



Cancer Survivor Tracy Case Named 2008 Maximum Mom

by Kim James

Tracy Case has not let cancer stop her from being the best mother she can be to her two young children.

Case is the recipient of the Maximum Mom Award for being an extraordinary mother of high integrity, strong moral character and, in all ways, serving as a role model for her children.

Nicole Dixon, director of communications for CanCare, nominated Case.

Dixon says, “Tracy makes you want to be as strong as she is when you are around her, and she doesn’t even realize it.”

At the age of 30, Case was diagnosed with breast cancer and had a mastectomy. Her son was 10 months old. Just three years later, she was diagnosed with Stage IV metastasis breast disease to her spine and liver. This was only four weeks after the birth of her daughter.

Both diagnoses brought fear — fear that she would leave her children without a mother. That fear fueled her fight. With a strong network of family, church members and neighbors supporting her, Case took on a “kick butt” attitude and balanced motherhood while battling cancer. She says a positive attitude, a sense of humor, faith, networking; support groups and hope are the keys to her survival.

“My faith really helps me get through this, because I know I have to trust the Lord to watch over my children,” she says.

Case says she took her example from her own mother.

“She taught me how to be a strong woman and mom,” she says.

Case’s mother is a three-time cancer survivor. When Case was a young girl, her mother was diagnosed with melanoma. When Case was 18, her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer.

“I do not remember ever feeling like I grew up with cancer in my life, because my mom made sure that our lives did not revolve around cancer,” she says. “I think that is the example I strive to live for my children. I pray I can do as good of a job of protecting, loving and teaching them to be strong individuals like my mom did.”

Case’s son will turn eight, and her daughter, five, this month.

She says her favorite thing about being their mom is the unsolicited hugs and “I love yous” they give.

“That makes all the tough times worth every minute of it,” Case says. In addition to being a dedicated mother to her children, Case speaks hope and encouragement into the lives of others who are fighting cancer.

In 2006, Case became a CanCare volunteer. She went through 17 hours of volunteer training in order to provide support to young women facing cancer. Case says she can pay it forward by helping others in cancer situations similar to her own.

She often is a speaker for CanCare and helps to raise awareness for the organization. Case says when she speaks with her referrals and with the public, she keeps it real and doesn’t sugarcoat anything. She admits that battling cancer is not easy and there are tough times, but she also shares that there is hope at the end of the tunnel.

Case continues to strive for the future and challenge herself. In 2006, she ran the Houston Half Marathon.

“I am not a runner by any stretch of the imagination,” she says. “It was something I could do to show this disease it would not rule my life and make all the decisions.”

Case still won’t let cancer or fear of its recurrence rule her life. She is daily devoted to her family. She says her current greatest accomplishment is, “surviving being a mother to two very bright, strong-willed children.”

“Being a mom with a chronic illness is hard, and balancing it all sometimes seems daunting,” she says. “But I am motivated to continue doing what I am doing.”