

BREAST CANCER WELLNESS

BE A THRIVER!

NOMINATIONS OPEN
OCTOBER 1

FOR THE
2018
BCW
AWARDS



**KNOW YOUR
RIGHTS**

**FIGHT
LIKE A GIRL**

**THRIVING FOR
45 YEARS**

**BC NONPROFITS
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FOR US**

Donna Baker

**112 DAYS
LATER**

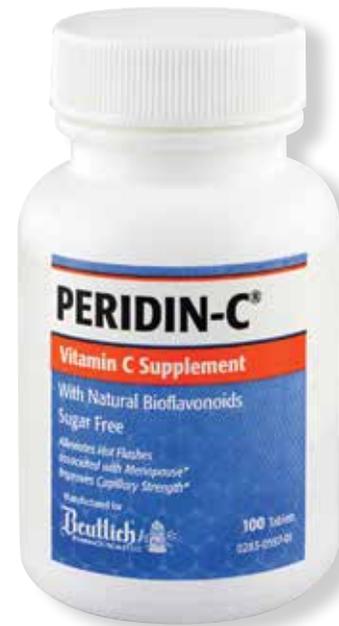
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¹ Smith, Charles J. Non-Hormonal Control of Vaso-Motor Flushing in Menopausal Patients. Chicago Medicine 1964;67:193-195

² Constellation Newsletter, Spring – 2002, Volume 2, Issue 1. www.nsabp.pitt.edu/Constellation_Newsletter_Spring2002.pdf



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And the award goes to...

NOMINATIONS OPEN OCTOBER 1

The **Breast Cancer Wellness Magazine** is excited to announce the 2018 Breast Cancer Leaders and Advocates Awards. The recipients will be announced in the next issue.

Breast Cancer Wellness Magazine will be accepting nominations until November 15, 2018. To nominate your organization, an individual or yourself, go to www.BreastCancerWellness.org/BCWawards.

Nominations are now being accepted for the following categories:

- 🏆 National Breast Cancer Nonprofit of the Year
- 🏆 Community Breast Cancer Nonprofit of the Year
- 🏆 Breast Cancer Lifetime Achievement Award
- 🏆 Breast Cancer Advocate of the Year
- 🏆 Oncology Nurse Navigator of the Year
- 🏆 Breast Cancer National Leader of the Year
- 🏆 Breast Cancer Community Leader of the Year
- 🏆 Breast Cancer Blogger of the Year
- 🏆 Mastectomy Fitter of the Year
- 🏆 Thriving Caregiver of the Year
- 🏆 BCW Ambassador of the Year
- 🏆 BCW Thriver of the Year



**Breast Cancer
Wellness**
M A G A Z I N E

EDITOR'S LETTER

THE ULTIMATE VALUE OF LIFE

Dear friends,

As you read this issue, I invite you to have an “awareness” experience with yourself as you contemplate each article in this issue; possibly looking at your personal perspective about ‘awareness’ from a new angle and giving yourself permission to seriously contemplate and re-prioritize what is most important to you. May each article speak to you and help in some way.

On this topic of awareness, it's sometimes easy to fall into the trap of mindlessly following how others, including marketing gurus want us to behave after diagnosis, according to the beat of their drums and letting our life values to be driven by them. A diagnosis of breast cancer is a wake-up call on many levels and engaging the art of mindfulness and awareness is a great tool for any stage of the journey to safeguard our best interests.

By being aware and mindful, we are less likely to fall prey to distractions that have little or no value for our healing objectives and can rob us of our precious time. Be aware; be mindful of these energy zappers. Paige Davis has some great tips in this issue about awareness and mindfulness.



— Aristotle

of contemplation rather than mere survival.

The ultimate value of life depends upon awareness and the power

AWARENESS

Remember, it is through the principle of “awareness” that desired change begins and this applies individually and collectively; please give yourself the ultimate freedom to dance to the beat of your drum and to act upon the ultimate values and priorities in your life.

Our cover story is Donna Baker, a long time dear friend of mine. I was shocked last year when I heard Donna had been diagnosed with breast cancer but not surprised with the way she managed her health needs and her career as she went through treatment. She is one of the top women in the world that I admire. The adage of ‘how you do one thing is how you do everything’ applies to Donna and why I respect her so highly because she lives her life and her breast cancer experience with truth, kindness, fairness and grace and is a gifted visionary trouble shooter/solution seeker.

Anita Cochran has put her commitment for surviving and thriving into a strength-filled video “Fight Like a Girl.” As an award winning country western artist, music is her love and also her healing outlet. Feel her strength as you read her story and watch her video.

I love the advice that Loretta Kaminsky has for us in this issue. Loretta is 82 years young, a 45 year breast cancer thriver. Her advice is to begin every day with a smile. Her story will make you smile.

Be a thriver, on your terms, in your style!

Beverly Vete

Publisher and 26 Year Breast Cancer Thriver





Prioritize Your Priorities

BY BEVERLY VOTE

Breast cancer rearranges our lives, including our priorities. While changes aren't always welcomed or presented to us at a most opportune time in our life, the diagnosis causes us to review what is most important for our remaining time in life, whatever that time may be.

Do you know what is most important to YOU? Give yourself permission to consider your inner most desires. This contemplation may be a valuable personal key to your life.

Having clearly defined priorities help simplify our decisions, our schedules and very importantly, our boundaries! When we are clear about our priorities and the order of what is most important to us, it becomes much easier to say no when we mean no and yes when we mean yes.

Here are a few tips to keep YOU as the top priority on your healing journey going forward:

- ✓ **Contemplate** your top ten most important issues in your life, and then whittle it down to your top **five to thrive priorities** because when going through so much, we cannot serve everything at once; thus the need to be clear on what is most important to us will help to stay on a purposeful course.
- ✓ **Write** these top five priorities down in the sequence of their importance to you and put on your bathroom mirror, have as your screen saver, write them in your journal, or keep them in your purse or pocket.

"Sometimes when you're overwhelmed by a situation — when you're in the darkest of darkness — that's when your priorities are reordered."

— PHOEBE SNOW

- ✓ **Decide** not to be distracted from your priorities with the countless distractions every day. It's deemed a distraction if it doesn't align in some way with your top five priorities.
- ✓ **Remember** you have control over what stays on the list and the order of the list.
- ✓ **Surround** yourself with people who have similar priorities and values.
- ✓ **Do** something every day to honor one of your top priorities.
- ✓ **Read** each of your priorities out loud and **pray** over them every day.
- ✓ **Share** with a close friend who will help you stay true to your priorities.
- ✓ **Know** why the priority is important to you..
- ✓ **Remain** true to yourself.
- ✓ **Give** yourself permission to change priorities as you want.
- ✓ **Keep** in mind that your priorities will get tested periodically to see if you are being true to yourself or to convey if it's time to review their order of importance.
- ✓ **Express** or journal your gratitude for the gift of today.

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KNOW *Your* RIGHTS

BY MONICA FAWZY BRYANT

Many people are unaware of their rights and the resources available to assist them through the vast maze of legal, employment, and insurance systems, and the financial impact that cancer may have on their lives. When people hear the dreaded words, “you have cancer,” they can become overwhelmed. People think about their health, their family, their mortality. People think about treatment options, oncologists, and cancer centers. But rarely do they think about the law.

In our workshops and conferences across the country we often hear similar concerns from survivors, caregivers, and their health care professionals. For example, individuals may experience employment challenges while working through treatment, taking time off work, or returning to the workplace. These

include potential workplace discrimination and trying to balance their time and energy between dealing with treatment and work responsibilities. Those who take extended periods of time off from work can also face issues getting back into the workforce.

But there are laws in place to protect individuals and provide tools to help them continue to be a productive employee. The federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides eligible cancer survivors with protection against discrimination in the workplace and access to reasonable accommodations. Most states have laws similar to the ADA, but some are more protective. For example, the state law may cover smaller employers than the ADA.

One of the most valuable tools the ADA provides is access to reasonable accommodations. Some examples of helpful reasonable

accommodations for employees with cancer include:

- Modifying work schedule (e.g., flexible schedules, additional breaks, telecommuting, extended leave, etc.)
- Modifying work space (e.g., switching offices, ergonomic chair, etc.)
- Using technology (e.g., headphones, speak-type software, smart phone, etc.)
- Change in workplace policy (e.g., wearing a hat/scarf, etc.)
- Shifting non-essential job duties to other employees
- Moving to a vacant position, if available.

The Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a federal law that allows employees to take time off from work because of their own serious medical condition, to care for a spouse, a parent, or a child. While taking leave, an employee’s job and their employer-sponsored



health insurance coverage are protected. (<https://trinecancer.org/employment>)

Keep in mind, though, the law only provides a minimum of what employers must provide to eligible employees. Many employers offer benefits above and beyond what the law requires. Therefore, it is in everyone's best interests to investigate what their employers might offer them.

Employees may be required to provide their employers with a medical certification form from their health care provider verifying the need for the reasonable accommodation or medical leave. However, individuals have a choice if, when, how much, and to whom they disclose their cancer diagnosis. It is an incredibly personal decision. We hear from individuals who have regrets because they didn't think it through or didn't know they had choices. We encourage individuals to talk with their health care teams about their disclosure decisions. Disclosure decisions used to just be about whether or not you would have direct, in-person or phone conversations with family members and friends. Now, with technology integrated into every aspect of daily life, medical information might accidentally or intentionally be disclosed online. Information shared online can have a long-term impact, and be found by anyone (e.g., future or current employers, future dating prospects, etc.), so individuals should make conscious decisions about if, and how much, medical information they want to share online. For more information, visit <https://trinecancer.org/QuickGuide-Disclosure>.

In addition to challenges around work and disclosure, many individuals are completely unaware of the long-term financial impact

that cancer may have on their lives. Cancer care is expensive and treatment costs aren't just an issue for individuals who are newly diagnosed or in active treatment. There can also be a long-term financial impact of a cancer diagnosis, which extends into post-treatment survivorship. One of the most important things that individuals can do to mitigate the financial impact of a cancer diagnosis is to have the right health insurance policy for them. The Affordable Care Act (aka Obamacare) has given Americans more options for health insurance and consumer protections than ever before. However, few of us are ever taught how to pick between more than one health insurance option. There are three key things that insurance should compare when considering health insurance options: 1) costs; 2) are health care providers covered by the plan; and 3) are needed prescriptions drugs included on the list of covered drugs (formulary). Furthermore, health insurance is confusing, so it is no surprise that individuals do not always use their policies to the maximum potential. And confusion about the health care system is only compounded by the fact



that things are frequently changing at the state and federal levels and individuals often do not know where to turn for reliable, unbiased information. For more information, visit <https://trinecancer.org/healthinsurance>.

Of course, this is not a comprehensive list of all the cancer-related legal issues. Individuals may also have to become familiar with their rights around disability insurance, genetics, family law, estate planning, and medical decision making. Cancer can be a life-altering experience. But arming oneself with information about legal rights and options can help avoid the many pitfalls that may be hiding in the maze of cancer-related legal issues. Triage Cancer is here to help.

