

# “I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.”

by Stacey Brown

I am only one,  
But still I am one.  
I cannot do everything,  
But still I can do something;  
And because I cannot do everything  
I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.

— Edward Everett Hale

**T**his quote is particularly inspiring to me because it truly embodies what I feel every person accepting the challenge to improve the quality of life for our elders has embraced in their heart.

At the age of 19, I had the honor of caring for an amazing woman named Betty Farley, who had been diagnosed with terminal cancer. As her cancer progressed, I watched her daily struggle to win a losing battle with a disease process that was robbing her of her dignity, pride and independence. She and I were lucky enough for me to be able to care for her in her own home where she was surrounded by her things and her memories. While caring for her, I became her largest advocate with health care professionals as well as her eyes, ears and legs. She was no longer well enough to participate in her passion: bowling!

So, guess who became the youngest bowler in a seniors' bowling league? While she could no longer participate, she could socialize with her friends and became quite a coach, I might add. An advertising sales associate for an agricultural newspaper, she no longer had the ability to run around town and meet with clients but I could ... so, guess who learned more about tractor equipment and agricultural products than they ever teach in a California high school?

She was able to participate in her daily activities, maintain her purpose in life and possibly live just a little bit longer because she had someone like me to care for her physically and emotionally in an environment that inspired her to hold onto part of who she was when everything about her was changing. I will be forever grateful to my grandmother, Betty Farley, who helped me find my passion and inspire my “call to action.”

To me, it is such a privilege to care for and support our elders [to] live a meaningful and purposeful life to the best of their abilities ... to love them and respect them for who they are and honor them in their end-of-life journey.

I want to again read to you from my favorite quote, which has so inspired me:



**I am only one:** elder among many needing more interaction, time and compassion from those who care for me.

**I am only one:** caregiver daring to make a difference.

**But still I am one:** elder who may not have a voice but can speak through my caregivers.

**But still I am one:** caregiver standing before you accepting the challenge to care and speak for my elders.

**As an elder I cannot do everything:** I may have done before my body betrayed me and robbed me of my physical and/or mental capabilities.

**As a caregiver I cannot do everything:** I do not stand alone ... I have a team, a guide, clinical support staff and sages to help my elders live a purposeful life.

**But still I can do something:** As an elder in my new home ... I can wake with a purpose; to people who know me and encourage me to live to the best of my abilities.

**But still I can do something:** As a caregiver I can commit to my elders, my team and my families to provide living opportunities within a nurturing environment of hope, dignity and love.

**And because I cannot do everything:** As a valued elder I rely on my caregivers to love, encourage and support me to be as independent as I can safely be.

**And because I cannot do everything:** In my role as a caregiver I rely on my team and God to give me the strength and compassion to selflessly do what is right for my elders and our family.

**I will not refuse to do the something that I can do!** 🙏

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