



Breast Cancer Wellness

What is Core Strength?

What is YOUR
Healing Habit?

The Power
of Saying
NO

10 Road Lessons

— LINDA CRILL

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**BCW
Bloggers**





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COVER THRIVER

Linda Crill p. 32

FALL 2013

Volume 8, Issue 3

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TRUSTING YOURSELF



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DEAR FRIENDS,

Trust. Perhaps the most important five letter word in today's language. Sometimes it is difficult to know who or what to trust, what latest medical protocol to trust, what direction to go, who to believe, or what to do next.

We can get lost in the enormity of who or what to trust that sometimes we don't place our faith anywhere and we give up trusting our own instincts that we turn this most coveted position over to others to make our choices for us.

I have often pondered that developing trust within one self, with God and with others is the most difficult part of the healing equation. I learned it helps to be aware that our loved ones and even professionals may openly express their dismay when they don't approve of our choices. I now have a better understanding why breast cancer has been called the "disease to please" because too often I was making decisions based on seeking approval, verses taking care of my healing needs or making choices that were best for my life.

This Show Me gal from Missouri finally accepted that prayer and a woman's instinct are two powerful sources for making life changing choices. This acceptance finally came after I saw that developing trust was like developing a muscle, the more I used it, the stronger the connection and reliance became.

Be a Thriver!

Beverly Vete

Publisher

21 Year Breast Cancer Thriver

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P.S. I hope you enjoy these photos that were taken on the BCW Alaska cruise. Thank you Otis Hightower for sharing them with us!



Just trust yourself, then you will know how to live.

—Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

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WHAT IS CORE STRENGTH?

BY VAUGHN HEBRON, TWO-TIME SUPERBOWL CHAMPION

"Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger." — John F Kennedy

What is "core strength" and why do we need it for healing? Core strength has been defined as:

- the central part
- the driving force
- the portion of the foundry that creates the shape
- the place in a nuclear reactor where fission occurs
- a basic essential part
- the essential meaning
- a part removed from the interior mass to determine its composition
- the seed that becomes the fruit
- life itself

every client is unique. Having clients with diverse backgrounds and goals has helped me sharpen my skills and competency as a trainer.

On any given day, I work with professional athletes as well as patients who want to gain strength and mobility following surgery and with clients who want to become fit and healthy. I also work with a special group of clients — breast cancer Thrivers. Each client has their unique set of strengths and challenges. The one area of consistency is their desire and the need to improve core strength. It is this variety that engages me as a trainer.



As a personal trainer I am motivated by the opportunity to be the "change agent" for clients of all ages and fitness levels. Helping others with their transformation is one of the things I love most about my profession. Every day is different and

Our core is at the center of every functional movement in life. It is imperative to help every client improve their individual level of core fitness. This has the capacity to transfer over into other areas in our lives including our healing needs.

I am fortunate to be working with Dr. Beth DuPree, who understands the importance of offering programs focusing on lifestyle modification to her patients. Dr. DuPree was an athlete earlier in her life. Like many of us, her personal fitness took a back seat as she established herself professionally and cared for her patients.

In 2007, a benign breast mass shook Dr. DuPree to her core. From that moment on, we have been working together strengthening her core fitness. Leading by example, Dr. DuPree performs the same exercises as her patients.

I have often heard women diagnosed with breast cancer say exactly what Dr. DuPree said, that they were shook to their core. I propose that a diagnosis of breast cancer leads each to their core, to the essence of who they are which includes finding and developing their unique strengths and also includes getting in touch with their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual strengths.

Newly diagnosed breast cancer patients do not always receive adequate education on the importance of integrating fitness, nutrition, and stress reduction into their recovery. Incorporating these lifestyle modifications can enhance one's quality of life. Dr. DuPree wants her patients to be strong THRIVERS not just survivors.

Dr. DuPree is leading the change by challenging accountability to her patients. She not only provides education but funding as well. Through the generosity of The Healing Consciousness Foundation (HCF) - www.hcfbucks.org, she provides the funding to remove the perceived obstacles to a life of health and wellness for her patients.

Obesity is defined as having a Body Mass Index (BMI) > 30. For example, a woman who is 5'6" and weighs 186 lbs. would be considered obese. Obesity is an independent risk factor; not just for the development of breast cancer, but for its recurrence.

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Obesity carries with it numerous health risks and unnecessary dangers to our body. Breast cancer is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg. It is important to lead a healthy lifestyle. We need to incorporate 60 minutes of activity most days of the week. It is not simply hormones and weight gain but where and how the weight is distributed.

Women who are considered to be "apple shaped" and carry most of their weight in the middle are at an increased risk for breast cancer; compared to those who carry their weight around their hips and thighs. This is one example of why focusing on overall conditioning and core strength is beneficial to all of my clients.

Another important aspect of core strength and breast cancer recovery is that core strength improves balance. Many survivors have neuropathy (numbness and tingling) in the hands and feet after chemotherapy. This neuropathy can impact balance and confidence. Focusing on core strength helps Thrivers engage their core, which creates overall balance, confidence and strength in everyday life as well.

Participating in a regular fitness program that includes core strength will help breast cancer survivors combat additional weight gain. They will notice improved energy and confidence and make friends along the way. Many want to have their pre-cancer body

back and that may not be possible. Their body has been through a lot and it takes time to get it back. If they stay consistent with a program that includes cardiovascular fitness, strength training, core strength, flexibility combined with a sound nutritional program, they will be amazed at the transformation that is possible.

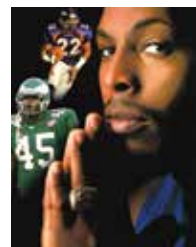
As I say to my clients, 'let's make it happen.' My wife Kim and I will be joining Dr. DuPree on the 8th Annual Breast Cancer Thrivers Cruise. I look forward to answering 'everything you need to know about core strength but did not know who to ask.'

Feel free to contact me at vaughn@vmovement.com. ■

*BMI within the obese (BMI, ≥ 30 kg/m²)
overweight (BMI, 25-29.9 kg/m²)*

Obesity at diagnosis is associated with inferior outcomes in hormone receptor-positive operable breast cancer†‡

Joseph A. Sparano MD1,S, Et al Article first published online: 27 AUG 2012 DOI: 10.1002/cncr.27527*



Vaughn Hebron, Two-Time Superbowl Champion

Vaughn Hebron is CEO/President of VMS Movement Specialists, a Fitness Center and Personal Training Studio located in Newtown, Penn. Previous to creating VMS, Vaughn signed as a free-agent with the Philadelphia Eagles where he played running back and later played with the Denver Broncos where he won Super Bowl XXXII and Super Bowl XXXIII.

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PINK RIBBON COOKING



Roasted Tomato Soup

8 medium tomatoes
1 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1 dash pepper
2 quart chicken stock
8 oz. non fat Greek yogurt
1 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1 cup basil leaves
1 dash salt
1 dash pepper

1. Place the tomatoes in a roasting pan, drizzle with 1 tbsp of the olive oil and season with the black pepper. Roast at 425° until the tomatoes are well browned.
2. Combine the tomatoes and chicken broth in the body of a blender and puree. Place in a medium sauce pot and bring to a boil.
3. Reduce heat and simmer 25 minutes.
4. Add the non fat Greek yogurt, olive oil and basil. Mix well to combine. Cook another 5 minutes. Adjust seasoning as needed with salt and pepper.

Divide the soup into bowls and serve.

NUTRITION FACTS

Serves 4. Amount Per Serving — Calories 331, Total Fat 12.47g, Cholesterol 14mg, Sodium 762mg, Total Carbs 33.44g, Dietary Fiber 4.42g, Sugars 19.40g, Protein 21.46g

Paired with crispy bread... a drizzle of cold pressed extra virgin olive oil and a twist or two of fresh ground pepper and a meal is made in no time. This recipe is simple enough for busy weekday and slow enough for a leisurely weekend. The choice is yours but make this soup before all the good tomatoes are gone!

One reason I like this recipe so much is that tomatoes are an excellent source of lycopene. Studies indicate that lycopene could reduce the risk of some cancer through its antioxidant properties and its ability to interfere with the growth factors that stimulate cancer cells. By simmering the soup and blending it we release the lycopene from the structures it is bonded to in raw tomatoes, making it more accessible.



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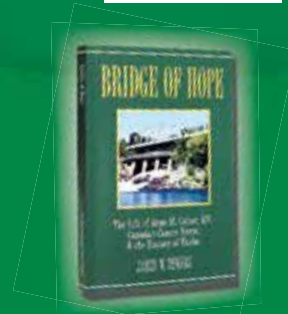
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Variations of kefta are common street foods in the Middle East. Kefta is easy to make at home and they may be served as an appetizer or as a more central part of a meal.

