

Benny Smith Remembers Her Mother

A Health Quality Ontario Video

I'm here today in memory of my mother, Mary Bishop.

My mom was a bubbly, happy homemaker who loved her children and her grandchildren. She enjoyed life; a happy-go-lucky lady.

It was just a different mom. The lady—that regal lady just wasn't coming out at times, so we definitely knew something was wrong.

We had planned a huge 80th birthday for both mom and dad. When the birthday cake came out there was a beautiful picture of mom and dad together on the cake, and my mother did not recognize the people on the cake. That's when our journey began.

My dad had some very deep concerns because mom was screaming a lot, and actually he said to me, "Benny, her screaming is manic." And we'd had a psychiatrist looking after mom who put her on the psychotic drugs to try and calm my mother down.

My mother's emotions? My mother really didn't have any emotions. If there was something sad that should have brought maybe some tears or some quiet time, my mom's response would be laughter. She had nothing. There was just no—absolutely no emotion there. We had lost that part of my mom.

That was a scary decision for us three girls to make. Scary because we didn't know what the outcome would be for our mom.

With the reduction of mom's medication, my mother's brilliant blue eyes came back sparkling. She wasn't laying on the couch or the loveseat tired. She'd be up motoring in her wheelchair.

When I came to visit, I would spot my mother and I would say very loud, "How's my beauty queen?" The response from across the room would be, "Ha, ha, ha" because mom had lost the ability to speak, but that was her way of communicating with all of us.

She would smile, she could show tears, and she also could tell us that she loved us. The "I love you" the first time was heart-warming; brought tears to my eyes. I still remember her sitting in her wheelchair looking directly at me and saying, "I love you".

That was the greatest, greatest moment that we could have had through this journey.

- Benny Smith
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