Triage Cancer is a national non-profit organization that provides education on the practical and legal issues that may impact individuals diagnosed with cancer and their caregivers. Triage Cancer offers the following resources to help people navigate cancer-related legal issues:

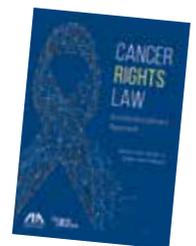
- Quick guides on topics such as employment, disability and health insurance, and finances
- An educational blog
- Monthly cancer survivorship webinars
- Free Triage Cancer Conferences
- Animated Videos to explain complex topics in an easy to understand way (English, Spanish, and Tagalog)
- A website focused on Cancer Finances, including how to navigate your health and disability insurance options

All of the services that Triage Cancer provides are free of charge. However, over the years we have been asked for a comprehensive resource for all types of professionals to use when helping patients. That is why we authored *Cancer Rights Law*. This book is the first of its kind and more information (and a 35% discount code) can be found at <https://trinecancer.org/cancerrightslaw>.



MONICA FAWZY BRYANT

Monica Fawzy Bryant is cancer rights attorney, speaker, and author, dedicated to improving access to quality information on cancer survivorship issues. She is the co-founder and COO of Triage Cancer. Throughout her career she has provided hundreds of educational seminars, written articles and blogs, and appeared on community television and radio shows. She is also an Adjunct Law Professor teaching a class on Cancer Rights.



10

**TIPS TO HELP
MANAGE THE COST
OF CARE**

BY MOLLY MACDONALD

Breast cancer can be an extremely costly disease to treat, even with insurance. There are ways to help manage the cost of care.

Here are my top ten tips:



1. ASK TO SPEAK TO A FINANCIAL NAVIGATOR AT THE TIME YOUR TREATMENT PLAN IS PRESENTED to determine the costs of your care. Be sure and ask about diagnostic tests, tattooing for radiation, oral drugs, chemo infusions and any integrative care you might have, like a massage for lymphedema or acupuncture.



2. KNOW YOUR INSURANCE PLAN and how much you will need to set aside for co-pays and of course that pesky annual deductible. You also need to make sure all your doctors are in-network, and if not, understand what your costs will be for their services.

3. DON'T JUST PAY EVERY BILL THAT YOU'RE SENT! Wait until you receive the explanation of benefits, EOB, from your insurance plan, then review each with a fine-tooth comb. Look for double billing and check for the correct name, address, and insurance codes. If you are unsure you received a particular medication or test, or anything on the invoice varies from your treatment plan, call the hospital.

continued on page 14



Introducing EES – Essential Eyebrow Solution®

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THE PROBLEM

Your doctor may tell you that your chemotherapy treatment will most likely lead to hair loss. In addition to scalp hair loss, you may also lose your eyebrows. While scalp hair loss can be disguised, the loss of eyebrows can be difficult to conceal and is often perceived by patients as an unwelcome, visible sign of their illness.

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THE PROOF

A recent EES clinical trial published in *PRIME International Journal of Aesthetic & Anti-Ageing Medicine* demonstrated that 91% of the 117 enrolled cancer patients retained 50-100% of their eyebrow hair while undergoing chemotherapy treatment, despite experiencing full body hair loss elsewhere. The article "Preserving Eyebrow Hair during Chemotherapy Treatment" was written in collaboration with Josephine Ford Cancer Institute/Henry Ford Health System, located in Detroit, Michigan.

Readers of Breast Cancer Wellness can receive a **20% DISCOUNT** by using the promo code: **EES20BCW**

Patient retained her eyebrows despite full body hair loss elsewhere



Chemotherapy regimen consisted of: Perjeta, Taxotere, Carboplatin & Herceptin (every 3 weeks x 6 cycles), followed by Herceptin every 3 weeks for 1 year.

“ The ability to maintain my natural eyebrows during my treatment made a significant psychological difference when dealing with my other losses. With a wig, eyeliner and the preservation of my own eyebrows, others frequently commented on their amazement that I had not lost my hair... when indeed I had. The loss of eyelashes and the hair on one’s head are far easier to conceal than the loss of one’s eyebrows. Thank you for the opportunity to use this product during my chemotherapy. ”

— Lynn

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4. RECORD EVERY CALL YOU MAKE, the date, time, and to whom you spoke. Ask for first and last names; keep this data in a notebook. You may need to refer to it later. Even better, follow-up every phone call with an email, if possible, detailing the discussion and next steps.



5. SET UP A PAYMENT PROGRAM IN WRITING! Rather than pay the bill in full, you may want to preserve your cash and pay over time, with no interest. Once you have a payment plan in writing and you pay as you agreed, your bills will not be sent to collections. Do not put your payments on your credit card unless you have no other way to pay and can pay the balance in full each month. It may take years to pay off this debt, but remember this is not a sprint. Be prepared because some healthcare systems will ask for financial statements to determine what you can afford to pay.



6. IF YOUR BILLS GO TO COLLECTIONS, DO NOT negotiate lower payments with the collections agency! The reality is they will agree to settle the debt for less than what you owe and sell the balance of your debt to another agency who will come after you for the balance. Collection agencies are notorious for making promises on the phone and never providing written agreements. Instead, consult a collections attorney who will advise you how to work through this process.



7. SHOP AROUND FOR THE BEST PRICE ON PRESCRIPTIONS. You can do this online by plugging in the name of the drug, dosage and number of units prescribed. The same prescription can have different costs at different pharmacies, even with the same insurance coverage. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about cheaper generic or an equivalent prescription available. And finally, you may be able to get prescription assistance from organizations like The Patient Advocate Foundation, The Patient Access Network Foundation and Needy Meds. Keep in mind, these are low-income programs.



8. KNOW YOUR INSURER'S TIME LIMIT FOR SUBMITTING CLAIMS. If your claim is denied, always ask if the payment was denied due to a billing or clerical error first. If you find an error, insist the bill be resubmitted. Keep all of your paperwork. Insurers often deny claims that are later approved. It takes perseverance and knowing your coverage.



9. GET HELP THROUGH CONSUMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS which are run by states to serve as advocates for patients and assist consumers with insurance questions. They can help you file an appeal if your insurance claim is denied.



10. TO SHARE OR NOT TO SHARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA? Many survivors find incredible support on social media platforms. But be aware, oversharing can result in lasting repercussions, particularly when it comes to work. Future employers will google your name and can access anything you've posted publicly. Privacy settings can help, as well as telling friends and family to keep your circumstances confidential.



MOLLY MACDONALD

Molly MacDonald is an 12 year breast cancer survivor. Diagnosed at a time of job transition and without an income to support life's most basic expenses, she faced losing her second home to foreclosure, and her car to repossession. When family and friends stopped delivering pans of lasagna in every form imaginable, she found herself standing in line at the local food bank to feed her family. In a place where she was devoid of joy, MacDonald discovered what she now believes is her life purpose. She was to start an organization to help breast cancer survivors unable to work and without an income while undergoing treatment for breast cancer, pay some of their basic non-medical bills. These days, joy comes to MacDonald every single month when she has the privilege of signing her name to tens of thousands of dollars of checks paid to patient's creditors for housing, transportation, utilities and insurance. To date The Pink Fund has paid out close to \$2.1 million in bill payments. To learn more about her work, get or give help, visit, The Pink Fund.org.

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GO ORGANIC: *It's worth it!*

BY CHRISTINE HORNER, M.D.

The way your food is grown can have a powerful influence on the quality of its healing intelligence and, therefore, a significant impact on your risk of breast cancer.

Conventionally grown foods may look and smell wholesome, but lurking on and under the surface is often a toxic mix of poisons that includes the residues of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, hormones, and toxic additives. Organically grown foods, on the other hand, are carefully cultivated to avoid these chemicals.

The reasons you don't want your foods grown with synthetic chemicals are simple: They can damage your health and the environment. Some of these chemicals have been found to increase your risk of breast

cancer—and other cancers, as well. Many agricultural and additive chemicals can also damage your immune, nervous, endocrine, and reproductive systems.

There is another important health issue concerning conventionally grown food: Some seed producers change the characteristics of a plant by modifying its DNA. This process is known as “genetic modification.” The intent is to increase crop production or commercial viability by adding so-called “beneficial” traits to a plant's DNA. For instance, companies add genes to plants to make them grow bigger, to be more resistant to pests, or to increase their shelf life.

The problem is that scientists don't know what the long-term effects of eating these types of foods will be on human health—or

on the environment. No human studies were done to evaluate their safety before they were put on the market. In other words, you and your family are Guinea pigs in one of the largest nonconsensual human experiments in history! This “experiment” will find out what happens to humans when they eat these foods over a long period of time—and we are the ones who will most likely suffer for it—we and our children and future generations!

The only way to reduce your health risk from GMOs is to buy or grow only organically grown foods. Unfortunately, you can only decrease, not eliminate, your risk of consuming GMOs because accidents happen. Genetically altered foods have accidentally been mixed with biologically normal foods. Wind-blown pollen, commingled seeds, and black-market plantings have extended these products of biotechnology into the far corners of the global food supply—perhaps irreversibly. In other words, even organically grown plants can become contaminated with genetic modifications. For the most part, however, certified organic foods are free from GMOs and are really the only way to reduce your risk of consuming genetically altered foods.

WEED KILLER COULD KILL YOU

Conventionally grown foods are sprayed with chemical pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, and fertilizers. These chemicals are popular because they are effective, but most of them are also highly toxic. They can damage your health in a variety of ways, causing everything from cancer to nervous, endocrine, and reproductive system damage. Chemicals that damage your nervous system



are classified as neurotoxins. They impair IQ, memory, coordination, and the ability to concentrate. These chemicals, also known as endocrine disrupters, disturb the delicate balance of the hormones that regulate your body's functions, including reproductive functions functions.

Most samples of conventionally grown fruits and vegetables contain the residues of several of these dangerous chemicals.

THE POISON COCKTAIL

We humans aren't exposed to just one pesticide or harmful chemical at a time. We're exposed to a "soup" of toxins every day. These toxins come from our food, the air we breathe, and the chemicals that outgas in our homes, in the buildings where we work and shop, and in our cars. They also come from dry-cleaned clothes, home-cleaning supplies, and beauty and personal-care products. In addition, some toxins stay in our bodies for decades, creating an ever more complex, chemical cocktail. The big question is: What happens when these chemicals mix together? Do they interact in some way and become even more toxic? Because most of these chemicals haven't been studied, we don't know; however, the few studies that have been done suggest that this may be exactly what happens. A study conducted at Tulane and Xavier Universities in New Orleans found that when two pesticides, endosulfan and dieldrin, were combined together, the estrogenic effect of endosulfan increased 160 times and that of dieldrin increased 1,600 times. When the researchers combined endosulfan with chlordane (a pesticide banned in the United States but still used in third-world countries and sold back to us on the food we import), the endosulfan's estrogenic activity increased 100 times.

ORGANIC: IT'S WORTH IT!

Concern over harmful chemicals is probably the biggest reason why organically grown crops and organic products are the fastest growing sector of the agriculture economy, averaging 20 percent growth per year for more than a decade. Another reason may be that organic foods taste better. That's why many chefs at finer restaurants prefer to use them.