This recipe works equally well with ground pork, beef, turkey and chicken so feel free to play with the recipe even mixing and matching the meats until you get them just right for you. It also makes great use of some very beneficial and healthy spices, cinnamon in particular. According to Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center Cinnamon has antioxidant, anti inflammatory, antimicrobial and anti-tumor properties. Studies also indicate a relationship between Cinnamon and lower blood glucose levels.

RECIPES COURTESY OF:



Lamb Kefta (Ground Lamb Kebabs)

- 1 lbs. ground lamb
- 1/4 cup parsley, loosely packed chopped
- 1/2 cup cilantro, loosely packed chopped
- 1 tablespoon mint, chopped
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne, or more to taste
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 medium red onion, diced
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

1. Preheat an oven or grill to medium high heat, about 450°F for the oven and about 3/4 of the coals for a grill.

2. While the oven or grill is heating, combine the ground lamb with the other ingredients, being sure to add the onion and olive oil a little at a time at the end so as to not make the mixture too wet. The kefta mixture should be tacky, like the texture of sausage. Add the olive oil to finish if the mixture seems too lean.

3. Form the kefta kebabs by taking a small amount of meat and pressing it around the middle of a skewer, then roll it on a cutting board or between the palms of your hands to form an even cylinder around the skewer.

4. Grill the skewers, only turning once, until they are dense and firm to the touch. The kefta should be cooked through but not dried out. Serve with a variety of ingredients like hummus, cucumber salad or simple greens with vinaigrette dressing.

NUTRITION FACTS

Serves 4. Amount Per Serving — Calories 283, Total Fat 15.74g, Cholesterol 70mg, Sodium 1832mg, Total Carbs 8.42g, Dietary Fiber 2.04g, Sugars 4.43g, Protein 23.26g

Chef Curtiss Hemm



Chef Curtiss Hemm is the Founder and Executive Director of Pink Ribbon Cooking LLC. His mission is to educate cancer survivors and those looking to prevent the disease in subjects related to how food, nutrition and diet can improve the quality of life before, during and after a cancer diagnosis, sharing simple and healthy recipes, techniques and approaches to cooking food the entire family will enjoy. www.pinkribboncooking.com

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Lymphedema is caused by a malfunction or damage to the lymphatic system, which may occur during surgery for breast cancer. It can affect any part of the body, but most typically occurs in the arms. There is no cure for lymphedema, but it can usually be managed successfully with manual lymphatic drainage, wrapping, and compression.

Because most insurance providers do not cover these compression garments, it can be difficult for many patients suffering from lymphedema to afford the compression armsleeves, gauntlets and bandages they need. There are, however, organizations and products that can ease this financial burden. Read on to learn more about how you can get the compression garments you need to treat your lymphedema symptoms.

Financial Assistance Programs

The **All4One Alliance** provides support for compression products through the All4One Lymphedema Fund. Patients may apply through 1SourceApp to receive funding. Once approved, applicants must see a certified fitter to receive measurements for a properly fitted garment. Applicants can then purchase a garment from any approved vendor.

<http://www.all4onealliance.com/>

CancerCare offers a wide variety of financial assistance, including lymphedema supplies, for low-income individuals. Patients can call 1-800-813-HOPE to speak with a CancerCare social worker and begin an application for assistance.

<http://www.cancercare.org/financial>

The **Marilyn Westbrook Garment Fund** can provide one set of lymphedema garments each year to eligible applicants. Interested individuals must be seeing a National Lymphedema Network affiliated therapist or clinic to be eligible. Applications are available online.

<http://www.lymphnet.org/patients/westbrookFund.htm>

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BRAS AND BREAST CANCER: MYTHS AND FACTS

BY CHRISTINE HORNER, MD

Over a decade ago rumors began to spread that wearing a bra could increase your risk of breast cancer. However, the fact is that there are no well-designed peer-reviewed published studies that show a real link. The unpublished study that proclaimed the association is actually a perfect example of how a poorly-designed study can draw conclusions that are inaccurate and lead to the spread of false information.

A study published in the European Journal of Cancer in 1991 found that premenopausal women who do not wear bras have half the risk of breast cancer compared to bra users, but the researchers stated that the statistics probably had nothing to do with the bras. Instead, the real explanation lies in the many differences between women who usually wear bras and those that don't that are known to have a huge impact on the risk of developing breast cancer. For example, women who don't wear bras are usually thinner and have smaller breasts and re-

search shows that both of these characteristics are associated with a significantly lower risk of breast cancer. Compared to obese women, thin women also tend to be more active, and more health conscious regarding their diet and lifestyle choices which are additional factors that greatly lower the risk of breast cancer. Whereas, women who tend to wear bras, usually have larger breasts and are more likely to be obese. Both large cup size and obesity are well-known risk factors for breast cancer. In fact, in the above study, the women who wore bras and had the high-

est risk of postmenopausal breast cancer, had the largest cup sizes and were obese. So obesity and cup size — not the bra — are the major risk factors.

Simply having more breast tissue, independent of obesity, places a woman at higher risk. A prospective study published in the International Journal of Cancer in April 2006, found that lean women with breast cup sizes "D" or larger were at a significant increased risk for premenopausal breast cancer. Obesity is not the explanation for these women. Instead, it may be that they have higher estrogen levels — the female hormone responsible for breast development and directly associated with the growth of breast cancer. Research also shows that reducing the volume of breast tissue surgically, commonly done for women suffering with severe back and neck pain due to the excess weight of their breasts, drops the risk of breast cancer.

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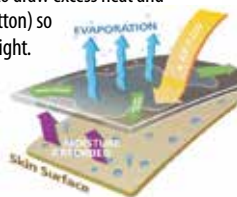


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The Coping with Cancer Workbook was developed with funding from the National Cancer Institute (Award #: 2R44CA106154-02A1). The content is solely the responsibility of Talaria and does not necessarily represent the official views of NCI or the NIH.

When it comes to lowering your risk of breast cancer, it's best to focus on those factors that research shows has a significant influence — rather than worrying about the potential risk of one factor that is unproven.



The only way that the influence of bras on breast cancer risk can be accurately determined is from a large well-designed prospective study — a study that follows women into the future for 10 to 20 years — and corrects for all the other known risk factors. This hasn't been done yet.

When it comes to lowering your risk of breast cancer, it's best to focus on those factors that research shows has a significant influence—and there are dozens—rather than worrying about the potential risk of one factor that is unproven. In my book, *Waking the Warrior Goddess: Dr. Christine Horner's Program to Protect Against and Fight Breast Cancer*, winner of the Independent Book Publisher Award for "Best Book in Health, Medicine, and Nutrition for 2006," I report on over 50 different foods, supplements, herbs, activities and lifestyle

choices that research shows you should either avoid because they increase your risk, or favor because they significantly protect your breast health. I recommend becoming familiar with all of these research-proven approaches so that you can make well-informed choices, based on good science that will have the greatest impact on lowering your risk of breast cancer and supporting your overall good health. ■



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.

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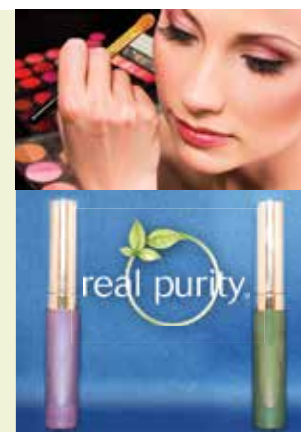
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Show Me the Way Out

Mary Ann thought she had everything going her way
Until breast cancer was to change her every day.
In anguish, Mary Ann cries out, her pleas full of doubt.
She was in a dark hole with no light to show her way out.

She thought she had hope when a doctor walked by.
Why didn't he understand her tear filled cry?
He wrote her a prescription and went on his scheduled way.
But her hopes and her direction were still in dark dismay.

Again, Mary Ann cries out, her pleas full of doubt.
This time a priest nearby heard her shout.
He walked to the hole Mary Ann was in.
I hear your cries, I will pray for your sin.
Bless you my child, he had to say,
And gave three Hail Marys to anoint her way.

Once again, Mary Ann cries out, her pleas full of doubt.
Quietly a stranger responds,
I know your fears inside and out.
I know the secrets hidden within.
I know too well this hole that you are in.

The stranger jumped without hesitation
Into the hole filled with so much tribulation.
Bewildered, Mary Ann cries out, her pleas full of doubt.
What have you done, why are you here?
I appreciate your grace,
But now we are both in this dark, dark place.

Shhhsssh, says the stranger to Mary Ann.
I hear your cries, your pleas full of doubt.
I have been here myself, as a survivor showed me,
I will show you the way out.

—Beverly Vote, 21 year breast cancer thriver



Nearly **80%** of breast lumps are benign.

But, that doesn't stop you from worrying **100%** of the time.

When patients learn they need to have a breast biopsy – the concern can be overwhelming. Although the thought of having a biopsy might be frightening, the results can provide reassuring peace of mind.

