter—but so do my dreams, goals, and plans beyond cancer.”

Special Populations in Cancer Care

“Rest, food, water, and gentle movement are not extras; they are part of my treatment plan.”

Caring for Your Body During Treatment

“My feelings are not problems to fix; they are signals that I am human and still deeply alive”

Caring for Your Mind & Spirit