In addition, most studies comparing



the nutritional quality and content of organic foods to conventionally grown foods have found that organic foods fare much better. For instance, a study conducted at the University of California, Davis, found that corn grown without pesticides had 58 percent more antioxidants when compared to conventionally grown corn. Researchers also found that organically grown Marion berries (a type of blackberry) had 50 percent more antioxidants and organically grown strawberries had 19 percent more antioxidants than the same fruits grown conventionally.

Organically grown crops have been found to have a higher nutritional value 40 percent of the time, whereas conventionally grown crops had a higher nutritional value only 15 percent of the time. Organic crops had an equal or higher nutrient content than conventionally grown foods 85 percent of the time. Three nutrients stood out as being consistently better in organic crops: On average, they have about 20 percent more vitamin C, better protein quality, and about 20 percent fewer carcinogenic nitrates.

Nutrients don't tell the whole story of a plant, however. The best test is to observe what happens to human beings and animals when they eat organically grown crops compared to what happens when they eat chemically grown crops. Are there any differences in their health? Animal experiments have been done to find the answer to that question. A review of these studies was published in the journal

Alternative Therapies in 1998. Most of the studies included in the review found a significant difference. The animals that were fed organic foods were healthier. The biggest differences were seen in animals that were sick or very young. The organically fed animals tended to have a higher reproductive capacity, better survival of the young, less illness, and better recovery from illness.

Organically grown foods are somewhat more expensive than conventional crops, but the power they have as natural medicines makes them well worth the difference. Think of it as a commitment to your health. It's a small price to pay for food that delivers the most nutritional value, tastes better, is free of (or has very low amounts of) dangerous carcinogenic chemicals, and is grown in a way that doesn't damage the environment. Remember that buying organic foods saves you money in the long run because cancer, or any chronic disease, costs you time and drains you physically, emotionally, and financially.



Christine Horner, M.D.

Christine Horner, M.D. is a board certified and nationally recognized surgeon, author, expert in natural medicine, professional speaker and a relentless champion for women's health. She is the author of *Waking the Warrior Goddess: Dr. Christine Horner's Program to Protect Against and Fight Breast Cancer*, winner of the Independent Book Publishers Award 2006

for Best Book in Health, Medicine, and Nutrition. www.drchristinehorner.com

MORE *for Stage IV*

Heather Jose and Lori Lober had bleak prognosis when each were diagnosed over 18 years ago, but today they want to connect with others who are facing the challenges of a stage IV diagnosis. Feel free to email them with your stories and messages of hope and inspiration.



Heather Jose
18 Year Metastatic Breast Cancer Thriver
Author of *Every Day I Am Killing Cancer*
Founder, *Go Beyond Treatment*
Co-editor, *BCW More for Stage IV*
www.HeatherJose.com



Lori Lober
18 Year Metastatic Breast Cancer Thriver
Nutrition Guru and Lover of Life!
Author of *Still Bigger than Pink; Alive and Thriving* and *Love to Live, Alive and Thriving*
Co-editor, *BCW More for Stage IV*
lorilober@aol.com
www.WeLovetoLive.com

I Support Her *Choices*

BY JOHN LOBER

When we found out Lori had stage four, metastatic breast cancer in April, 2000 at the age of 36, we knew many, many things would need to change about our lives going forward. My main goal, as her spouse and partner in life, was to keep things as positive as I could. I supported her choices to incorporate complementary modalities and I understood that nutrition, movement, high quality sleep and thinking well would all play an instrumental role in her long-term recovery.

I began to help around the house, did laundry, helped with shopping and meal prep and of course, I have always loved preparing wild turkey (her favorite!), chukar, elk, crappie, (any type of fish!) deer and anything else I could get my

hands on for Lori and the family.

In my opinion, one of the absolute-key things, especially when Lori was on hard chemotherapy, was to plan fun things for all of us to look forward to, especially Lori.

We planned family outings, game nights, trips with friends and even the “girl” trips Lori went on with her friends, in my opinion, have helped her not just survive, but thrive after being diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer. She’s my strength, my rock, and it’s been an honor to be by her side through the good times as well as the bad.

We love talking about our future and everything we’ll continue to do for both of our optimal health and wellness in the many years to come. Life has been an amazing blessing!



"Let us move forward with strong and active faith."

— FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

13 **FACTS** about Metastatic Breast Cancer

1. No one dies from breast cancer that remains in the breast. Metastasis occurs when cancerous cells travel to a vital organ and that is what threatens life.
2. Metastasis refers to the spread of cancer to different parts of the body, typically the bones, liver, lungs and brain.
3. An estimated 155,000 Americans are currently living with metastatic breast cancer.(also called Stage IV breast cancer) Metastatic breast cancer accounts for approximately 40,000 deaths annually in the U.S.
4. Treatment for metastatic breast cancer is lifelong and focuses on control of the disease and quality of life.
5. About 6% of people are Stage IV from their initial diagnosis.
6. Early detection does not guarantee a cure. Metastatic breast cancer can occur 5, 10 or 15 years after a person's original diagnosis and successful treatment checkups and annual mammograms.
7. 20% to 30% of people initially diagnosed with early stage disease will develop metastatic breast cancer.
8. Young people, as well as men, can be diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer.
9. Like early stage breast cancer, there are different types of metastatic breast cancer.
10. Treatment choices are guided by breast cancer type, location and extent of metastasis in the body, previous treatments and other factors.
11. Metastatic breast cancer is not an automatic death sentence. Although most people will ultimately die of their disease, some will live for many years.
12. There are no definitive prognostic statistics for metastatic breast cancer. Every patient and their disease is unique.
13. To learn more about National Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day on October 13 and to access resources specifically for people living with metastatic breast cancer and their caregivers, visit www.mbcn.org.

How A Cancer Diagnosis **SAVED ME**

When I was diagnosed with breast cancer in November 2016, I was stage 4 with tumors also showing in my liver and from the top of my spine to my pelvis and everywhere in between, as well as lots of lymph nodes. A few bones were so bad I started ten rounds of radiation the week before I started chemo. So my first week of chemo was also my second week of radiation.

Like most people receiving a cancer diagnosis, I entered a very steep learning curve. I have always leaned toward a holistic approach to health care, and felt strongly that I needed to be my own best advocate, so I read every word of the paperwork my oncologist provided to me, and began working with a holistic doctor to support me thru chemo. I knew if I was going to have a shot at getting better, I had to do an integrated approach, taking the BEST I could find of both traditional and alternative medicine.

My experience with chemo was different from most that I have talked to. Despite needing IV fluids and five units of blood and one of platelets by the time I finished six rounds, with every round of treatment I got stronger and had less pain and fatigue. My body was getting better!

On the home front, my marriage was in crisis. My husband did not know how to deal with me being incapacitated, and neither one of us was prepared for how the chemo and radiation would affect my "girl parts." I spent several months not knowing if my marriage would survive. But I also spent those months in a group therapy with women who were going through similar situations, though due to different circumstances.

Right in the middle of all of that, our teenage daughter who was struggling with deep depression, unbeknownst to us, attempted to take her own life by overdosing on pain pills. I found myself the night after my third round of chemo in the emergency



room facing our daughter possibly having permanent liver damage and discussing which residential treatment facility we wanted her placed in.

Once again I found myself on a steep learning curve, but this time it was about setting boundaries, practicing self-care, and learning to step into my own personal responsibility and power. I felt like just as the chemo was cleaning up my body, the trials and

**BY DARLA FAIRBANKS
STEVENS**

Metastatic Breast Cancer Survivor
Community Outreach Coordinator
at Survivor Soul Project

the things I was learning emotionally were cleaning up a different kind of cancer that was destroying my family.

I learned through it all that there is only so much I have control over, but for the things I do have control over, it is my responsibility to figure them out. I have also learned that our minds can be powerful allies or ruthless masters, depending on what we choose to spend our time thinking about. Thoughts impact our health, our relationships and our power to heal, but they are just thoughts, and they can be changed.

I did not know what my husband would decide to do. I did not know what my daughter would decide to do. I did not know if my body would recover. But I learned to embrace faith and hope in a new way, at a deeper level than ever before. And I found peace.

In May of 2017, after a lot of study and consideration, I opted for a bi-lateral mastectomy. My pathology all came back clean, much to the shock of all the involved doctors. Since October 2017, my PET scans have continued to come back with No Evidence of Disease (NED). Woohoo!

My daughter is flourishing and my husband is still my husband, and working through his own stuff. Our relationship is better than it has been in years, and continues to grow. For all these things I am very thankful. But I am most thankful for the knowledge that my own happiness and fulfillment is no longer dependent on anyone else or their choices. I am growing in health and wellness, both physically and mentally.

I am a different person than I was two



years ago. My cancer journey has been the catalyst for a life transformation I didn't know was possible. I have gone from being defeated and lost to thriving and embracing life. I am not perfect, but I am so much better.

The Survivor Soul Project provided me with tools and resources to better understand what's possible after diagnosis. I am very grateful to be part of this organization and to spread hope and share resources with others facing a cancer diagnosis and the aftermath of treatment.

I find a lot of joy in sharing my story, and sharing the tools that have brought me to where I am today. I am embarking on something very special, an endeavor to provide empowering survivor support programs to groups, hospitals and cancer centers, from someone who has walked in the deep trenches of the breast cancer experience. You can find me on Facebook and at SurvivorSoulProject.com.





Introducing EES – Essential Eyebrow Solution®

...A Solution for a Problem

Patient retained her eyebrows despite full body hair loss elsewhere



Chemotherapy regimen consisted of: Perjeta, Taxotere, Carboplatin & Herceptin (every 3 weeks x 6 cycles), followed by Herceptin every 3 weeks for 1 year.

“The ability to maintain my natural eyebrows during my treatment made a significant psychological difference when dealing with my other losses. With a wig, eyeliner and the preservation of my own eyebrows, others frequently commented on their amazement that I had not lost my hair... when indeed I had. The loss of eyelashes and the hair on one’s head are far easier to conceal than the loss of one’s eyebrows. Thank you for the opportunity to use this product during my chemotherapy.”

— Lynn

Nurse Anesthetist and Former Cancer Patient

EES is a topical formulation that is applied cosmetically to address eyebrow thinning or potential eyebrow loss.

- Clinically Tested*
- A Patented Formula
- Safe & Non-Irritating
- Dermatologist Tested
- Paraben-Free
- Hypoallergenic
- pH Balanced



*The EES clinical trial data was published in PRIME, a peer-reviewed publication.

www.essentialeybrowsolution.com
1-888-208-5081

PRESERVING EYEBROW HAIR DURING CHEMOTHERAPY TREATMENT

Personal appearance directly affects the self-esteem and psychological well-being of cancer patients—that’s been proven in numerous studies and observed by most oncologists. And one big challenge cancer patients face is the prospect of hair loss during chemotherapy. More than 80% of those who receive chemotherapy say hair loss is the worst aspect of treatment and 8% of female patients assert that they would even decline chemo to avoid this side effect. For many men, hair loss during chemotherapy negatively affects their self-perception of virility and masculinity.