While talking with your doctor to determine the best biopsy option for you, be sure to ask about a **new minimally invasive procedure** with Mammotome elite®. This procedure is available in the doctor's office, takes approximately 15 minutes, and your incision will be so small that you will not require stitches. Knowing your breast biopsy options can help you gain a definitive breast cancer diagnosis while minimizing pain, scarring, and recovery time.

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As with any surgical procedure, a breast biopsy may present risks or complications such as hematoma, hemorrhage, infection, or pain. Mammotome elite® is for diagnostic use only. Patients should consult with their doctors to discuss whether this procedure is appropriate for them. If the tissue sample is not benign, further surgery using standard surgical procedures may be necessary. Individual patient results may vary and are not indicative of all outcomes.

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— Andrej Szuba M.D. Ph.D. Stanford Lymphedema Center, Stanford University
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"It's a miracle that after 15 years of unsuccessful treatment I now have my arm under control. I'm able to wear my normal clothing again. My doctor put me on a Sequential Circulator and the swelling went down. There was no longer a buildup of excess fluid under my arm and shoulder area. The previous treatment consisted first of massage then a wrap with a special low stretch bandage with foam underneath. I also had to wear a compression sleeve night and day that made my arm hurt so badly I could not sleep. The Bio Compression Sequential Circulator system allows me to lead a normal life and cost much less than manual treatment, which must be administered by a therapist. Your system is also easy to use, which is important since I'll be taking this treatment the rest of my life. With all this behind me, I wanted to let you know how happy I am with your Sequential Circulator."

Helen Gustin • Maron, Ohio

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YOUNG THRIVERS!™

BY HEATHER JOSE

Have a Plan

Here we are in another fall season. It amazes me how quickly time goes by and how many different activities occupy my time. As a busy mom of teenagers I have found that my schedule conforms to theirs, and that is the way I want it to be. While I know that there are many components to wellness one thing that I know affects my whole family is the quality of food that we eat.

I thought it might be helpful to share a few of the ways that I keep my head above water in the busyness and keep us all from eating pizza or hotdogs every night.

Ingredients matter: We eat normal American foods at my house, but I make them with quality ingredients. I don't mean organic necessarily, but I care about how it was grown or raised. When shopping, I prefer to be able to pronounce the ingredients of things I purchase. I have found that the best and cheapest way to do this is to buy staples and build my own meals.

Snack packs: Every now and then I spend time stocking my pantry with snacks in single servings. Rather than buy all of the items individually packaged I simply do it myself. I use almonds, pistachios, trail mix (nuts, seeds and raisins), pretzels, dried fruit, baked chips, granola bars, tortilla chips, wheat crackers, and animal crackers. You can do the same thing in the fridge, make a drawer of grab and go, carrots, grapes, berries, cheese sticks, celery, the list goes on and on. The most important thing is that the work is already done when you are looking for a snack or lunch item.

I do buy single servings of peanut butter and sometimes nutella for the pantry and single serve hummus and guacamole for the fridge. These are a great addition to many of the items listed above as well as and great ways to provide calorie control.

Use the freezer: I usually take time a couple of times throughout the year and fill my freezer. My son loves the burritos and pasties, my daughter likes the potpies and lasagna. My favorite is the fried rice. And my husband will grab some taco meat and turn it in to a dip or nachos on a late night. I make all of these things in single serve portions for quick dinners. I know you can buy all of these things, but by making them I get to use quality ingredients at an economical price.

Buy local: I live in the country. There aren't nearly as many stores at my disposal. However there are farmers. I get all of my beef from a grass fed farm near my house. I just bought a pig from a friend who

raised it with the corn that he grew and I had it processed without nitrates. I stop at farm stands, go to the farmers market and volunteer to collect eggs for our friend who raises chicken whenever they go out of town. The more I talk with people about food, the more I find good resources right around me.

Plan: If I have a plan, there is a much better chance we will have a healthy dinner. I am not perfect at this, but I have gotten better. I try to consider what we have going on each night and what my energy level will be. For example, Thursday night is often frozen food night at my house. We are all tired and turning on the oven is easy. Because I have good choices in my freezer I don't beat myself up about it. It is silly to plan something that is unrealistic in terms of time or make a meal that your family will not eat.

There are some great blogs and meal subscription services to help you plan. Some cook once a month, or once a week. Others will match sales in your stores to a meal plan. Many of these sites have clean eating or whole food type of plans.

There are many ways to eat healthy. I have been vegetarian, my best friend is vegan. We do eat meat in our house, but in much smaller quantities. It is important to do what works for you.

Happy fall!

Heather Jose

Author, Speaker, Breast Cancer Wellness Advocate
Heather@BreastCancerWellness.org
www.gobeyondtreatment.com

About Heather

Heather Jose is a 15 year thriver of stage IV breast cancer, diagnosed at age 26, with a prognosis of six months to live. A national speaker and advocate, Heather's message is to go Beyond Treatment. Visit her online at www.heatherjose.com.



Visit Young Thrivers™ on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/264032713653598/>



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What are your Healing Habits?

Many behavior experts advise that successful life changes are first created in the mind. Here are six tips to create an empowered habit:

- ✓ Prepare your mind for experiencing continued success.
- ✓ Be clear and focused on the benefits your new habit will bring.
- ✓ Have an accountability partner or join a group with similar interests.
- ✓ Be realistic, compassionate with yourself, consistent and focused.
- ✓ Keep a daily diary of your achievements and progress.
- ✓ Enjoy the process and be proud of your actions.



I am Mary, a five year thriver from Naperville, IL. After learning the importance of my body being properly hydrated, I have begun drinking 8 to 12 glasses of mostly filtered tap water per day and have lost 8 lbs. over the last 8 wks. I have more energy and feel better overall. I became much more conscious of my water intake during a recent volunteer and vacation trip to Kenya. Here I am with a young Maasai village girl. I have such empathy for this girl and others in countries without clean water. It's amazing what we in the U.S.A. and developed countries take for granted every single day: the ease and access of this basic need. I am ever so grateful and hope to raise awareness!

—**Mary K**



BREAST CANCER, IS A NEW LIFE SENTENCE — In the 12-months since my wife Wendy was diagnosed with stage 0 DCIS; we began a new relationship. The one real Healing Habit I implemented was heightened intimacy. We have always been in love. We've been married 40 years. As we tackled this disease together we each had to learn what the other was going through. This meant I had to learn to talk more deeply about personal thoughts and feelings. It meant learning to touch more (I had never been a touchy-feely person). The result is that we fell in love all over again. Every moment together is a new joy, a new discovery and a deeper feeling of oneness.

—**Larry Doherty**, Husband of Wendy Doherty (Diagnosed 2012), Portage, MI



On July 31, 2012 what started out as an ordinary day did not end on an ordinary note. I received the call that I had been diagnosed with Stage 0, DCIS. It would take my experience with breast cancer to alter the life course I was traveling. I made some drastic changes

that required courage, imagination and a little insanity! Through this process I learned about peace. My discovery taught me how to define it, how to achieve it, how valuable it is and that choosing peace is a habit. When I live in the moment, I experience peace. I am not looking in the rear view mirror at what has happened, and I am not looking at what is ahead of me. I am only concentrating on the here and now. I believe this is what God intended.

—**Wendy Doherty**, Portage, MI



I am a 10 year breast cancer thriver - diagnosed in 2003. I found a silver lining to that awful diagnosis — dragon boating. I am a member of Dragon Boat Atlanta, a breast cancer awareness team based in Atlanta, GA. We strive to show that there is life

after breast cancer. We have gone from surviving to thriving. Team members range in age from 29-73 and are of varied fitness levels. We practice once a week on Lake Lanier, the site of the 1996 summer Olympics. We each find healing and promote wellness as we propel our 40' boat across the water. We have fought our cancer fight, so we paddle with all of our might! www.dragonboatatlanta.org.

—**Kathy Cunningham**, (a.k.a. "Icy Girl", my dragon boat name), Cumming, GA

“ Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habit. Watch your habits; they become character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.

— **Lao Tzu**



Water aerobics and Aqua Zumba have helped me climb out of the “cancer cocoon” of post-chemo, radiation and lymphedema. They are also triple threat fighters against my Sjogren's Syndrome, a chronic autoimmune disease that shares some side effects of cancer

treatment such as fibromyalgia, neuropathy, and chronic fatigue. My spirit soars in my water aerobics classes. Water is very cool and soothing to achy joints. Water buoyancy allows safe stretching, resistance, and cardio work. Also, the water pressure surrounding my lymphedema arm protects it. My YMCA offers several levels of water aerobics with positive, well-trained instructors. Try Aqua Zumba classes for pure fun! I don't have to worry about my wacky thermostat or shy “dance moves” as they are mainly underwater! Music and movements in both classes have added joy and confidence back into my persona. I'm stronger than ever mentally, physically, and spiritually!

