

My Story

Daneene Johnson

I'm not sure when it happened. Perhaps it was being the oldest daughter of a nurse who had two other sisters who were nurses and listening as they told stories about their work. Maybe it was being the caretaker for two younger sisters as both parents had to work to provide for the family.

My grandmother ("Nonnie") who helped raise me was a severe Diabetic. I would watch as she tested her urine for glucose in the glass test tube with a Clinitest tablet. Blue was good, orange was bad. (Nonnie cheated sometimes.) I would watch as she rolled her insulin bottle and drew up the units, injecting herself in the thighs and stomach. One day she asked for a favor. (I would have done anything for this lady, I worshiped her) "Please give me my insulin in my arms; my legs and belly are so sore" My hands shook but I did it and she was so grateful. Maybe that is when my journey began.

It has been a journey; 40 years so far. I have wept over the miracle of childbirth, provided comfort for those in emotional as well as physical pain, been "adopted" into families, gone into areas of extreme poverty and tremendous wealth, and closed the eyes of those who pass, silently thankful they are at peace. I remain amazed at the complexity of the human body and the power of the spirit.

I tried retirement for 5 years, did not tolerate the bugs, heat, and exasperation of the game of golf, never mastered the game of Bridge, and bored with ladies luncheons and teas.

Tired of the hurricanes, increasing traffic, and skyrocketing costs, we moved from Southwest Florida to Ocala in October of 2006. The landscape and greenery was more reminiscent of home (in Pennsylvania) than the sand and palms down South. About to accept a job at ORMC, a neighbor told me of an ad in the paper for Hospice. The rest is history and it's all good.