In addition to scalp hair loss, cancer patients may lose their eyebrows. Most of us don’t think about it, but eyebrow hair loss is very dramatic. Eyebrows create a frame for our face, make us more attractive and help us convey certain expressions and emotions. Eyebrows also play a practical, but critical role in protecting our eyes from sweat, dust and debris.

Eyebrow hair loss can also cause facial changes—resulting in emotional distress for many cancer patients. While scalp hair loss can be disguised, the loss of eyebrows is difficult to hide and is often perceived by patients as an unwelcome, visible sign of their illness.

RMV Trademarks, LLC understands the profound importance of a healthy appearance during chemotherapy and created EES – Essential Eyebrow Solution® to address eyebrow loss. EES is the only clinically-tested and patented product of its type.

In a recent clinical trial, 91% of the 117 cancer patients using EES retained 50-100% of their eyebrow hair while undergoing chemotherapy treatment, despite experiencing full body hair loss elsewhere. The data was published in *PRIME International Journal of Aesthetic & Anti-Ageing Medicine* as “Preserving Eyebrow Hair during Chemotherapy Treatment,” written in collaboration with Josephine Ford Cancer Institute/Henry Ford Health System, located in Detroit, Michigan.

Although EES was originally formulated to help preserve eyebrow hair in connection with chemotherapy treatment, EES has a place in general beauty regimens, too. This year, a 16-week clinical study was conducted to determine if EES would be effective for beauty consumers looking to maintain and enhance their natural eyebrows. Approximately 84% of the 44 participants who completed the study reported noticeable improvement in their eyebrows (density, fullness, shine, strength and overall eyebrow appearance).

RMV made an official launch of EES to the oncology community as part of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Meeting in June 2017. The success at ASCO led to distribution of EES into new US and global markets.

To learn more about EES – Essential Eyebrow Solution® or to order, visit: www.essentialeybrowsolution.com or call toll-free: 1-888-208-5081.

BREAST FRIENDS CANCER SUPPORT RADIO NETWORK



*Helping women survive the trauma
of cancer... one friend at a time.*

If you missed the live show or want to hear our other exciting episodes at your convenience, visit our archives at:
www.voiceamerica.com/show/2532

Sample topics include: Different stages of the cancer journey
Survivorship • Sex and intimacy • Nutrition and weight loss
Thriving Beyond Cancer • Passion and Purpose • Lymphedema and
other side effects • Living with metastatic disease • Keys to cancer survival
Creative healing • Palliative care • Medical cannabis • Chinese medicine...and more!



**CO-HOSTS
BECKY OLSON & SHARON HENIFIN**

WWW.BREASTFRIENDS.ORG

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HEARTFELT GRATITUDE

HEARTFELT GRATITUDE for every single breast cancer nonprofit, group leader and advocate in the world.

Please take a moment and reflect upon the many diversified ways that the collective work of breast cancer nonprofits, founders, leaders, advocates, and volunteers have made an impact through the years for the greater good. Ponder the combined decades and centuries of compassionate service that hundreds of nonprofits and millions

of individuals have provided to help others.

Please join me in prayers of gratitude not just for the breast cancer nonprofits spotlighted in the following pages, but for all of the nonprofits, leaders and volunteers around the globe. We might not realize how their unending hours of commitment go unrecognized, and we might not be aware of the challenges they face to keep their nonprofits moving in the right direction.

Take all that into consideration how these collective pink missions

have touched our lives that never get reported or were never thanked or the times when they fell short of what was in their heart or the times they lay awake trying to make a hard decision in the dark of night.... just for the sole or should I say soul reason of serving with their best intentions of making a difference for breast cancer survivorship and prevention.

Surely one of these days all of this amazing heart centered love and commitment will reach the tipping point to end breast cancer!

Godspeed!

MANY WOMEN
who have undergone cancer-related breast surgery tell us that they felt poorly informed about their options – **and we're changing that.**

From diagnosis to living beyond breast cancer, **TheDayIWasTold.com** is a place to learn, connect, and share stories.

*Tell us how we can support your organization:
info@amoena.com*

amoena
f t i

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NATIONAL BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION

National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc. was founded in 1991 by breast cancer survivor, Janelle Hail. She was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1980 at the age of 34. At the time of her diagnosis, there was little information about the disease, and she was forced to make a decision about her health with few options. After her treatment, Janelle made a commitment to help educate women around the world about breast cancer and to provide support services to those in need.

NBCF is Helping Women Now® by providing free early detection services, breast health education and support services for those facing breast cancer and partners with hospitals across the U.S. To learn more about breast cancer or to request free breast health educational resources, please visit nbcf.org.



JANELLE HAIL

HOW YOU CAN HELP



\$150 helps provide a mammogram
for a woman in need.



Get involved with friends and family
to start or join a fundraiser.



Partner with a nationally
recognized charity.

STAY CONNECTED



www.nbcf.org

National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc.
2600 Network Blvd, Ste 300 | Frisco, TX 75034
nbcf.org | 972.248.9200



**NATIONAL
BREAST
CANCER
FOUNDATION, INC.®**



With you, for you.

Breast cancer changes lives. Since 1991, Living Beyond Breast Cancer has provided people with breast cancer support, guidance and the information they need to understand diagnosis and treatment. Twenty-seven years of service has led to a robust offering of easy-to-understand educational resources that women with all stages of the disease have come to trust and rely on.

Every year, Living Beyond Breast Cancer reaches over 500,000 women with breast cancer. Many of these women attend our two national conferences to hear the latest medical information from leading healthcare experts and network with similarly diagnosed peers. They join us online for webinars and Twitter Chats, and online or in-person for Breast Cancer 360s, programs that look at a targeted topic from every angle. They learn about breast cancer on LBBC.ORG and through our library of over 20 publications, written by LBBC staff and vetted by medical experts and women who have been there.

When these women need someone most, they reach out to our Breast Cancer Helpline, a peer-to-peer support service staffed by trained, trusted, and knowledgeable volunteers who know the impact breast cancer has on a life.

Based just outside of Philadelphia, LBBC's staff of 30 implements these programs nationwide to work toward our vision of a world where no one impacted by breast cancer feels uninformed or alone. By offering our programs virtually and in-person, we strive to ensure that any woman, anywhere — from major metropolitan areas to America's most rural regions — can access the information she needs to feel confident in her treatment decisions and cancer care.

We also know that clear information isn't the only key to coping with breast cancer. For many, meeting others impacted by the disease, or meeting other families and caregivers, is just as important. So we offer regular events to bring people together as advocates and friends, in the form of specialized volunteer programs, regional walking groups, closed social media communities and our annual Reach & Raise yoga fundraisers, held throughout each year in cities across the U.S.

In 2018, LBBC earned our 13th consecutive 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's premier charity evaluator. Receiving four out of a possible four stars indicates that our organization adheres to good governance and other best practices, and that we consistently execute our mission in a fiscally responsible way. Only 1 percent of rated charities have received at least 12 consecutive 4-star evaluations.

We work toward our mission to connect people with trusted breast cancer information and a community of support, and we do it with great dedication. If you, a friend or a loved one needs us, we're here: We're with you, for you.



Living Beyond Breast Cancer

Toll-Free Phone Number: (855) 807-6386 | Breast Cancer Helpline: (888) 753-5222

LBBC.org | facebook.com/livingbeyondbreastcancer | Twitter: @LivingBeyondBC

Instagram: livingbeyondbc | YouTube: Living Beyond Breast Cancer

Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/livingbeyondbc/>



Celebrating 20 Years of Support, Education, and Empowerment Young women CAN and DO get Breast Cancer

Young Survival Coalition (YSC) is the premier organization dedicated to the critical issues unique to young women who are diagnosed with breast cancer. Originally founded by three young women who were discouraged by the lack of resources available and the under-representation of young women in breast cancer research. Now in our 20th year, we offer resources, connections, and outreach so women and their co-survivors feel supported, empowered, and hopeful.

What is a Co-Survivor? Breast cancer doesn't just affect the young woman diagnosed; it also affects her co-survivors. A co-survivor is someone who offers crucial emotional, physical, financial or spiritual support that a young woman needs. At YSC, we champion the needs of co-survivors and provide opportunities to connect with other caregivers and to find the support needed.

Get Empowered

Join us at the 2019 YSC Summit and connect with friends—new and old—who understand what you're going through. Discuss unique questions and concerns – like dating after diagnosis, navigating your career or managing fear and anxiety – with survivors, co-survivors, and healthcare providers. Learn about the latest research and treatment updates from leading oncologists and researchers.

The metastatic track offers sessions addressing practical concerns and overall well-being for attendees living with metastatic breast cancer. The weekend starts with a dynamic, half-day retreat providing a creative outlet to discuss and define your legacy. Our co-survivor-focused workshops provide a space to connect and learn the how to care for yourself while caring for your loved one.

Registration is now open and limited funds for travel grants are available. Learn more: summit.youngsurvival.org

Get Connected

Whether you're looking to connect in-person or from the comfort of your own home, we provide several ways to find the support you need.

Our YSC Face2Face networks are local, in-person support groups for young women affected by breast cancer, young women living with metastatic breast cancer, and co-survivors. Find your local Face2Face network: youngsurvival.org/meet-in-person

Connect anytime, from anywhere through our online support programs. Our facilitated Online Video Support Groups are monthly meetings where you can share feelings, experiences, information and resources from the comfort of your own home.

Whether you're a co-survivor needing to share feelings or a young woman looking for information, our community is available 24/7 through our discussion boards and private facebook groups. Join the online discussion, visit: youngsurvival.org/find-support-online



**We are here
24/7/365 with
Support, Resources,
and Empowerment**



INFLAMMATORY BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION

BREAST CANCER YOU CAN SEE?

Wait. What?

NO LUMP? IT CAN HURT TOO?

ARE YOU SURE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT BREAST CANCER?

Yes, there is a type of breast cancer that you can 'see' and it may hurt. It's called Inflammatory Breast Cancer (IBC). This is the most aggressive and deadly type of breast cancer. Cancer cells block the lymph vessels in the skin of the breast which can cause it to become swollen, red or inflamed. IBC is rare, accounting for 1 to 5 percent of all breast cancers diagnosed in the United States and progresses rapidly, often in a matter of days or weeks. It grows in sheets or nests which is why mammograms rarely pick it up. At diagnosis, IBC is stage IIIB.

Symptoms of IBC include:

- Rapid swelling — may be overnight
- Red, warm/hot breast
- Nipple Inverted
- Orange peel look to the breast
- Pink, red or purple skin rash
- Itchiness, tenderness or pain
- Mimics an infection

IBC is usually misdiagnosed as a breast infection. ONE course of antibiotics is prescribed but if the symptoms do not go away, DEMAND a biopsy to rule out IBC.