—**Anne E. Davidson**, TNBC diagnosis August 2011, Knoxville, TN



Healing Habit: Live life outside my comfort zone (at least a little) — What 51 year old woman would dare backpack alone across 500 miles of northern Spain? After reading about the Camino de Santiago — an historical spiritual and physical trek — I knew I

needed to act on the wisdom of my patients to live life to the fullest. This summer, I found myself submersed in a culture as foreign to me as the language I attempted to speak. I traversed mountain passages, meandered through vineyards, endured countless rainy days and nursed a constellation of blisters on my feet. I ate octopus and drank sangria and laughed and cried with new friends. And at the end of my journey, I realized one needn't leave home to feel so alive. When you find the beauty in something, dance about! And when you think you can, chances are, you really can! When you feel love, express it and feeling love is one daily habit that I am not only comfortable with, but a habit that I embrace with my family, friends and patients!

— **Kim Dalzell, PhD, RD**, www.naturesanswerstocancer.com

“Cultivate only the habits that you are willing should master you.”

— **Elbert Hubbard**



It has been said that some of our most difficult times are our best teachers. My mom, sister, aunt, and I have all had breast cancer. My sis had the study done and we did not have a hereditary gene. I was diagnosed in June 1999

— the same year I discovered

nutrition from the Rainforest. I now eat to enhance my immune system and get high vibrational energy, and I use products that have no toxins and are natural as possible. I also learned about positive thought, meditation, and healthy spiritual practices from reading books that have help change the course of my life. I feel very blessed to have shared all of this with love ones and helped them have more health and wellness in their lives. It is my passion to share my healing habits with others.

— **Anna Brothers**, Bellflower, CA

“You leave old habits behind by starting out with the thought, ‘I release the need for this in my life.’”

— **Wayne Dyer**

“First we make our habits, then our habits make us.”

— **Charles C. Noble**



That is a fantastic question. In fact, the name of my latest album is called “Habit”. It is based on the human condition of habits. I believe that our thoughts become our words, our words become our deeds, our deeds are what we are remembered for; thus, our deeds

become our habits and our habits make us who we are. A healing habit that I have implemented since my first cancer diagnosis three years ago and most recently is to engage in a higher level of awareness; this is shifting my perspective of my approach to literally everything in my daily life so that it can bring me joy instead of worry and relieve my body and mind of stress. Stress causes inflammation in the body and inflammation is an ideal host for disease. A prime example is L.A. traffic; traffic is beyond my control. I no longer see it as time imposed on me, it is my time too so I make it as productive and relaxing as possible while stopped in traffic. I listen to books, soothing music or I make phone calls to loved ones whom I haven't caught up with in a while. I am a healthier person for it.

— **Margo Rey**

“Great is the power of habit. It teaches us to bear fatigue and to despise wounds and pain.”

— **Marcus Tullius**



My healing habit is the daily care of my body which includes taking vitamin D. I have my vitamin D levels checked once a year. I was on Tamoxifen for the first 2 years, and I am now on Femara. I understand the joint pain that comes from removing all

estrogen. I have found that the anti-inflammatory properties of vitamin D through regular use at the 2000 IU daily level has mitigated this pain significantly. I encourage other women who are estrogen receptor positive to not give up, but to have your vitamin D levels checked before you quit taking your lifesaving meds. If this doesn't work well enough for you, then there are other things your navigator or an integrative medicine doctor can suggest to try. Be your own advocate and persist in reaching out to available resources to get the help you need to thrive!

— **Karin Viox**, Diagnosed Stage 3 in March 2010, Bunnlevel, NC



One healing habit I have implemented into my life since being diagnosed with stage 2 breast cancer in 1980 is trust. What I tap into is my faith which causes me to trust. Trust in God and His word and what it says about sickness and healing. What

it says is that sickness and disease are from the enemy and that I as a Christian have dominion over that enemy including breast cancer. I trust that it is the absolute truth and it gives me peace of mind. Our state of mind is vital to our recovery process and what better state of mind is there than “peace of mind”. God gives me that “peace which surpasses comprehension” and I can cope. If you are not a believer, find something that gives you peace in your mind and a way to de-stress.

— **Valerie Willoughby**, Durham, NC

“Things start out as hopes and end up as habits.”

— **Lillian Hellman**



After my dog and I were both diagnosed with cancer (and both survived, against the odds), I researched ways to fight cancer and decided a change in diet was in order for both of us. I switched my beagle to a raw diet with no processed foods. And the most

important healing habit I adopted for myself was to switch to a vegan diet. Since then, I've lost thirty pounds, increased my energy, I sleep through the nights, my skin and hair look better and I feel better. I often say the side effects chemo did to me, a vegan diet un-did. I'm now “No Evidence of Disease” and still celebrating that fact. It's just that now I celebrate with a kale smoothie.

— **Teresa Rhynne**, Diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer January 2009, Riverside, CA

“All humans actions have one or more of these seven causes: chance, nature, compulsions, habit, reason, passion and desire.”

— **Aristotle**

“Faith is taking
the first step when
you don't see the
whole staircase.”

Meet Margo, the 2013
Face of Inspiration.
My inspirational words gave
me a new perspective during
my uncharted breast cancer
journey. I needed strength,
hope and encouragement
while facing the unknown. It
was a great relief to discover
that I only needed to take
the first step.



2013
Face of Inspiration



Courage is never to let
your fears win
by you.

We cannot defeat the
waves, but we can
adjust ourselves.

Every day my life
surprises me, just like
my cancer diagnosis
surprised me.

COURAGE is being
Afraid but going ON
ANYHOW!

COURAGE is being
Afraid but going ON
ANYHOW!

OPTIMISM is
the FOUNDATION
of COURAGE!

Since the very first day
the world has you
life is full of joy and love.

Yesterday I dared to
struggle. Today I dare
to WIN!

If we are living in
the right direction,
all we have to do is
keep going.

If we are living in
the right direction,
all we have to do is
keep going.

Be as who you
are, be true in what you
feel. Your power will
come from that.

Keep on
keeping on.

I would be going
backward, and by
to keep looking up.

Nothing can be done
without hope and
confidence!

Be optimistic. It is not
many years in your life, but
it is many years in your years!

There is a lot of love in the
world. Just look at the
face of a child.

The importance of being
happy and in your life, but
not being in your years!

We cannot defeat the
waves, but we can
adjust ourselves.

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OPTIMISM is
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Meet Margo

Margo is American Breast Care's 2013 Face of Inspiration. She won the contest based on her inspirational message below,

"Faith is taking the first step when you don't see the whole staircase."

Margo's inspirational words gave her a new perspective during her uncharted breast cancer journey.

She needed strength, hope and encouragement while facing the unknown.

Even though Margo realized that the whole staircase of tomorrow was not visible, she knew that fear and anxiety needed to be replaced by peace, joy and hope. She did not know what the future held, but she knew who held the future.

Now Margo looks for opportunities to provide inspiration and hope. As a wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend, neighbor and nurse, she has opportunities to share words of encouragement to those in need. She takes that step of faith each day and continues to transform her entire outlook on life!

Face of Inspiration

Being the Face of Inspiration gives you the incredible opportunity to share your breast cancer journey, connect with other survivors and to inspire women all over the U.S. To enter, send us your inspirational message of hope by scanning the code below. Your inspirational message must be received by November 30, 2013 to qualify.



SCAN NOW!

ENTER CONTEST
NOW! USE YOUR
PHONE OR TABLET
TO SCAN CODE.

Enter to Win

Enter to win an Inspiration Watch!
Just sign-up to receive emails from ABC to get the latest on new products for women after breast surgery and more! Entry must be received by November 30, 2013 to qualify.



Inspiration Watch



SCAN NOW!

ENTER CONTEST
NOW! USE YOUR
PHONE OR TABLET
TO SCAN CODE.

Meet the BCW



Every woman's healing journey is an individual experience. Our beliefs, culture and perspectives differ yet we are connected by the breast cancer pink thread. The mission of BCW is to help each other, to inspire and empower. The journey is less frightening and less overwhelming when we learn from each other. Sometimes we learn what is best for one person might not be the wisest for another, yet we learn to make our choices on our individual healing needs.



