

October is national breast cancer month. This year wear your pink ribbon to show you support those battling this terrible disease.

## Think Pink

With every passing year, as her health declined, I found myself praying that she would make it to the next Thanksgiving meal, the next birthday, the next



Christmas... The cancer could have taken her at any moment, but we celebrated every holiday like there were many more to come.

Sometimes, in the back of my mind, I would ask myself if this would be the last...

No matter what the occasion, a deep sadness throbbed from within, plaguing my holiday thoughts with the threat of a correct medical prediction. She wasn't supposed to be here, according to all of the doctors, but four years after her diagnosis, she was still going strong. Throughout the years, we were hit with death sentences of two weeks to two months, but she proved them all wrong. It was an emotional roller coaster that sometimes left us not knowing which way was up.

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Since my mother-in-law was diagnosed with terminal cancer, I think we all needed something to grab a hold of in order to embrace impending challenges. Although pink was the designated color of breast cancer awareness, we first thought it stood for all cancers and used this color to show our support and love for the matriarch of my husband's family, who was battling colon cancer. The color became our shield. We all wore pink ribbon pins on our jackets and pink rubber bracelets on our wrists. If we came across anything pink, we had to have it.



"Online shopping is a diamond in the rough. The longer someone has been online is one of the best predictors of whether they'll shop online or not."

Still, online retail sales figures add up to only a fraction of figures for offline sales. This year, analysts expect online figures to reach just 3 percent of the \$217.4 billion seen in offline sales, according to the National Retail Federation. Online figures are up about 1 percentage point from last year, compared with an expected increase of about 5.7 percent in offline sales, according to the NRF.

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One particular Christmas was an event that I will never forget. The tree looked like an angel standing in the middle of the living room. It was a vision of white and gold. Under the tree, an explosion of cream and gold-wrapped presents sparkled. For the majority of my mother-in-law's gifts, we decided to go with the color pink.

### Thinking Of You Gift Basket



Let them know that you are thinking about them during this difficult time. This tasteful basket contains Swiss Cheese, Crackers, Deluxe Mixed Nuts, Pineapple Pound Cake, Nonni's Biscotti, Cappuccino Chocolate Sticks, White Chocolate Amaretto Cookies, a tin of Mixed Fruit Candy, Tazo Tea, and Caffe Caramella.

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Propped up in a straight back chair in the middle of the living room, my mother-in-law looked exhausted, but she still forced a smile. With her grandson beaming beside her, she slowly unwrapped her gifts. With each offering, she lit up with anticipation. Pink robes, pink poodle socks, pink hats, pink pajamas, a pink beaded bracelet with pearls...

The exchange of gifts seemed neverending, but when the gift-giving session was finally over, the joyous moment soon passed and was replaced with reality. I don't know if I was the only one thinking this, but at that time, I pondered whether or not this would be the last time the Christmas tree lights would shine in her presence. A silence set over the room and glancing at my mother-in-law, I detected a shade of disappointment on her face. Did we miss something? Should we have done more? What was she thinking at this precise moment? All of these questions raced in my head.

The following Christmas, the straight back chair was empty and the answers to my questions had become quite apparent. My mother-in-law taught me to appreciate each day, including the little things in life like just

being able to get out of bed every morning. I feel she must have been thinking that her presents paled in comparison to the best gift of all... life.