In 2006 Patti Bradfield's daughter Tina, had been diagnosed with IBC. Bradfield made a commitment to educate about IBC and together with KOMO TV in Seattle, 'The Silent Killer' piece came out in May of that year, which went viral. Dr. Massimo Cristofanilli, then at MD Anderson in Houston, saw the piece and called Patti. "I think we have an epidemic" he said to her. "No Doctor, women have finally found a doctor who will take their symptoms seriously". Dr. C (as the women call him) opened the first IBC clinic in the world in October 2006.

During the opening, Dr. C., Bradfield, Jenee Bobbora (diagnosed at 32 with a 2 year old) and Doug Jenks who lost his wife to IBC, decided to start a foundation dedicated to educating the public and the medical community. The IBC Foundation, (www.EraseIBC), was founded on May 25, 2007.

The board consists of all volunteers who work tirelessly to educate. Our



Inflammatory Breast Cancer Foundation

mission is to raise awareness of IBC, and change the perception that not all breast cancers have a lump. Knowing that IBC is generally misdiagnosed, the need to minimize the time spent to receive a diagnosis is crucial.

Current president, Peggy Stephens, a young mother at 43 with two children, 11 and 3, was diagnosed with IBC. Peggy knew within days of searching the internet, and watching 'The Silent Killer' video, that she had IBC. It took over 7 weeks to finally receive a correct diagnosis.

Peggy's entire family volunteer to help others who are struggling to find a doctor to get a correct diagnosis just as husband pushed medical doctors for answers.

Read and download the information at www.eraseibc.org and watch the 'Silent Killer' video at: www.komotv.com/ibc.

Knowledge is powerful and it could save your life or someone you care about.



THE PINK FUND

WHILE FIGHTING FOR THEIR LIVES, MANY BREAST CANCER PATIENTS IN ACTIVE TREATMENT LOSE THEIR LIVELIHOODS.”

— Molly MacDonald, Survivor, Founder, The Pink Fund

A breast cancer diagnosis can destroy the financial health and well-being of patients and their families.

While in active treatment, many patients are unable to work and experience a loss of income that can result in catastrophic financial losses and the need to rebuild financial health.

The Pink Fund provides financial support which helps meet basic needs, decrease stress levels and allow breast cancer patients to focus on healing, while improving survivorship outcomes.

Our up to 90-day grant program covers non-medical basic cost of living expenses, such as health insurance premiums, housing, transportation and utilities.

Breast cancer patients in active treatment who can demonstrate a loss of income due to their diagnosis and treatment can apply on line at www.thepinkfund.org. Click the Get Help tab to pre-qualify and access either a downloadable paper application or apply through our online portal.

All applications forms must be filled out completely and all required documentation included to be considered.

Applications are reviewed monthly for consideration. Payments are made directly to patient's creditors.

Our program is solely dependent on the collaborative power of independent financial contributions. This support comes from comes from individuals who want to make an immediate difference in the lives of breast cancer patients; third party events that donated proceeds to The Pink Fund, cause-marketing partnerships, corporate partners, grants, In-Memoriam and planned gifts, as well as our annual Dancing With The Survivors® signature event.

Since our founding, The Pink Fund has made close to \$3 million dollars in bill payments to patient's creditors.



Molly MacDonald, Survivor, Founder, The Pink Fund

Visit our website, www.thepinkfund.org to learn more about the financial challenges breast cancer patients and our national survey of survivors on the financial challenges they face.



The Pink Fund is a public charity and is exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Pink Fund is a Platinum participant on Guidestar.

The PINK FUND®
REAL HELP NOW

METASTATIC BREAST CANCER NETWORK

The Metastatic Breast Cancer Network (MBCN), is an all-volunteer, patient-led advocacy organization addressing the unique needs and concerns of women and men who are living with metastatic or stage IV breast cancer. Stage IV needs more!

In the early 2000s, two patients with metastatic breast cancer were asked to leave an event for people with breast cancer. The organizers didn't want any discussion of stage IV breast cancer which they felt would frighten the audience, most of whom had early-stage disease.



Today, it still can be challenging to connect with other patients or even to find brochures and up-to-date, patient-friendly information on living with metastatic breast cancer. Most people are familiar with early-stage breast cancer. Our reality is different—treatment is for life. We help people with metastatic breast cancer understand their disease—and understand they are not alone.

We educate and empower and advocate on behalf of the estimated 155,000 US people living with stage IV breast cancer.

We have held national conferences at major cancer centers as well as co-presented local conferences in the Midwest. We are a founding member of the Metastatic Breast Cancer Alliance and the first patient participants in the Metastatic Breast Cancer Project. We support MBC research through annual leadership grants. We represent the patient voice at ASCO, San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium (SABCS) AACR and other national and international events.

MBCN has helped fund and promote the Metastatic Trial Search Engine and its companion site Metastatic Trial Talk: <https://metastatictrialtalk.org/>.

Since 2009, October 13th has been designated National Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day—MBCN played a key role in lobbying Congress to accomplish this goal. Now it is up to every metastatic breast cancer patient and those who love and support them to find ways to make use of this day (and throughout the year) to further our cause to support those living with the disease and demand focused research to find treatments to extend our lives.

MBCN was founded in 2004.

WEBSITE: www.mbcn.org

EMAIL: mbcn@mbcn.org

mbcn | METASTATIC
BREAST CANCER
NETWORK
EDUCATING • EMPOWERING • ADVOCATING

NATIONAL BREAST CANCER COALITION

THE NATIONAL BREAST CANCER COALITION (NBCC) has been revolutionizing the breast cancer community since its inception in 1991. As an organization, we have a unique role to play, with our mission to end breast cancer, our focus on system change, and our determination to make the disease a priority for our government. We bring a sense of urgency to breast cancer, with the courage to ask hard questions, our belief in evidence based approaches and ability to stand up and challenge the status quo. NBCC has worked relentlessly to support meaningful breast cancer research, to set the right scientific priorities and to bring the necessary people together to achieve significant progress. In 2010, to renew the sense of urgency to its mission and to refocus global efforts on ending breast cancer and saving lives, the National Breast Cancer Coalition Fund set a deadline to know how to end breast cancer by January 1, 2020: Breast Cancer Deadline 2020®. The Deadline is a call to action for policymakers, researchers, breast cancer advocates and other stakeholders, and a means of holding ourselves accountable to our mission.



Fran Visco, President NBCC

OUR MISSION IS TO END BREAST CANCER. Our goals are to make certain that researchers have the necessary funding to do meaningful science; that everyone has access to quality health care and that trained and educated advocates are a part of all decision making that will impact breast cancer. We believe that trained and educated advocates must lead the way and we focus resources on programs that teach lay advocates about science, research processes and policy decision making. NBCC advocates then participate in scientific and regulatory decisions, promote truthful media coverage and bring informed advocacy to the health care arena and their communities. For the general public to understand the concepts and process of science and policy at a level to make a real difference takes a lot of work, dedication, training and time. NBCC's programs and services fill that need in the breast cancer community.

OUR ARTEMIS PROJECT HAS CHANGED SCIENCE. It brings together visionary scientists to develop specific plans under advocate leadership, to figure out how to stop women and men from getting breast cancer and from dying of it.

NBCC'S 7TH ANNUAL ADVOCATE LEADERSHIP SUMMIT will be held April 27-30, 2019 in Washington, DC. Save the date for this three-day intensive training event that includes thought-provoking plenary sessions with esteemed speakers, interactive workshops, and briefings on the latest developments in breast cancer research, public policy, and quality health care. The Summit offers high-quality programming, innovative sessions, and advanced leadership training — and is a great way to kick start advocacy work or refresh and refine expertise.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO GET INVOLVED, visit breastcancerdeadline2020.org, follow NBCC on social media: twitter.com/deadline2020, facebook.com/Deadline2020/, sign up to receive our monthly *Call to Action* newsletter: bit.ly/2vqjGTr





Sisters'

JOURNEY

Sisters' Journey is a faith based breast cancer support and advocacy group. The Sister in Sisters' Journey doesn't refer to a woman you share parents with or a woman who is part of a religious order, but these women are united by a common bond that forms a sisterhood. The common bond is breast cancer and the journey is the months and years of trials and tribulations from diagnosis through treatments of surgery, chemotherapy and radiation, fighting for survival and a cure.

Linda White-Epps was the first sister in this organization and it was from her own journey and frustration to heal her spirit that she looked for others who had also been diagnosed with breast cancer and who could relate to what she was going through. This experience lead her to learning more about the disease, the health disparities that existed and then ultimately wanting to educate her community and promote early detection to save lives.

African American woman are statistically more likely to die from breast cancer than other ethnic groups; they are diagnosed at younger ages and most often with a more aggressive, harder to treat form of breast cancer called Triple Negative.

Sisters' Journey was founded by Linda in 1999. In her search for women like herself to talk to, she discovered that there were more women than she could have ever imagined that had lived through similar experiences...women even in her own family, and that there was a code of silence that needed to be broken to allow others to be aware and take advantage of the early detection screening opportunities. A calendar was created to break the silence among

women of color, the group with the highest mortality rate that with early detection could live longer healthy lives beyond their diagnosis. For 20 years, courageous women have shared their stories of hope in the Sisters' Journey breast cancer survivors' calendar. Many share that through their faith, quick action and the support of others, they have had their lives extended.

Because the journey actually doesn't end when treatment ends, but continues years after due to the anxiety of the disease reappearing, the physical scares that can exist, and the lasting side effects, Sisters' Journey hosts a support group meeting at a church parish hall once a month. We have annual survivor cook outs, a Christmas party, a Mother/Daughter "know your family history" brunch, and beauty shop chats to advocate for early detection in our community. The survivors participate in parades and share their stories at schools from elementary through college.

The new calendar featuring 12 new survivors is unveiled at an annual event we fondly called The Pink Tea, a concept adapted from a traditional church social. The Pink Tea has grown into a luncheon with over 600 guests of family, friends, supporters and medical professional keynote speakers. Linda White-Epps survived 12 years before passing from a recurrence in 2003. Sisters' Journey will celebrate its 20th anniversary with the 2019 Calendar.

www.sistersjourney.org

SUSAN G KOMEN FOR THE CURE

About 12 years ago, I heard the words that no one wants to hear – that I had breast cancer. I was diagnosed with Triple Negative Breast Cancer, only I didn't understand it at the time. I just knew it was an aggressive form. I was fortunate to have access to some of the best doctors, but it like anyone else who has gone through it, it was difficult. Three years later my mother (who had been initially diagnosed with breast cancer years before) died when her cancer returned and metastasized. Those experiences ignited a fire to serve; to do whatever I could to help end this disease for the future. I have two daughters who are now young adults. I don't want anyone's daughters – or sons – to have to go through what we went through. For me, having the opportunity to lead Susan G. Komen is a personal calling.

Susan G. Komen was born out a promise between our founder, Nancy Brinker, and her sister Susan Komen, who was diagnosed at the age of 33. Before Suzy passed, Nancy promised she would do everything she could to save others from the tragic end that her sister was nearing. That legacy drives us to this day. We are the only breast cancer-focused organization that is working across the entire field of breast cancer, including funding breakthrough research, providing patient and provider education, ensuring all patients receive the care and support they need, and providing everyone impacted by this disease a platform to use their voice for change through public policy and advocacy. We do this nationally, and in communities across the country. Anyone looking for more information or access to support can visit us online at www.komen.org or by calling our Helpline at 1-877-GoKomen (1-877-465-6636).