Meet **Hollye Jacobs**

Hollye Jacobs, RN, MS, MSW, is a speaker, author, nurse, social worker, and child development specialist. Diagnosed with breast cancer in 2010 at the age of thirty-nine, she writes about her experience on TheSilverPen.com. Hollye's professional knowledge as a clinician and her personal experience as a cancer patient and survivor present a powerful wisdom package. She is the informed and experienced girlfriend who tells you what to expect, holds your hand and helps you find Silver Linings from the time of a diagnosis through treatment and recovery. In addition to writing daily on TheSilverPen.com, she also contributes to The Huffington Post, BreastCancer.org and Army Of Women. Hollye's book, *The Silver Lining: An Insightful Guide to the Realities of Breast Cancer*, will be published on March 18, 2014 by Simon & Schuster. >>> www.TheSilverPen.com



Meet **Elyn Jacobs**

Like most people, I thought that if you have cancer, you go to the doctor like a good little patient and accept whatever protocol is prescribed — and then you move along on your merry way. I was wrong. If we do not find the cause of our cancer, then how can we treat and cure? This would be a bit like painting over a water stain on your ceiling without fixing the leaky pipe that caused the stain. I now know that to beat cancer, one must utilize integrative and holistic care; we must treat the person with the cancer, not the cancer of the patient. We must change the environment in which it was permitted to grow. Everyday people die from cancers that were curable or manageable. People need to know that they have options within the standard of care and that they have options outside the standard of care. It is the job of one's team to make recommendations; however, it is the patient's job to accept or decline those recommendations or to seek further options and/or a different team. Elyn Jacobs is a breast cancer survivor, professional cancer coach, radio talk show

host, keynote speaker, and the executive director for the Emerald Heart Cancer Foundation. Elyn empowers women to choose the path for treatment that best fits their own individual needs. She is passionate about helping others move forward into a life of health and wellbeing. >>> www.elynjacobs.wordpress.com



Meet **Heather Jose**

Heather Jose is an inspiring writer, speaker and columnist for Breast Cancer Wellness magazine and is the host columnist for the www.WeAreCaregivers.com. Heather Jose is a caregiving professional herself: an occupational therapist. The devastating diagnosis of stage IV breast cancer could have been the end of her life. Instead, she decided to fight the cancer head-on. In addition to the help she enlisted from many caregivers and healthcare providers, she added her own physical and spiritual disciplines. Now, 15 years later, she is healthy — Heather travels widely as a speaker, empowering patients to play an active role in their treatment and maximizing the role of the caregivers to help. Heather lives in Michigan with her husband, Larry, and two children. Sample pages and other information about Heather's book *Every Day We are Killing Cancer: A Cancer Survivor Story: Becoming a Cancer Thriver Using Your Inner Resources for Wellness*, plus caregivers and doctors can be found online. >>> www.EveryDayWeAreKillingCancer.com



Meet **Mandi Hudson**

Mandi was diagnosed with breast cancer at age thirty, the day before her thirty-first birthday. After some poking and prodding they eventually landed on a IIB breast cancer diagnosis and her oncologist gave her what she lovingly called the "kitchen sink" treatment for being so young. She is a workaholic marketing professional by day and a pretend foodie and proud dog mom of two pooches by night. She has an amazingly supportive husband who has helped her hang on to the threads of reality in the ups and downs that come with life during and after cancer treatment. She has been recording her experience with breast cancer to hopefully help others through their breast cancer treatment. She decided to call her blog "Damn Good Lemonade" because her initial response was that she better learn to make damn good lemonade now that life gave her some serious lemons. >>> www.darngoodlemonade.com



Meet **Barbara Musser**

Sexy After Cancer was created to serve a hugely under-addressed area: how cancer impacts sexuality, intimacy and relationships. It combines my personal experience with breast cancer for 24+ years, my skills as a workshop designer and facilitator, author, and the work I've done for many years with many patients on the cancer journey. My vision is to provide the ingredients for a happy, healthy robust life that includes enhanced intimacy, sensuality and sexuality for those on the cancer journey and their partners. >>> www.sexyaftercancer.com

Bloggers



Meet **Angela Long**

Turning Adversity into Advocacy — Angela Long is a breast cancer thriver and founder of Breast Investigators, an online comprehensive breast cancer resource network designed to help others find the information, care, and support resources they need. She is also the host of Girl Talk on Health, a monthly meet-up in Sarasota, Florida, where she invites expert guest speakers to freely share knowledge that can help women improve their health. Since her diagnosis in 2004, Angela has been drawn to sharing with others what she has learned along the way. She thrives by discovering and connecting with others who share that passion. Turning adversity into advocacy through action or attitude is inspirational. Whether it's starting a foundation, a garden or just doing one's work with a new depth of understanding and compassion, Angela believes that all great success stories begin with a great challenge and wants to share those stories of inspiration with the world. >>> www.breastinvestigators.com



Meet **Wendy Doherty**

After making a difficult but freeing decision to leave a job that no longer made her happy, Wendy left the corporate world to pursue something that was stirring in her heart. Going from two stable incomes to one was extreme, but it was a choice. Taking this leap has brought Wendy a new experience — peace. "When I live in the moment I experience peace. I am not looking in the rear view mirror at what has happened, and I am not looking at what is ahead of me. I am only concentrating on the here and now." Wendy Doherty lives in Portage, MI. She and her husband, Larry have been married for 40 years. They have a grown daughter, Christy, who is married and working on her doctorate. Wendy is a contributing writer for A Woman's Journey and the author of three blogs... thewendblog.blogspot.com, thebookofpossibilities.blogspot.com and theroadtotitanium.blogspot.com. Wendy holds a BA in management and organizational development from Spring Arbor University. >>> www.thewendblog.blogspot.com



Meet **Barbara Jacoby**

I have dealt with breast cancer on two occasions and ultimately had a double mastectomy with reconstruction but cancer will never define who I am. I am known for using my life experiences to help and inspire others to understand that they are not alone in their journeys and that there are others who care and want to provide support and assistance. I am a believer that each of us can and should be our own advocates when it comes to our medical treatment. I am driven by the challenge to constantly provide the most recent information about treatments, medications, clinical trials, new FDA approvals and alternatives for dealing with cancer and its effects as well as improved health. My aspirations are to just be the very best I can be in any and every way that I can. >>> www.letlifehappen.com



Meet **Linda Crill**

Linda Crill is a sought-after speaker, trainer, and thought leader on mastering the new leadership skills: reinvention, resiliency and chaotic creation. She is the author of *Blind Curves — One Woman's Unusual Journey to Reinvent Herself and Answer What Now?* A story of reinvention where Crill trades her corporate suits for motorcycle leathers in a moment of rebellion on a quest to answer "What Now?" >>> www.BlindCurves.com



Meet **Tessa Guy**

Hello, my name is Tessa Guy. I am British and I live near Windsor in the UK. I have 3 sons ages 22, 20 and 14. I was born in Ottawa, Canada and spent much of my childhood living in different places (and at boarding school), as my father was in the forces. Having obtained a masters at WSU, Pullman WA in physical education, I built my career up in the health and fitness industry in the UK, latterly free lancing as a personal fitness trainer to fit work around school schedules, etc. In June 2010, at age 46 — I was diagnosed with TNBC and had a right

mastectomy with lymph gland removal, followed by a DIEP flap reconstruction in 2012. Cancer finally made me step back in life and ask myself some pretty tough questions. Was I happy, what was going on in my life, was I living the life I had dreamed of? For the first time in life, I began to truly understand the mind, body and spirit connection and its awesome! >>> www.inmindinbody.com

Keep up with their latest messages at BreastCancerWellness.org



“

I have metastatic breast cancer.
I want to get more from my hormone therapy.
Because I'm still here in the moment.



And this is my

MORE

Persons shown are not actual patients.

Currently available data have not shown an increase in overall survival. Additional data will be available in the future.



IN THE
HERE &
NOW

—LINDA

I think of **AFINITOR** as hormone therapy PLUS—combined with exemestane, it gives me **MORE**.

MORE out of my hormone treatment.

MORE time before progression.

MORE in the moment.

AFINITOR® (everolimus) Tablets is a prescription medicine used to treat advanced hormone receptor-positive, HER2-negative breast cancer, along with the medicine exemestane, in postmenopausal women who have already received certain other medicines for their cancer.

If you're a postmenopausal woman with advanced hormone receptor-positive, HER2-negative breast cancer, you now have a treatment choice that offers you **MORE** than hormone therapy alone: **AFINITOR** combined with exemestane tablets. **AFINITOR** is the first treatment in 10 years to be specifically approved for HR+, HER2-metastatic breast cancer patients. Adding **AFINITOR** to the hormone therapy exemestane is proven to extend the hormone therapy's benefits, more than doubling the time before cancer progression compared to exemestane alone.

The median progression-free period was 7.8 months with **AFINITOR** plus exemestane vs 3.2 months with exemestane alone. **AFINITOR** is offered in a once-daily dose.

Learn **MORE**. Ask your doctor about **AFINITOR**.

Important Safety Information

Patients should not take **AFINITOR** if they are allergic to **AFINITOR** or to any of its ingredients. Patients should tell their healthcare provider before taking **AFINITOR** if they are allergic to sirolimus (Rapamune®) or temsirolimus (Torisel®).

Learn more at **PLUS-AFINITOR.net**.

