

Chris Slone

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The greatest fighters of all time have one thing in common — they never give up. It's not part of their DNA.

Joshua Presley is one of those all-time great fighters. No, he's not a boxing champion or a UFC champion, and he'll probably never win a gold medal at the Olympics. For Presley, the stakes are much higher.

From the moment Presley was born, he began fighting for the right to live a normal life. After he was brought into this world, doctors told his parents Robin and Rick Presley that he had a disability, and he would never walk, talk, know his parents, be able to feed himself or even have an opportunity to witness a normal life.

"From that point, you're broken hearted but I always prayed to God, 'Let me have the strength to push him and give him the opportunity to be as normal with his physical disabilities as we can.' And it just so happened, God gave him the character to be strong and he's one of the most gentle, kind-hearted people," Robin Presley said.

"Everywhere he goes, he lights up a room. I couldn't be anymore proud of what he has accomplished. He's absolutely struggled and fought, and stayed strong, he never even had the mindset he wanted to stop."

After overcoming the early obstacles and surpassing every expectation placed on him by the medical experts, the 34-year-old Presley is in another fight — perhaps the most important fight of his life.

Presley was born with one kidney and that kidney is failing. According to Robin Presley, who is a Physicians Assistant at Kings Daughters Medical Center, a normal kidney should function between 80-100. Joshua's kidney levels are at 15.

Needing a transplant, Presley's family began stepping up and getting tested to determine if they were a possible match. Presley's blood type is O, which is the hardest blood type to match. People with O blood types can donate blood or organs to anyone, but can only receive organs from other individuals with the same blood type.

After several members of his family were tested, Presley found a match. His cousin Jama Salyers was a match and was willing to donate a kidney to save Presley's life.

After the testing was complete and Salyers was deemed a match, the next step was surgery. However, a week before surgery, one last round of preliminary testing was

required. Presley was required to have an EKG and a chest X-Ray, while Presley and Salyers were both required to have blood work.

When Presley and Salyers went for the blood work, the physicians at the University of Kentucky Medical Center didn't anticipate any problems. It was described to the family as merely a "formality." Presley was told he would know the results in two days but not anticipating any problems, the schedule was prematurely scheduled for Jan. 21.

However, on Jan. 14, one day after the preliminary testing, Robin Presley received a phone call and was told Salyers was no longer compatible with Presley and the surgery had been cancelled. According to the doctors, Presley has five antibodies in his blood and one of them had spiked, which clashed with the antigens in Salyer's blood, causing the two to be incompatible. The situation was labeled as "an extremely rare occurrence."

Robin, who was at work when she received the news, called her husband Rick and they both went home to break the news to Joshua.

"It was probably one of the hardest things I've ever had to do in my life, walking into that house and see Josh, and tell him the surgery had been cancelled," Robin said. "And I can't offer him any other solution or any other comfort. He was at the bottom of the stairs when we came into the house."

"He just sat down and we sat down beside him. He laid his head down in our laps and he cried, and we cried with him. It was probably one of the hardest things I've done in my life. As a parent, your children look to you for support and help, and in a case like this, your back is against the wall, and all you can do is hug them and cry with them."

Even if that antibody in Presley's blood returns to normal, it develops memory markers, which eliminates Salyers from ever being a compatible match. Now, Presley is in search for another donor with time quickly running out.

Robin and Rick have been trying to keep Joshua off dialysis but once the transplant was cancelled, dialysis has become more and more of a reality.

"It's just about gone and we can't live without kidneys. Once it's gone, he will be living on dialysis," Robin Presley said. "There's no other way to live but that's what I'm trying to prevent. He's my son and I'm going to do everything I can to help him and battle for him."

While he's been fighting for his life, he has slowly begun to forget the simple joys of life — such as food. When people develop kidney disease, as their kidney function deteriorates, it disrupts their life. They become fatigued, they have to develop a special diet, which is more stringent than an ordinary weight-loss diet.

“His favorite thing in the world is Mexican,” Presley said. “He loves chips and salsa, and he can’t eat that. He looked at his dad the other day and his dad was pouring a glass of milk, and he said, ‘Hey dad, what does that taste like? Did I ever drink that?’ It’s probably been four years since he’s had plain milk.

“He saw a commercial one day and somebody was pouring a glass of orange juice. He said, ‘Mom, that’s orange juice. Did I ever drink that?’ I said, ‘Yeah, all the time, back when you were in high school.’ He said, ‘Did I like it?’ It’s just things like that, it’s disheartening.”

While Josh has been restricted due to his kidney failure, he has a Facebook campaign that has been shared by hundreds of people. Just like in 2001, when Presley walked across the stage at Russell High School to a standing ovation as he received his diploma, Presley has received an outpouring of support from family, friends and complete strangers who are walking beside him during this fight.

“It’s hard to put into words. When Josh graduated from high school, my husband cried and he’s commented to this day that he’s never seen a class of young kids embrace a person, who’s a little bit different than they are, like that particular class did,” Robin Presley said.

“In the community, it’s hard to find the words to express the heart-felt gratitude I have for the words that they’ve given. Some of them don’t even know Josh. That can only be one thing, that’s God blessing on our family, keeping Josh in his hand, protecting Josh, blessing Josh and giving these people the courage to do something like that. There truly are Guardian Angels that walk among us.”

If anyone is interested in becoming a donor for Presley, contact Todd Maynard, Living Donor Coordinator at the University of Kentucky, at 1-859-218-2937. All expenses are paid for the donor.