There has been tremendous progress against this disease, but there is so much more to do. More than 41,000 women and men in the U.S. will die from breast cancer this year alone – that is unacceptable. To us, that number is not just a statistic. It is made up of our mothers, sisters, fathers and friends. They are people who deserve a chance to live longer. To ignite change, we are focusing our efforts to cut the current number of breast cancer deaths in half by 2026. We will accomplish this by investing in breakthrough research into the breast cancers that kill – those cancers that are the most aggressive or have spread to other parts of the body – seeking to understand why they spread or recur, and why some cancers become resistant to treatment. We also know that some lives can be saved without a single new breakthrough. That's why we work to ensure that all patients have access to the care that they need. Part of this work is addressing the differences in outcomes for African-American women diagnosed with breast cancer who are 40 percent more likely to die compared to white women. Some of that difference is genetic; much of it reflects the reality of socio-economic and cultural issues that act as barriers to care.

<https://ww5.komen.org>



*Paula Schneider
President, CEO*



TRIPLE NEGATIVE FOUNDATION

The Triple Negative Breast Cancer Foundation was founded in 2006 in honor of Nancy Block-Zenna, who was diagnosed at the young age of 35 with triple negative breast cancer. In response to Nancy's diagnosis her friends identified a dire need to create a central source of information for this dangerous and aggressive form of breast cancer.



Triple negative breast cancer gets its name from the lack of three receptors known to fuel most breast cancers: estrogen receptor, progesterone receptor and human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2). The most successful treatments for breast cancer target these receptors. Triple negative breast cancer tends to be more aggressive, more likely to recur, and more difficult to treat because there are currently no targeted treatments.

The Triple Negative Breast Cancer Foundation's mission is to be a credible source for triple negative breast cancer information, a catalyst for science and patient advocacy groups, and a caring community with meaningful services for patients and their families. The TNBC Foundation supports the triple negative breast cancer community in many ways including a continually growing website, hosted forums, a TNBC helpline and programs specifically for the TNBC community as well as TNBC specific research grants.

"A triple negative breast cancer diagnosis can be an isolating experience, as it is a less common form of breast cancer. As most newly diagnosed patients turn immediately to the Internet, we strive to have comprehensive and hopeful online services through our website (tnbcfoundation.org), including clinical trials matching services, a helpline, and a very active forum that enables women to share strengths, stories, and treatment options." says Executive Director Hayley Dinerman.

From first diagnosis to survivorship the Triple Negative Breast Cancer Foundation is constantly working to offer the TNBC community meaningful services and educational opportunities for patients, survivors and their families. The Foundation offers multiple live conferences, teleconferences and webinars, and printed and online materials that have proven to be essential resources for patients.

For more information about triple negative breast cancer and the work of the TNBC Foundation, visit tnbcfoundation.org or visit us on Facebook and Twitter.

GILDA'S CLUB

CSC is a global non-profit network of 175 locations, including CSC and Gilda's Club centers, hospital and other health-care partnerships, and satellite locations that deliver more than \$50 million in free support services to patients and families. In addition, CSC administers a toll-free helpline and produces award-winning educational resources that, together with the service locations, reach one million people each year.

CSC also conducts cutting-edge research on the emotional, psychological, and financial journey of cancer patients. In addition, CSC advocates at all levels of government for policies to help individuals whose lives have been disrupted by cancer.

In January 2018, CSC welcomed Denver-based nonprofit MyLifeLine, a digital community that includes more than 30,000 patients, caregivers, and their supporters that will enable CSC to scale its digital services in an innovative, groundbreaking way.

Patients and caregivers may get all of this information, including the locations of CSC and Gilda's Club locations where in-person support groups, wellness programs, and other free services are offered, by visiting CancerSupportCommunity.org.

For individuals diagnosed with breast cancer, CSC's website also includes free online resources about breast cancer risk factors, screening for

signs and symptoms, diagnostic testing, and treatment and specific side effects.

In addition, CSC's free Cancer Support Helpline (1-888-793-9355) is staffed by licensed mental health

professionals and resource specialists who can help breast cancer patients find resources to fit their needs and share information about their diagnosis, treatment plans, and methods for coping with cancer. One patient summed up her experience in the following way: "I wasn't aware how much I needed to talk to someone. I was thinking about stopping treatment because I felt so alone and now I know there is someone I can talk to about how hard this is. I will try and work on the things you suggested. No one has helped me like you."

True to its mission, CSC also wants to hear from breast cancer patients and survivors as well as their caregivers about their experience. The Cancer Experience Registry is an online community for those impacted by cancer to share their stories and receive updates on cancer survivorship research and support. In addition, CSC's grassroots networks engage patients in helping change policies to improve the lives of people facing cancer.

Formed in 2009 by the merger of The Wellness Community and Gilda's Club, the Cancer Support Community (CSC) represents 35 years of service to patients.

The Cancer Support Community (CSC) is dedicated to ensuring that all people impacted by cancer are empowered by knowledge, strengthened by action, and sustained by community.





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A FULL *and hopeful* HEART

BY DONNA BAKER

*Every heart that has beat strongly and **CHEERFULLY**
has left a **HOPEFUL IMPULSE** behind it in the world,
and **BETTERED THE TRADITION OF MANKIND.***

— Robert Lewis Stevenson



I'm writing this 112 days after the final round of sixteen chemo treatments ended and that beautiful, shiny bell was rung with a full and hopeful heart.

Since that spring day, there has been a lot of growth in many ways. Outward evidence abounds. Healthy cells replacing those no longer needed. Growing back lashes, hair (where did all that gray come from?), nails, so carefully tended to keep them holding on despite the ravages of chemo until new baby nails could grow in their place, and—not exactly a bonus-leg hair that could truly cut a tomato. Everyone is so very supportive of the ‘new normal’ appearance. Even strangers say my short ‘do looks amazing. I tell them, “Thank you, my oncologist is my hairdresser.” That’s met with either a laugh or uncomfortable silence. Hey, we deserve to have some fun with this aftermath, yes?

The internal growth is not quite as evident. Not quite as easy to laugh about, not quite as easy to process.

I celebrated my last chemo with a group of friends including Kristi. We toasted my final round and her thirteen years being cancer-free. I hadn't seen Kristi in a while. We swapped stories as we shared the same PR+HR+/HER2-. We talked Taxol, ‘Red Devil’ (“Chiefs Glory” this proud Kansas City Chiefs fan called the red-tinged A/C chemo). We talked neuropathy that she said ruefully can linger even thirteen years later (“don’t believe what your doc tells you, Sister, it hurts like hell when it’s cold out.”) And we talked about being in the unique Sisterhood of thousands of friends and strangers. We were Survivors. And we laughed. We laughed a lot.

Eight weeks post-treatment was the all-important scan anticipated with full vision of nothing but good news and blessedly that’s exactly what news we received. It was truly a joyful day. My husband, family, friends, work-family---so many loving hearts were





rewarded with the best possible news: No. Evidence. Of. Disease. And So It Is. Onward and Upward.

My work family rushed to bring champagne and we toasted and cried. I was a worthless mess so my husband and work family lovingly said, "Please go have a cocktail with your girlfriends and get out of here." It was one magnificent day.

Except for one thing.

A mutual friend confided, under penalty of excommunication from friendship if I told, that Kristi had some pain that she was getting checked out. And the initial response from tests was concerning. And Kristi didn't want me to know because

she didn't want anything to cloud my good news.

And then she got her news. Stage 4. Aggressive. Lots of very large words. Long faces. Pure shock.

Kristi made her transition five weeks later. She is free and whole and no longer in pain. She had five weeks surrounded by the true love of family, friends, her pets, her life. She put all details in perfect-Kristi order and gave assignments to those who willingly stepped forward and to some who didn't step forward at all, but she knew would be best for the role she needed filled to execute the agonizing details of "after." Shocked and saddened, all of the loved ones gathered, grieved, celebrated, and now move forward, anchored in the light that only Kristi brought to the world, achingly grateful for the brilliance she brought to each and all.

Internal growth. In my standard eternally optimistic vision, this was a dark

curve ball that knocked the wind out of my soul, if there is such a thing as that happening. You know that feeling?

In the weeks that followed, there were some very dark thoughts that I had never allowed before. I wasn't sure what to do with them and wasn't very good at explaining to my husband, my friends, or even to myself. Fear, always defined in my belief as False Evidence Appearing Real, crept up instead as a dark cloud weaving through my thoughts and often landing heavy in my gut like a bad apple.

Surrounded by the same love and support as always, life's color seemed muted and wrapped with a cloak of impending... what? I simply didn't know this new feeling, even though I have walked some dark days.

The only response that was real to me was silence. Not letting the feeling out, not exploring it deeper, just accepting it with a thin affirmation, "there is a something I am

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to learn but I'll be damned what it is so far now, I'm just going to keep walking, just a little step."

I'd love to say there was a moment of clarity as bright as the stars that washed away that feeling, but that's not true.

What is true is that I learned in this time what I had never allowed myself to even ponder any day since my diagnosis or before. I learned to embrace the dark, not run from it. I learned to pause and fully feel sadness, fear, uncertainty, loss—not as a bridge on the way back to life's road, but as guides that are equally as important as the learning of how to feel joy.

In my life I've been blessed in so very many ways. We will be married this year for 25 years, and I have the joy of being married to my very best friend. Our adult son is kind, and good, and loving, and happy. I have worked very hard and been given opportunity that has yielded a career I love and am proud of. I have true, deep friendships and a wonderful family rounds out my beautiful world.

I am in the club no one asks to join, this Sisterhood of Survivors. When I rang that beautiful bell after treatment sixteen, I said these words, "And now I move forward with my life. I promise to live it beautifully." The dark path was, and is, a gift. The light of life ahead is even more beautiful with this knowing, and all is well with my soul.

Oh...and when you see a hummingbird? Well, that's Kristi telling you and me to celebrate every day walking this earth and to leave our hopeful mark on the world.

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Mindfully

Meeting Cancer & Survivorship

BY PAIGE DAVIS

With

mindfulness

you can establish yourself

in the present in order to

touch the wonders

of life that are available

in that moment.

— Nhat Hanh



PRACTICAL PRESENT-MOMENT PRACTICES

These can be practiced anywhere, anytime

- 1. Close your eyes** – Going within produces a sense of balance and relaxation
- 2. Feel your breath** – Simply feel the rise and fall of your chest
- 3. Set an intention** – Shifts awareness from a stressful situation to a peaceful one (all is well, I am calm)
- 4. Smile** – Releases endorphins that reduce stress and help us feel better.