AFINITOR®
(everolimus) tablets
2.5mg | 5mg | 7.5mg | 10mg

Hormone therapy **PLUS.**

Exemestane is available in the US under the brand name Aromasin® from Pfizer. It is also available in generic form.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

Patients should not take AFINITOR if they are allergic to AFINITOR or to any of its ingredients. Patients should tell their healthcare provider before taking AFINITOR if they are allergic to sirolimus (Rapamune®) or temsirolimus (Torisel®).

AFINITOR can cause serious side effects, which can even lead to death. If patients experience these side effects, they may need to stop taking AFINITOR for a while or use a lower dose. Patients should follow their healthcare provider's instructions. Serious side effects include:

Lung or Breathing Problems: In some patients, lung or breathing problems may be severe and can even lead to death. Patients should tell their healthcare provider right away if they have any of these symptoms: new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, chest pain, difficulty breathing, or wheezing.

Infections: AFINITOR may make patients more likely to develop an infection, such as pneumonia, or a bacterial, fungal, or viral infection. Viral infections may include reactivation of hepatitis B in people who have had hepatitis B in the past. In some people these infections may be severe and can even lead to death. Patients may need to be treated as soon as possible. Patients should tell their healthcare provider right away if they have a temperature of 100.5°F or above, chills, or do not feel well. Symptoms of hepatitis B or infection may include the following: fever, chills, skin rash, joint pain and inflammation, tiredness, loss of appetite, nausea, pale stools or dark urine, yellowing of the skin, or pain in the upper right side of the stomach.

Kidney Failure: Patients taking AFINITOR may develop kidney failure. In some people this may be severe and can even lead to death. Patients should have tests to check their kidney function before and during their treatment with AFINITOR.

Before taking AFINITOR, tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you:

- Have or have had kidney problems
- Have or have had liver problems
- Have diabetes or high blood sugar
- Have high blood cholesterol levels
- Have any infections
- Previously had hepatitis B
- Are scheduled to receive any vaccinations. You should not receive a live vaccine or be around people who have recently received a live vaccine during your treatment with AFINITOR. If you are not sure about the type of vaccine, ask your healthcare provider
- Have other medical conditions
- Are pregnant or could become pregnant. AFINITOR can cause harm to your unborn baby. You should use effective birth control while using AFINITOR and for 8 weeks after stopping treatment
- Are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. You and your healthcare provider should decide if you will take AFINITOR or breastfeed. You should not do both

Tell your healthcare provider about all of the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins,

and herbal supplements. Using AFINITOR with certain other medicines can cause serious side effects. Keep a list of medicines you take and show it to your healthcare provider when you get a new medicine. Especially tell your healthcare provider if you take St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), medicines that weaken your immune system (your body's ability to fight infections and other problems), or medicines for:

- Fungal infections
- Bacterial infections
- Tuberculosis
- Seizures
- HIV-AIDS
- Heart conditions or high blood pressure

If you are taking any medicines for the conditions previously listed, your healthcare provider might need to prescribe a different medicine or your dose of AFINITOR may need to be changed. Tell your healthcare provider before you start taking any new medicine.

Common Side Effects: Common side effects include mouth ulcers. AFINITOR can cause mouth ulcers and sores. Tell your healthcare provider if you have pain, discomfort, or open sores in your mouth. Your healthcare provider may tell you to use a special mouthwash or gel that does not contain alcohol, peroxide, iodine, or thyme.

Other common side effects include:

- Infections
- Feeling weak or tired
- Cough, shortness of breath
- Diarrhea and constipation
- Rash, dry skin, and itching
- Nausea and vomiting
- Fever
- Loss of appetite, weight loss
- Swelling of arms, hands, feet, ankles, face, or other parts of the body
- Abnormal taste
- Dry mouth
- Inflammation of the lining of the digestive system
- Headache
- Nose bleeds
- Pain in arms and legs, mouth and throat, back or joints
- High blood glucose
- High blood pressure
- Difficulty sleeping
- Hair loss
- Muscle spasms
- Feeling dizzy
- Nail disorders

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or does not go away.

These are not all the possible side effects of AFINITOR. For more information, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Brief Summary of Prescribing Information on adjacent pages.

The brands listed are the trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners and are not trademarks or registered marks of Novartis.

Brief Summary of Important Risk Information. This information does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or treatment.

AFINITOR® (everolimus) Tablets

What is AFINITOR?

AFINITOR® (everolimus) Tablets is a prescription medicine used to treat advanced hormone receptor-positive, HER2-negative breast cancer, along with the medicine exemestane, in postmenopausal women who have already received certain other medicines for their cancer.

What is the most important information I should know about AFINITOR?

AFINITOR can cause serious side effects. These serious side effects include:

1. You may develop lung or breathing problems.

In some people lung or breathing problems may be severe and can even lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these symptoms:

- New or worsening cough
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Wheezing

2. You may be more likely to develop an infection, such as pneumonia, or a bacterial, fungal, or viral infection.

Viral infections may include active hepatitis B in people who have had hepatitis B in the past (reactivation). In some people these infections may be severe and can even lead to death. You may need to be treated as soon as possible. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have a temperature of 100.5°F or above, chills, or do not feel well.

Symptoms of hepatitis B or infection may include the following:

- Fever
- Chills
- Skin rash
- Joint pain and inflammation
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea
- Pale stools or dark urine
- Yellowing of the skin
- Pain in the upper right side of the stomach

3. You may develop kidney failure.

In some people this may be severe and can even lead to death. Your healthcare provider should do tests to check your kidney function before and during your treatment with AFINITOR.

If you have any of the serious side effects listed above, you may need to stop taking AFINITOR for a while or use a lower dose. Follow your healthcare provider's instructions.

Who should not take AFINITOR?

Do not take AFINITOR if you are allergic to everolimus or to any of the ingredients in AFINITOR. See full Prescribing Information for a complete list of ingredients in AFINITOR.

Talk to your healthcare provider before taking this medicine if you are allergic to:

- sirolimus (Rapamune®)
- temsirolimus (Torisel®)

Ask your healthcare provider if you do not know.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking AFINITOR?

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you (check all that apply):

- ☐ Have or have had kidney problems
- ☐ Have or have had liver problems
- ☐ Have diabetes or high blood sugar
- ☐ Have high blood cholesterol levels
- ☐ Have any infections
- ☐ Previously had hepatitis B

- ☐ Are scheduled to receive any vaccinations. You should not receive a live vaccine or be around people who have recently received a live vaccine during your treatment with AFINITOR. If you are not sure about the type of immunization or vaccine, ask your healthcare provider.
- ☐ Have other medical conditions

- ☐ Are pregnant, or could become pregnant. AFINITOR can cause harm to your unborn baby. You should use effective birth control while using AFINITOR and for 8 weeks after stopping treatment.
- ☐ Are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if AFINITOR passes into your breast milk. You and your healthcare provider should decide if you will take AFINITOR or breastfeed. You should not do both.

If you have checked any of the boxes above, be sure to discuss with your doctor before taking AFINITOR.

Tell your healthcare provider about all of the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. AFINITOR may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines can affect how AFINITOR works. Using AFINITOR with other medicines can cause serious side effects. Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them, and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine. Especially tell your healthcare provider if you take:

- St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*)
- Medicine for:
 - Fungal infections
 - Bacterial infections
 - Tuberculosis
 - Seizures
- HIV-AIDS
- Heart conditions or high blood pressure
- Medicines that weaken your immune system (your body's ability to fight infections and other problems)

Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist if you are not sure if your medicine is one of those taken for the conditions listed above. If you are taking any medicines for the conditions listed above, your healthcare provider might need to prescribe a different medicine or your dose of AFINITOR may need to be changed. You should also tell your healthcare provider before you start taking any new medicine.

How should I take AFINITOR?

Your healthcare provider will prescribe the dose of AFINITOR that is right for you. Take AFINITOR exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to. Your healthcare provider may change your dose of AFINITOR if needed.

- Use scissors to open the blister pack
- Swallow AFINITOR tablets whole with a glass of water. Do not take any tablet that is broken or crushed
- Take AFINITOR 1 time each day at about the same time
- Take AFINITOR the same way each time, either with food or without food
- If you take too much AFINITOR contact your healthcare provider or go to the nearest hospital emergency department right away. Take the pack of AFINITOR with you
- If you miss a dose of AFINITOR, you may still take it up to 6 hours after the time you normally take it. If it is more than 6 hours after you normally take your AFINITOR, skip the dose for that day. The next day, take AFINITOR at your usual time. Do not take 2 doses to make up for the 1 that you missed. If you are not sure about what to do, call your healthcare provider
- You should have blood tests before you start AFINITOR and as needed during your treatment. These will include tests to check your blood cell count, kidney and liver function, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels



What should I avoid while taking AFINITOR?

You should not drink grapefruit juice or eat grapefruit during your treatment with AFINITOR. It may make the amount of AFINITOR in your blood increase to a harmful level.

What are the possible side effects of AFINITOR?

