

VALERIE HARPER

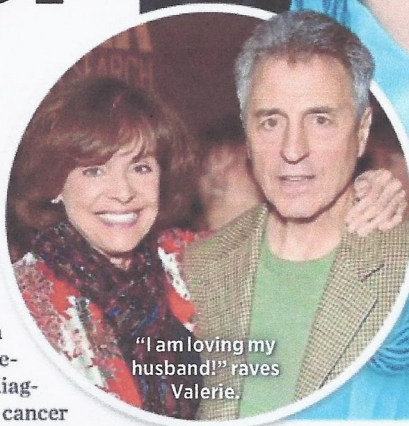
Not GIVING UP

THREE YEARS
AFTER A
TERMINAL
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THE TV STAR
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STRONG

Smiling broadly, actress Valerie Harper “looked great and was full of energy,” according to an onlooker at the Tower Cancer Research Foundation’s Tower of Hope Gala in Beverly Hills on May 19. The beloved star of *Rhoda*, who was diagnosed with a rare and terminal cancer of the lining of the brain in 2013, has defied all odds by continuing to survive and thrive. In fact, Valerie, 76, confides to *Closer*. “I saw my doctor last week and I’m doing really well!”

She credits her oncologists at Cedars-Sinai, a positive attitude and her beloved husband of 29 years, Tony Cacciotti, with giving her the strength to fight. “My husband is the greatest caregiver in the world,” boasts Valerie. Tony, a former personal trainer to the stars, hasn’t let his wife languish on the couch between treatments. “He makes me exercise!” she confides. “So many of us don’t. We think it’s food [that matters most], but exercise and food both matter.”

At the event, Valerie and Tony smiled sweetly at each other and held hands as they strode the red carpet. “Valerie is very strong in what she is going through,” he



“I am loving my husband!” raves Valerie.

tells *Closer* with obvious pride. “She is staying very positive.”

MAKING IT COUNT

That positivity extends to Valerie’s desire to help others. She continues to make appearances for Lung Force, an American Lung Association initiative dedicated to combating lung disease in women. “It’s the No. 1 cancer killer of women. It kills double any other cancer,” notes Valerie, who successfully beat lung cancer in 2009.

While Valerie knows that she can’t live forever, she’s taking it day by day. “All of us have the same thing coming — death. It’s waiting,” she says. “I’m ready to go, but I don’t want to. I want to live to be 102!” — *Louise A. Barile, with reporting by Amanda Champagne-Meadows*



“Life is amazing. Live it to the fullest,” says Valerie, here on May 10. “Stay as long as you can.”

“Some days I feel icky, but today I’m feeling good.”

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