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Cyclist 2016, 2015 and 2014

Why do I ride? My reasons have evolved since my first Closer to Free Ride.

When I first signed up, I was riding for two reasons:

1) To support my long-time friend and co-worker, Karen DiCrosta whose middle school-age daughter, Haley, was stricken with cancer and was receiving treatment at Smilow Cancer Hospital. That's a scare and pain that any parent can relate to.

2) Because I love the challenge of riding centuries. Simple. I thought I would ride this one time and next year I would find another century to ride.

These two reasons stayed in my head until about two or three miles into the ride when we stopped in front of the hospital. While stopped, I noticed the pictures of loved ones pinned to riders' jerseys. I heard the hushed chatter about friends and family who were saved and those who were not. Patients and medical staff alike came out to the street to cheer us on. The collective emotion was palpable---and contagious.

That's when I realized that this ride is much bigger than my desire to ride centuries, and it's bigger than Karen and her daughter, Haley, who, by the way, is doing well and has blossomed into a beautiful young woman. This ride is about all of us; it's too important to wait for others to do it. Simple.