AFINITOR can cause serious side effects. See "What is the most important information I should know about AFINITOR?" for more information.

Common side effects of AFINITOR in people with advanced hormone receptor-positive, HER2-negative breast cancer include:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mouth ulcers. AFINITOR can cause mouth ulcers and sores. Tell your healthcare provider if you have pain, discomfort, or open sores in your mouth. Your healthcare provider may tell you to use a special mouthwash or mouth gel that does not contain alcohol, peroxide, iodine, or thyme • Infections • Feeling weak or tired • Cough, shortness of breath • Diarrhea and constipation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rash, dry skin, and itching • Nausea and vomiting • Fever • Loss of appetite, weight loss • Swelling of arms, hands, feet, ankles, face or other parts of the body • Abnormal taste • Dry mouth • Inflammation of lining of the digestive system • Headache • Nose bleeds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain in arms and legs, mouth and throat, back or joints • High blood glucose • High blood pressure • Difficulty sleeping • Hair loss • Muscle spasms • Feeling dizzy • Nail disorders |
|---|--|--|

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or does not go away. These are not all the possible side effects of AFINITOR. For more information, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

Keep AFINITOR and all medicines out of the reach of children.

General information about AFINITOR

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Patient Information leaflet. Do not use AFINITOR for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give AFINITOR to other people, even if they have the same symptoms or condition you have. It may harm them.

This leaflet summarizes the most important information about AFINITOR. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information written for healthcare professionals. For more information call 1-888-423-4648 or go to www.AFINITOR.com.

Manufactured by:
Novartis Pharma Stein AG
Stein, Switzerland

Distributed by:



Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation
East Hanover, New Jersey 07936-1080

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4/13

AFB-1063787

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10 ROAD LESSONS

BY LINDA CRILL

The middle of the road is where the white line is — and that's the worst place to drive. — Susan Taylor

Inner Mayhem

Driving home after hearing those startling words that I had breast cancer, I processed a chorus of many chattering voices inside of me. One hopeful voice questioned the cancer diagnosis and suggested it might be a mistake. An angry one demanded to know why me and reminded me that I didn't need any more life lessons about cancer. Another rehearsed the best way to tell my family and friends. Other voices in my head repeated words like: chemo, surgery, my breasts, my life and what now?

My Whole-Me Promise

However, it was the message of a single powerful voice that I focused on as it traveled from the base of my spine, expanded as it moved up through my navel and heart, and continued to the top of my head. This voice radiated calmness and spoke with conviction: "All you ever truly have is this moment; how are you going to experience it?" With the power of its delivery the other voices faded.

In that moment, I was more fully myself again and NOT solely a breast cancer patient. I was a businesswoman, athlete, family member, astute problem-solver spiritual seeker, and resilient lover of life. On this new journey before me, I promised myself that I'd not lose touch with all of these and many other significant parts of myself that create the whole-me.

My Gift of the Moment

With this newfound calmness, I expanded my view beyond the road I was driving on to take in the broader scene in front of me. A



smile spread across my face as I noticed the deep teal sky that served as a quiet backdrop for the billowing cumulus clouds in front of it. I thought I don't want to miss this eye-candy, and I will if I try to imagine an uncertain future for my life or lose myself into a cancer identity. This moment, this now, is where all of life happens.

Cancer Detour & Recalculating GPS

And that's how my breast cancer journey began. Like many others before me, in a single moment this breast cancer diagnosis changed everything—my calendar brimming with plans, life over-flowing with expectations, beliefs that my body would keep me safe from dangerous diseases. Now I was questioning all of these and more.

I knew too well how deeply my life would be affected by this abrupt detour that forced me off the interstate and onto winding back roads—some that I discovered weren't on

any map. Even my former destinations with planned stopovers along the way would need to be recalculated daily, monthly, and yearly as this new road trip progressed.

In 4 months I had planned to publish my newly finished book. Now with pending surgeries, treatments and endless medical protocol crowding onto my schedule, there'd be little time or energy for such an ambitious undertaking.

I had just signed up on Match.com. What was I supposed to tell any man who wanted to meet me? Saying I have cancer on a first date is hardly a come on.

Now I was on my way to who knows where, but I would at least have this moment of gorgeous sky and most importantly—the whole of me to savor it.

My Blind Curves Story

Why was this present moment so important to me after receiving a diagnosis of

cancer? My answer has 2 parts. First, I am a widow who lost my husband Bill 6 years earlier to an incurable cancer. On that journey with Bill and in the years that followed, I dug deep and processed so much about life, death, health, disease, healing, fear, forgiveness, and what really matters.

Even my spiritual beliefs had been turned upside down as I held conversations with God about how any grand creation plan could have allowed this kind of abrupt and probable separation of two people so deeply in love and meshed together in one spectacular union.

Secondly, I had spent the previous 3 years writing a book titled: *Blind Curves—One Woman's Unusual Journey to Reinvent Herself and Answer "What Now?"*

It's my true story how after 18-months of over-achieving and following one-size-fits-all advice for a 57-year old widow, I was still miserable. Needing something to shake up my life, I traded my corporate suits for motorcycle leathers and signed-up for a 2,500-mile motorcycle road trip down America's Pacific Northwest coast. The challenge was I didn't know how to ride a motorcycle and had only thirty days to learn.

In *Blind Curves*, I tell how I learned to handle my fears, survive situations that were beyond my skill level and most of all discovered the sources of true joy and resiliency. Unknowingly, I had spent the last 3 years writing about the skills I would now need to navigate this new breast cancer blind curve.

I'm no Pollyanna about cancer. I don't want to diminish the difficulties of any cancer diagnosis. I've seen its horrific side. My late-husband Bill had mesothelioma cancer. It was incurable and average life expectancy when he was diagnosed was forty days.

I was constantly at his side as his caregiver, wife, healing partner, and advocate watching his weight plummet, daily pain increase, sleep fade to no more than fifteen minutes at a time and the physical unwinding of a powerful body.

But I also saw how Bill extended a 40-day journey into 11 months using diet, exercise, laughter and most of all love, enjoying as much as he could while he was still here. He became an incredible diplomat, teacher, and even a saint in my eyes as he healed himself and so many people around him.



I Chose a New Label: Thriver

I am uncomfortable with the word survivor—a label we receive the first day we're diagnosed—because it sounds too heroic. When I hear the word survivor, I always want to say: What about those who don't live? Aren't they just as valiant and maybe even braver than those of us who continue living?

Then I also ponder: Is mere survival enough? Yes, cancer changes most of us significantly, but is survival the entirety of what I want? Isn't it the quality of our lives that should become greater because we, more than most, understand the volatility of life and that death is a given for everyone at some point?

Ten for the Road

Everyone's journey is different and there is no such thing as one-size-fits-all advice, but what I learned from being a caregiver and from Bill's and others' experiences helped me better handle the unexpected curves in my own life.

Treasure this moment; it's all anyone has.

From my experience with Bill, I realized that life is precious and not to wait to live it fully until later. Every moment is precious and there are no guarantees that there will be a tomorrow, next week, or next year. I learned in any situation especially ones that are unwanted—what I can control is my own attitude and how I choose to perceive what's happening.

Do what I can, while I can.

Immediately after my diagnosis, I lined up my support system of friends and professionals to be ready to help me later as I needed them. I reviewed my finances, called my insurance company to learn what was covered and to explore financial aid availability. I knew these chores would be more draining and even more difficult later, when I would need my strength for my personal recovery.

Don't let life turn into a waiting game.

I didn't want to wait to make plans or hold my breath until the next update about my health. There is always one more test, another anniversary or a new health hurdle to be cleared.

Fear is not my compass.

I learned not to let fear control my life before, during or after my cancer journey. The biggest thief of life isn't cancer; it's fear!

Dig deep for my hidden strengths.

I knew we're all much stronger than we think and that if I dug deep, I'd not only find many hidden strengths, but I'd find more of it than I thought I had. By strength I don't mean denying when I'm exhausted, in pain or physically less able to do things I used to do with ease. What I'm talking about is inner spirit and fortitude. I've discovered even my anger and fear can be converted to fuel and used to take charge of my life and healing needs.

Manage energy, not time.

We all only have so much energy so I knew to spend it where it counts. Every exertion (physical, mental and emotional) requires ample recovery time. I needed to schedule recovery and renewal time and not just events and appointments.

Hope is a welcome and necessary friend.

People do recover from every stage of cancer—even when the medical community has said there's no more they can do. We are each a study of one, and miracles happen every day.

Processing what's lost before what's gained.

It was easy for me to see all the disruption and changes my breast cancer was causing when I was first diagnosed. If someone else had tried to point out a multitude of benefits of this journey early on, I would have shut them out. Most of the deepest gains from involvement with our own or someone else's cancer aren't fully understood or recognized until we are ready to see them from a new perspective.