As a curious soul seeker for the majority of my life, I've discovered that practices like mindfulness and meditation help us respond to high demand situations and live life with more compassion, patience, generosity, and joy. My real entrée to a formal meditation practice came when I was a stressed out entrepreneur on the verge of burnout. I knew nothing in my outer circumstances were going to change and I was desperate for some peace. That is when I attended my first meditation training with Deepak Chopra and the Chopra Center. It was a game changer, partly because it was seven days of structured meditation time and I quickly learned that consistency is key to establishing anything new. Sure enough, I came back from that retreat and was able to cultivate a daily practice that fit my lifestyle and to experience some tangible results like sleeping better, feeling less stressed, and more connected in my personal and professional relationships. But the real benefits came nine months into my daily meditation practice when my doctor uttered the words, "breast cancer."

As I reflect back on my journey, I'm convinced those nine months of daily practice were the training ground for my body-mind-spirit to integrate and experience cancer as the transformational catalyst it was. I believe it provided the opportunity to experience cancer through a lens of love versus a battle to be fought. Not because I was naïve to the reality and brutality of cancer, I had witnessed several

family members experience cancer. It's because I needed to balance this reality through a more compassionate lens.

People commented repeatedly about how amazed they were by my positive attitude throughout my cancer journey. This always confused me, because I was very aware of the hardship of what I was experiencing. But I realized what others perceived as positive was really about being present.

I know this is confusing to people. I too used to be skeptical of the notion of being present, especially during challenging moments. But cancer and facing my mortality taught me a lot about presence. In many ways, it's the only option—the past is gone, the future is yet to happen. The present moment is all there is. I've learned that the moment at hand always gives me what I need—my breath which naturally calms me, feeling an emotion as a physical sensation versus a story I've created, or feeling a sense of connection to myself, others or source, however we wish to define that. Everything is amplified in this space—peace, sadness, joy—but all is met fully and creates the current of my life.

As I share in my book, *Here We Grow*, meditation and mindful living became my home base and gave me the perspective to realize I didn't need to be positive or deny the hardship of my situation, I needed to BE PRESENT. It is this present-moment awareness that lies at the core of any meditation or mindfulness practice.

I like to think of mindfulness as a muscle and meditation as the daily exercise for our brain. The more we flex our mindfulness muscle, the more present we become and able to respond to life's challenges with less stress, more compassion, and most importantly, boosted resilience. It requires willingness and non-judgemental awareness, being in this moment without the need to change. There are several techniques like breath awareness, body awareness, heart awareness and mantra when it comes to practicing mindfulness and meditation which all produce important physiological benefits.

Having an understanding of these techniques was key to developing a consistent practice. But I also discovered through that first meditation training that I had some key misconceptions when it came to meditation. Whether you are newly diagnosed or navigating the uncharted waters of survivorship, below are just a few myths explained that can help us mindfully meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual challenges of our cancer and survivorship journeys.

MYTH #1: I have too many thoughts to meditate – It's the nature of the brain to have thoughts just as it's the nature of the eyes to see. Meditation is not the practice of having NO thoughts. Meditation is the practice of having a thought and coming back to a point of focus (breath awareness, body, mantra, etc.), gently, repeatedly, and without judgment. While it seems counter-intuitive, having lots of thoughts in meditation can be a sign of the body releasing stress. Our goal is to be aware of our thoughts and come back to the point of focus. Even though I had a regular practice, during heightened moments of stress, scanxiety or feeling overwhelmed, I relied on guided meditations for more support. There are some wonderful apps including Headspace, Buddhify, Calm and Insight Timer.

MYTH #2: I REALLY don't have time – When people think of meditation, they envision big chunks of time of sitting and doing nothing and then imagine all the things they could get done instead. But the truth is, you can start with just five minutes. The daily discipline is more important than the duration when we first start meditating. If you are nervous about finding five minutes, find something you do every day, and add some mindful breathing to that (i.e., brushing your teeth, taking a shower). Ironically it was my chemo treatments that became my most treasured meditation times where I was able to practice visualizing the chemo as a loving friendly energy, part of my healing team helping to rid my body of harmful cells.

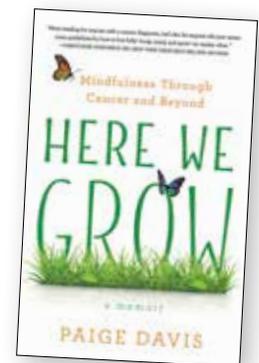
MYTH #3: I'm too stressed to meditate – Stress gets a bad wrap, but the truth is it is designed to save our lives. Stress activates our sympathetic nervous system which triggers the fight-or-flight

response, providing the body with a burst of energy and rise in stress hormones so that it can respond to perceived dangers. The challenge is our bodies don't necessarily know the difference between being in danger for our life and forgetting to hit save on a word document. It is this unnecessary activation of fight-or-flight that does our body more harm than good. With meditation, our bodies shift into a state of restful awareness and the parasympathetic nervous system (or, rest and digest). Meditation can help to increase the flow of energy in our bodies, which contributes to improving our healing and optimal health. I've discovered that doctors' offices are a great training ground. Simply focusing on our breath naturally calms us and lets our bodies and minds know we are safe in the current moment.



MYTH #4: Difficult emotions are the enemy – This took me some time to realize, but difficult emotions are not the enemy – it is our reactivity toward them that is harmful. It is not about denying our feelings, but being honest with them so they can move through. This is where mindfulness can once again be helpful, because it helps strengthen the parts of our brain that allow us to be more emotionally fluent (increased folds in insula). I now treat my emotions as self-care triggers and a reminder to do something nourishing for myself. This can be anything from an extra meditation, reflexology, a walk outside, or simply spending time with friends and family. I'm a big believer that self care is not indulgent, but rather a fierce practice of taking care of ourselves so we can be there for others in a more meaningful way.

While all of these continue to be helpful in sustaining my daily practice, the most important thing to remember is to be kind to ourselves as we continue to not just survive, but thrive on our cancer and survivorship journeys.



PAIGE DAVIS

Paige Davis is a mindfulness and meditation teacher, breast cancer survivor and author of *Here We Grow: Mindfulness Through Cancer and Beyond* (She Writes Press). Follow her on Instagram @hellopaigedavis and access her favorite free meditations and mindful resources at hellopaigedavis.com/resources



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Loretta Kaminsky

45 year breast cancer thriver

Of all the things I have done in my life, nothing has brought me more joy than what I am doing now, to help people feel more alive. The best advice I can give everyone is to start your day with a smile.

Loretta Kaminsky's story includes love, breast cancer, chocolate, loss, Zumba and love again.

In many ways, Loretta Kaminsky was leading a relatively typical life. She went to college, married her sweetheart Allan, welcomed three children, taught kindergarten – a beautiful life with laughter and love.

Then in 1973, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Awareness of breast cancer, treatment options and acceptance of breast cancer in the 1970's was much different than today.

Loretta's treatment included a bi-lateral mastectomy with breast implants as part of that surgery. The breast implants caused her many serious issues over the next 12 months.

"Her husband sat her on the bed and he said the "magic words," "I did not marry you for your breasts, they are just appendages, and I don't care if you have them or not, we have three wonderful kids, let's just get on with our life."

The implants were surgically removed and Loretta set about getting healthy again. Loretta confesses she's always been an exercise enthusiast her whole life so she immediately went back to the gym to exercise.

Loretta also connected with the American Cancer Society's Reach to Recovery program.

Loretta made it her mission to visit with other women after they had mastectomies to encourage them. Many felt that cancer held a stigma or was a death sentence – until this lively woman popped into meet with them about her experiences and their options.

What was missing from Reach to Recovery, in Loretta's mind, was an exercise component. Loretta and a member of the American Cancer Society flew to New York to meet with a major plastic surgeon. This physician listened to Loretta and designed a post-mastectomy exercise program.

"For five years I taught that class. There were no support groups – nothing.

We'd spend the first half hour just talking and a lot of crying. And the stories! It was a tremendous healing time for me as well. Even though I had this amazing husband, I had no one to talk to."

When asked what advice she would give to a 37 year old mother newly diagnosed with breast cancer, she was quick and passionate with her response: "I've been in your shoes. It's the most frightening day of your life but you are going to get through this with a strong positive mindset. You are going to be fine and you are going to make it fine. There will be sad days and there will be happy days. If you need to cry, you cry. But be joyous when you feel joyous. Share your feelings



– with family and friends or with a professional. Do not keep it in, you must get it out – that's what will get you through this. You need to talk to people who have been there – it's okay to feel this way' or 'I felt that way' – you need to share with other people going through the same things."

Something was changing for Loretta, she realized she wanted to be "remembered" in some way, to leave her mark. "I'm a breast cancer survivor, I've done all this stuff, the whole point of doing it all is how will I be remembered?"

Loretta and her husband Allan lived in upstate New York, with very long, very snowy winters. To pass the time when she and her children were housebound, Loretta baked. First for her family and friends, but word spread about her baked goods. She began to

take orders for parties, weddings, christenings and bar mitzvahs.

Then she became interested in chocolates. She took a class and began visiting the many chocolate shops in Buffalo – and found they all did essentially the same thing. But Loretta wanted a signature style, “I had this brainstorm ‘Why can’t we do a three dimensional rose?’”

She contracted with a local mold maker to make a 3-D rose mold. With some guidance from a florist friend, Loretta created the first 3-D chocolate rose, boxed as though they were fresh flowers. She then set to work marketing her creations.

Soon her chocolates took over her business. “At night my husband would come home, I’d line my three kids and husband up in the family room and we had an assembly line” laughed Loretta.

Loretta became a chocolatier designer, creating baskets and flowers and vases and more, all from chocolate.

When she realized she had to have a bigger space and help beyond the family, she opened a small shop, Lou-Retta’s Chocolates. She had a thriving local business, but she wanted more. She hustled her chocolates constantly. When Allan asked her what her goal was, she replied “to be bigger than Godiva.”

A local newspaper wrote an article about her that she copied and sent to other newspapers around the country. Just before Valentine’s Day, USA Today called and asked if they could feature Lou-Retta’s Chocolates. Then the phone really started ringing and the orders came in from all corners.

Her daughter Ellen joined her mother and their team work elevated Lou-Retta’s chocolates to a bigger stage. They attended food shows and conferences. One of their first orders was for over 60,000 chocolate lipsticks for Lancôme. At each show they attended, their products were recognized for their quality and innovation.

After 17 years of chocolate making, Loretta “retired” briefly. Just three weeks into her retirement, Canisius College in Buffalo NY asked Loretta to collaborate with them to develop their Women’s Entrepreneur program. For five years, she shared her knowledge of business and marketing to countless other women business owners. She also worked with the Amherst Chamber of Commerce on a similar program.

Loretta was a true trailblazer for women entrepreneurs and especially women in

manufacturing. She had faced many obstacles and was determined young women going into business would have the tools they needed to be respected and successful.

Through all the years of baking and chocolate and teaching, Loretta was also passionately tending to her fitness.

She advocates fitness for body and mind. Loretta reminds everyone – but especially cancer survivors – that exercise can give the brain some time off, allow one to forget for a short while.

Loretta began taking Zumba classes when they were first introduced in Buffalo and frequently took classes seven days a week.

“I think fitness was the one thing that I found helped me get better. If you can go to a fitness class, whether it is Zumba, Pilates, whatever you love – you can forget about what’s going on in your life for an hour.

