

The idea to construct a coping plan came about as a result of my feelings at the time of Gabe's diagnosis.

We all have very strong emotions at the time of our child's diagnosis (to say the very least), but those feelings are also very complicated and can even be contradictory. I felt like a failure, as though I had let Gabe down in the very worst way. I imagined there must have been something I could have done to prevent this disease. My only strategy was to run away with Gabe and hide from both the doctors and the cancer. I knew it was not a good plan but it was the only one I had. Thank goodness I did not act on my first impulse! Anyone told that their child is critically ill can remember that moment in great detail. The one aspect that re-occurs over and over in my nightmares, is feeling vulnerable and powerless to help my child. Even though I was with my husband, I felt lost and alone. I asked myself "what now?".

I found myself at my lowest point and I needed a helping hand, a road map to becoming a balanced family coping with cancer. It was time to chart a course that would navigate my family from extreme panic back to a feeling of normalcy (albeit a new normal).

No two families will follow the exact same path; each family has different needs, emotions and circumstances. The coping plan is derived from not only my family's experience, but the experiences of many families who have faced childhood cancer head on. Together we can offer you our combined knowledge and experience, in the hope that we can help you find a starting point to create your own pathway to coping.

Your family became cancer survivors on the very day your child was diagnosed. By working together, you can not only endure the experience, but grow closer as a family.

Lu Sipos

Founder, Gabe's My Heart