



Gena Goodfriend

May 17, 1962 - September 27, 2016

Gena Goodfriend, 54, passed away at home, unexpectedly, on Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2016, from health complications related to primary progressive multiple sclerosis.

She was brave, kindhearted, brilliant, cultured, inquisitive, a supporter of social justice and gender equality. Growing up actively involved at Congregation Emanu El, Gena's Bat Mitzvah was the first, including both father and mother, seated on the pulpit. She later studied other religions, embracing Universal Unitarianism, for its early roots supporting feminism, intertwining it with her Judaism.

Gena graduated from SMU with both a B.A. and B.B.A. Prior to MS, she had numerous adventures traveling the world exploring many cultures. Gena was a people person, valuing her collection of friends of all ages, cultures and intellects. Above all else, she treasured her niece, Gilliana, much as her daughter, whom she had the gift of helping raise.

Diagnosed nearly 20 years ago with multiple sclerosis, during 2004, Gena became bedbound, then, totally paralyzed, requiring 24/7 care by primary caregivers: her mother, later joined by her sister, whose family relocated to Texas in 2007. Just approved in September for a stem cell transplant that would dramatically improve her conditions, Gena wholeheartedly believed there would be a cure found during her lifetime, which was expected into her

90s, despite primary progressive MS.

Gena leaves her mother, Meryl Goodfriend; sister, Aléce Goodfriend; and niece, Gilliana Hope Gaines. She was predeceased by her father, Norris Goodfriend; and grandparents, Helen and Harold Baernstein; Rose and Ed Goodfriend. Special thanks to friends, Martin Cominsky, Terry Cominsky, Gary Goodfriend, Rabbi Robert Haas, Diane Stotz, Dena Stucker, Gene Stucker, the UU Care Team set up by Mary Jane Hurlbert, Drs. Eliot Frohman, George Hutton, Timothy Boone, Stephen Lapin, David Wolf, Brian Loftus, visiting nurses and therapists, supplementary caregivers, Multiple Sclerosis Society of America, Respite Fund of Lonestar National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Nurse Management EMS, CVS, Aetna and Medicaid all making it possible for Gena to be cared for while living at home.

Donations honoring Gena may be made to: Congregation Shma Koleinu Rabbi's Discretionary Fund; Multiple Sclerosis Association of America; The National MS Society Respite Fund, or remember Gena with an armband, if you walk or bike for MS.

Tribute Wall

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“ I cannot put into words Gena's impact on my life. We were young girls in college. I was new to Houston. We met in a night school. Became very fast life long friends. She stayed in my life as I moved away, got married, had kids, divorced, remarried, lived my crazy world....we remained the kind of friends who never expected anything but just to be there, and hope to have another chance to see each other. I never stopped telling her she's my hero. Never. Because she was. She talked to me while my own sister battled uterine cancer and lost. She never missed a reason to send a personalized card to my children or myself. And no matter her own problems, her love and her devotion to those around her raised her so high vibrationally....I have no doubt she's an Angel. She was here on earth. Always saw the good. Always hoped for the best outcome. I wish I had known how fast she was declining. I wish I had the chance to see her and say goodbye. But by then, it was my mother's turn. And now, she's gone too. They have reached their peace. Let us pray that we can remember those big beautiful, kind doe eyes, always a smile on the outer corners. I miss her. I didn't know she was gone. I only felt it when she left. And it's only now that I could confirm through the Obituary and see her beautiful face.

Until we meet again, my sweet friend, who always always made me smile. ☐ 🤝 🟫

Najla McHale - September 07, 2021 at 11:10 PM