“It’s not only the fitness – it’s the people you will meet in these classes. I have lifelong friends that I never would have had the opportunity to meet, my dearest friends who have seen me through tough times”

Her toughest time was when her dear husband and partner was diagnosed with Parkinson’s Disease. Then, in 2013, Allan died suddenly of an aortic aneurysm.

“We had been married for 57 years. He “found” me at 18; we had been through so

much together. He was the most supportive and wonderful husband you could ever ask for and he was always so proud of what I had accomplished.”

While Loretta and her family dealt with this loss, Loretta’s Zumba family stepped in to help her in practical ways. When she was ready, they encouraged her to become a Zumba instructor. They knew her personality and ability to connect with people was her strongest asset.

At 78 years young, surrounded by 20 and 30 year olds, Loretta took the Zumba training course and became a certified instructor. She offered to teach Zumba classes at her local YMCA. On her first day, three people showed up for her class. Undaunted, she continued to teach Zumba classes. Word spread quickly about this vivacious instructor who meets you where you are and inspires you to move to the music.

Today her classes have 60-75 attendees. Loretta teaches an average of ten classes per week, some at the YMCA and some at local retirement centers. She incorporates contemporary music (such as Justin Timberlake) with the classics.

In a new adventure, Loretta has recently started teaching aboard cruise ships – particularly on cruises for Dementia families. She described the emotional moment in one of her very first cruise classes:

“First day, all of the people come in with their caregivers. I explain what we are going to do, low impact movements and to really just enjoy the music. One woman comes in with her husband, she’s holding on to him. He’s bent over and his head is down. She settles him in a chair and she explains to me he doesn’t talk, but she wanted to dance with me. During our second song, all of the sudden, he sits up, and lifts his head. Then he stands up from his chair and starts moving his arms with me. Everyone in the room was crying. His wife said ‘you have brought something so wonderful to our family’ through her happy tears. I cannot tell you what this did for me.’ Of all the things I have done in my life, nothing has brought me more joy than what I am doing now, to help people feel more alive.”

Here’s another sweet part to her life story: Loretta has also found new love – at 82! Introduced by a mutual friend, she had her first date since 1957.

Together they are cruising and dancing through their lives as Loretta’s remarkable journey continues.



“**B**ecause I’m a fighter,
I’m a survivor, you
ain’t gonna change my
world.”

*From Anita Cochran's
Award Winning Video
"Fight Like a Girl"*



Fight Like a Girl

BY BEVERLY VOTE

Anita Cochran is an ACM and CMA nominated country artist and is the first female artist in the history of country music to write, produce, and play multiple instruments including lead guitar on her debut release. She released *"Back To You"* featuring the number one, award winning song *"What If I Said"* with Steve Wariner as a Warner Bros artist. She followed that album with her self titled sophomore release *"Anita."* She has since gone on to release *"Serenity"* under her independent label of Straybranch Records that also featured *"I Wanna Hear A Cheatin' Song"* which highlighted the voice, posthumously, of Conway Twitty.

Anita was diagnosed with triple positive breast cancer in August 2017. Her medical experience hasn't been easy; she had to be hospitalized after her first round of chemotherapy because of complications and side effects and her touring schedule had to be canceled.

After diagnosis, her music quickly became a healing resource. Earlier this year, she created and produced the video *"Fight Like a Girl!"* which is her personal message of strength and determination about her breast cancer journey but is also an inspiration for others who are facing their own challenges. The video recently won Best Music Video at the Creation International Film Festival 2018. You might find yourself singing along with her words in her poignant video, *"Because I'm a fighter, I'm a survivor, you ain't gonna change my world!"*

Anita has made several videos throughout her career; she knew exactly what story line she wanted for this video and how to accomplish it. She knew that a video would help to get her message out in a visual way.

After her fourth chemo round she almost stopped the treatments because she got so sick. She felt like she just couldn't do the last two rounds. She was actually about to give up but after a couple days but she started

to feel a little better and the song came to her and became her fight song. She told herself she was going to finish all her chemo treatments and do whatever was needed to survive and hopefully prevent it from recurring no matter how sick she got. She had to fight back with everything she had and to *"Fight Like A Girl."*

It was at that point that she knew she had to record the song she was writing and instantly the images for a video came to mind of a boxer in training for the biggest fight of their life. She wanted to put her story in a video so people could see a person fighting to get back their life. In the video she plays the role of the boxer in training as well as being the singer, to show her fight to getting back to her life. She wanted something that would inspire and motivate people to not give up their fight so

they could get their life back also. Anita's experience is that "It can be too easy to give up and quit. You have to stay strong, stay in training for the fight to win! Keeping a positive outlook is very important." That is why Anita believes this song is one of the most important songs she has ever written and recorded because it is about the strength that arises when facing the hard times in life.

While watching TV one night, she found a lump. She wasn't giving herself an exam, she simply went to scratch an itch and felt the lump. She called her doctor the next morning and made an appointment for the following day for an exam. She was immediately scheduled for ultra sounds and biopsies. Her prognosis was triple positive breast cancer, estrogen/progesterone/her2positive, stage 2. The treatment plan was six rounds of Chemo, Docetaxel, Carboplatin, Perjeta, and Herceptin every three weeks, Bilateral Mastectomy and Herceptin chemo every three weeks for a solid year from the initial chemo treatment. Her aunt had breast cancer and her grand daughter though her brca test was negative.



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"There are so many challenging parts during treatment from just day to day living but I guess my most challenging part was not being able to do my job that I love of touring and playing music because I was so sick from the chemo treatments. My doctor said my job was to fight cancer and that's it — my touring basically came to a standstill."

Anita says her future treatments include taking an estrogen blocker pill daily for 5-10 years and will be seeing her doctor every three months for the first couple years then to every six months and continuing to do self exams weekly. She says that "Breast cancer has changed me in several ways. I'm trying very hard to live a life with less stress. I don't stress about the small things in life anymore. I live more freely and my relationships have grown much deeper. I also feel that I have a new purpose added to my life of bringing more awareness to breast cancer and to work with organizations regarding breast cancer research for cures and even prevention. I had tremendous help from someone very close to me who was my main caretaker. I'm not sure I could have done it without them. I have some pretty incredible friends who walked this journey with me daily. It was very hard for me to accept that I was sick and needed help because I have always been very independent in all aspects of my life but after getting so sick after my first chemo treatment I knew I needed the help in more ways than one.

"After meeting with several doctors and a few different options, I feel as if I did the right treatment that I needed for me. My daily steps are to get back to my life, to being me again but a better version of it. I want to get back to work, back in the studio to make a new record and back on the road to share music and my story. I hope that somehow I can use my experience to help others and the fight against breast cancer in general. One in every eight is NOT okay.

"One of my goals is to be able to raise money and awareness to somehow help in the fight against breast cancer, to help educate and encourage woman to get their yearly mammograms. I hope that my song and video can help others to not give up because there are so many people who are trying to push past barriers and that's what "Fight Like a Girl" is about. Everyone is battling something. It's for all of us. I hope it can help give strength and encouragement. Her battle has inspired her to get involved in the fight against breast cancer by bringing awareness for the disease and educating others.

In her blog, titled "Journey to Healing," she gives candid insight about her treatments and provides support and educational information for people experiencing similar challenges.

"Maybe my journey can help people. I feel like that's my purpose now."



Studio Email: straybranchproductions@gmail.com

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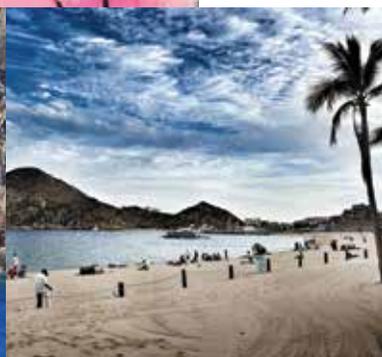


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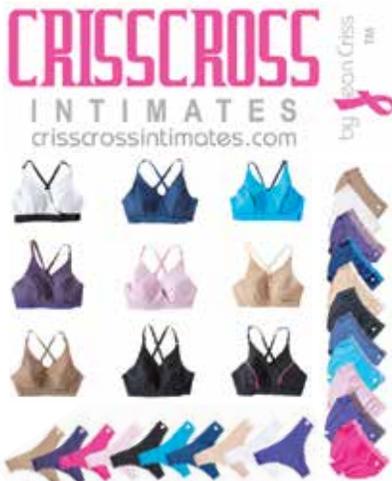
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A pioneer who pushed through federal and state legislation ensuring that breast reconstruction after a mastectomy would be paid for by insurance companies, Dr. Horner lost her own mother to breast cancer. She decided then that her mother's death would not be in vain.

Using the metaphor of the Warrior Goddess, this book explains what Ayurveda, an ancient system of healing, describes as our "inner healing intelligence." It also explores the various foods and supplements that enable women to prevent and successfully fight breast cancer, as they claim the healthy body that should be theirs. Dr. Horner has added research from more than 500 studies to the updated third edition of her award-winning book, as well as information on risk and the BRCA1 gene mutation (the genetic condition Angelina Jolie was found to have), and a new chapter on "The Spiritual Journey of Breast Cancer." In it, she describes why cancer is a wakeup call, a time-out in which women can turn inward to evaluate their lives with the intent to restore good health and learn how to receive, trust, and surrender as they cultivate their relationship with their intuition and a higher power.

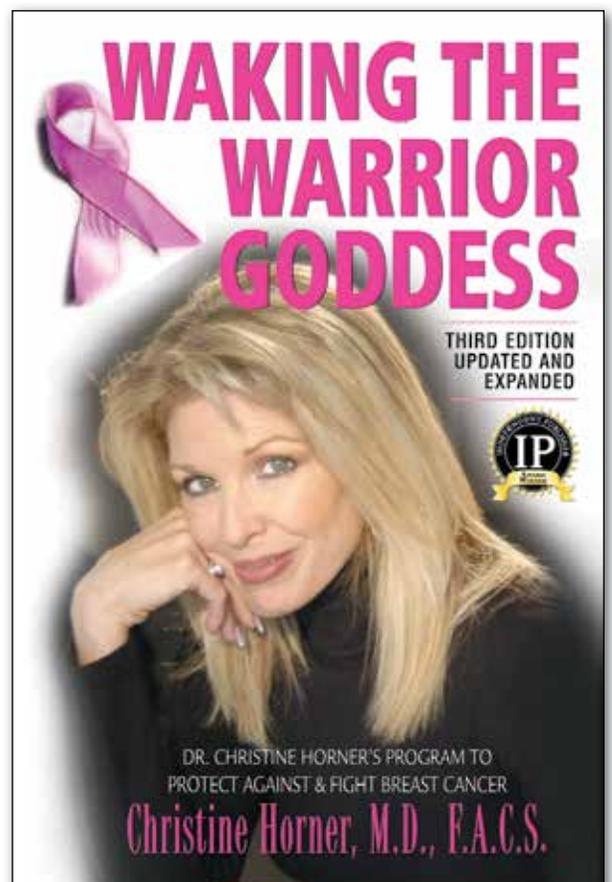
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