THINK BIG:
Overcoming Obstacles with Optimism

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The Odds Were Against Me...

I had to try...knowing I might fail

As a woman with a disability becoming a physician seemed unlikely.

20% of population with disabilities

• 0.2% of medical school graduates have disabilities

• 2-10% of physicians in practice have a disability
THINK BIG

T is for try
H is for hope
I is for initiate
N is for no
K is for know

B is for believe
I is for improve
G is for go
Reflect and write down...

• Your version of THINK BIG

• Your story

• Your goals
Some things in life may seem impossible, but we never will know unless we are not afraid to fail.
What will you TRY for?

Try to make a difference in the lives of others around you?

“You miss 100% of the shots you don’t take”
Wayne Gretzky
Some hopes and dreams may seem crazy to others, but if they get us through the tough times, then they are worth having.
What will you HOPE for?

Professionally:
- Goals
- Satisfaction
- Success

Personally:
- Love
- Happiness
- Health
Kindergarten graduation is far away from medical school graduation, but we had to get through each step to get to where we are today.
Many Steps To Get To Medical School
How will you INITIATE your goals?

Towards career goals?
Towards personal goals?
Towards something that seems far away from now?
My Story…

I Could See That…

...How Can You Do It?

NO

Never
Listen
to
the
No’s
Despite the paucity of interviews, one institution took a chance on me...
Medical School Graduation
Class of 2000
HOW DO YOU IGNORE THE NOs?

• When you know it’s in the best interest of ________.
• When you know it might seem impossible, but it’s the right thing to do.
• When others don’t think you can, but you know you can.
Each of us knows our capabilities and limitations better than anyone else.
My step stool is as important a tool as my stethoscope.
No matter how well-trained, intelligent, or well-intended we are, we will encounter:

Patients we cannot save. Puzzles we cannot solve. Problems we cannot fix.
How will you KNOW YOUR CAPABILITIES?

• When you’re afraid to share your limitations and/or capabilities

• When others don’t believe in you

• When you don’t have all the answers
No matter how hard you work, try, and hope for something you may not be able to make it happen... that’s where believing comes in.
Never stop believing.
How will you continue to BELIEVE?

• When you want to give up
• When no one else believes
• When results are not immediate, but well worth waiting for
Once we achieve a goal, our work is never done.
How can you IMPROVE the world around you?

- When our systems are so complex.
- When there is not sufficient support.
- When we have competing priorities.
- When there is not enough time in the day.

Focusing on improvement builds resilience.
GO FOR IT!

Sometimes we may have to throw caution to the wind.
What cancer has taught me
Identify one thing that you are going to just **GO FOR IT!**

Take the risk, don’t delay, today is the day!
Thank You