I still miss Bill. But I also treasure the many wondrous ways I've changed during these last 8 years. I'm more resilient, compassionate of others and accepting of my own shortcomings. I never would have gone on a motorcycle trip, written a book or left my former career for this one as an author, speaker, and reinvention expert.

Healing vs. Curing: There's a difference.

Everyone (family, friends, caregivers and others around us) can be healed, even

when it's not possible to cure the cancer.

Healing includes simple things like erasing old boundaries that no longer serve us by appreciating, loving, and forgiving others and ourselves.

Every ending is also a new beginning.

When I talk with women who have left the breast cancer side trip behind them, I always hear that they now live with greater vigor, gratitude and conviction to make each day count. These women helped me realize we are able to do more with our life because of the newly acquired strengths that we developed during this significant detour.

My Current Journey— Interstate Travel Resumed

Even though I was exhausted with adrenal fatigue the year following my radiation treatments, I was able to revise what I thought was my final manuscript to include more insight gained from this new blind curve in my life, the diagnosis of breast cancer.

My journey today continues to be deeply committed to doing all I can to reduce the fears associated with cancer and adding my voice to a chorus of others wanting to make life richer for care-givers, thrivers, medical staff, family, friends and the wider community affected by all cancers—including breast cancer.

I look forward to meeting many of you on the 2014 Thrivers Cruise where I will be delivering a lively and fun presentation titled: "Vroom! Rev Up Your Life." And I'll continue to stay in touch with all of you as a BCW Blogger, on the Breast Cancer Wellness social media pages, and my website and blog. ■

Linda Crill is a sought-after speaker, trainer, and thought leader on mastering the new leadership skills: reinvention, resiliency and chaotic creation. She is the author of *Blind Curves—One Woman's Unusual Journey to Reinvent Herself and Answer What Now?* A story of reinvention where Crill trades her corporate suits for motorcycle leathers in a moment of rebellion on a quest to answer "What Now?" For more information visit <http://www.BlindCurves.com>. This book is available in both softback and eBook versions from all major online booksellers as well as orders placed by your favorite bookseller.



<http://www.LindaCrill.com>
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- ♥ Mind-Body-Spirit

Annie Appleseed Project helps people reduce risk of cancer occurrence, recurrence, risk of toxicities, and educates on alternative therapies. Online since 1999, on Facebook and Twitter (@annieappleseed)

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The New Me, The New Us

BY LINDA DACOSTA

Courage means to keep working a relationship, to continue seeking solutions to difficult problems and to stay focused during stressful periods.

— Dennis Waitley

I was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2006. It was difficult seeing my family watch their mother, wife, daughter, sister, auntie, sister-in-law and friend go through the treatments. I did not want them to be scared because I refused to be scared. I did have the initial reaction of despair but this lasted just a few moments which in itself helped me to overcome the challenge. Also, some of my girlfriends were going through treatments and we were able to share our knowledge and support each other.

It was truly amazing the support I had from my family and in particular my husband was my rock. He made sure that I did not worry about anything although there were times when we wanted to kill each other. But looking back now, it is quite funny because the arguments were just silly such as trying to figure out what to eat. We were simply stressed. He had to keep up his law practice and at the same time worry about our financial situation and ensuring that our

children were taken care of while we traveled for my medical treatments.

The year 2010 was the most difficult time in my life and was a happy one at the same time. My husband lost his mother to Alzheimer in March of that year followed by my second diagnosis of breast cancer shortly thereafter. My sister was also diagnosed with cancer for the second time and we lost her in August. We then lost our nephew. There was so much sadness. However, I believe that my oldest daughter's graduation during that year and my second daughter beginning university in Canada are what kept me strong. I was so proud of them and to see Tonie graduate and to help Kasie get set up in Canada. They were the highlights of my year and I was very thankful. I can never say enough how thankful I am. My third daughter Selena was only 10 and my son Waide was 8 at the time and they were going through so much watching, yet learning from their family members. There are no

words to describe how brave all my children were at this time and continue to be.

When I was diagnosed in 2006, my son was almost 4 years old and we learned that he was 80% deaf. To this day our son is working to improve his speech. The fact that he is so bright and has a sense of humor will no doubt help him persevere. He even uses deafness as an excuse for not picking up his clothes or doing his homework and then laughs. Selena keeps her little brother on his toes and does not let him get away with anything. She is an old soul like her late grandmother Inez and has the most beautiful singing voice.

I found that I wanted to do whatever I could for those who helped me get through my illness. I took my loved ones on the BCW Alaskan Cruise. I scraped and saved money so that we all could experience this once in a life time event which even included our nanny who was instrumental in my recovery and getting us through the treatments. She took care of our home, cared for our children and took care of me whenever I was too weak. She was our Godsend and played a big part of our journey.

One issue that is really difficult to share is my marriage. I feel that there are many of us who are going through this and therefore I want to share with the brave women who are going through breast cancer that they are not alone. To be completely truthful, my marriage is the hardest part of my life. Marriage is hard enough and to have an illness on top of that, it is much more difficult.

Our family photo taken on the BCW Alaskan Cruise: Waide DaCosta, Selena DaCosta, Waide DaCosta, Cynthia Peters, Kasie Chisholm, Tonie Chisholm, and Linda DaCosta.



The
Third Edition
of This Award -
Winning Book

WAKING THE WARRIOR GODDESS

Dr. Christine Horner's Program to Protect Against & Fight Breast Cancer

Breast cancer has reached epidemic proportions in the United States. Once a relatively rare disease, it now affects 2 to 3 million American women. What can we do to protect ourselves? Christine Horner, M.D., has the prescription: Eat healthy foods, add a good dose of certain supplements, get the rest and exercise we need, and avoid things that are bad for our bodies. We each have a Warrior Goddess in us, and it's time to set her free.

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.

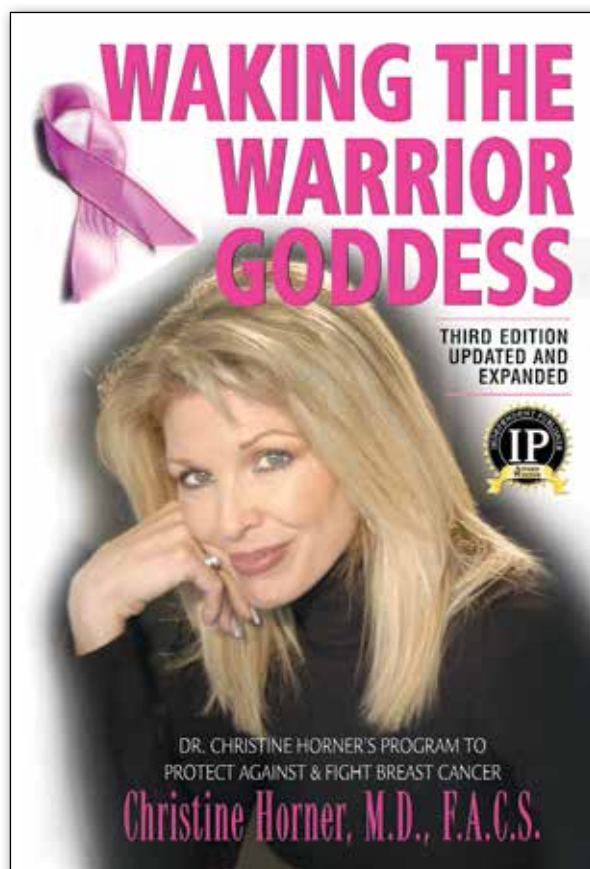
The final part of *Waking the Warrior Goddess* presents Dr. Horner's Thirty-Step Program for reclaiming health and defeating breast cancer. In addition, this book includes an extensive, newly updated resources section for obtaining the particular nutrients and products that our bodies need to become and stay strong and healthy.

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**I found I wanted
to do more for my
community.**

I had the pleasure of attending a seminar set up by BCW during our Alaskan cruise in which Reverend Michael Barry stated that many cancer patients have a "Type C" behavior in that we are the nicest people to meet and we do not wish to have any confrontations. I found this to be an eye-opener because Reverend Barry was describing me. However, I can honestly say my Type C behavior has gone out the window and I am speaking up! This seminar helped me to see that it was okay to be more aware of what I need in life and that it isn't selfish. I have learned to be truthful and not hold back what I feel. This is easier said than done for me. My husband is now learning to deal with his new wife that is emerging. He is a good man and we will get through this as we continue to redefine who we are to each other and acknowledge the strengths and differences between us. I know in the long run this is healthier for me and for our marriage.

After completing all my treatments, I found myself wanting to do more for my community. I attended charity events but this was not enough for me. My good friend and doctor, Dr. Sook Yin asked if I was interested in becoming a board member of the Cayman Islands Cancer Society ("CICS"). I immediately accepted. I am so honored to be a part of CICS which has accomplished so much. I have to pinch myself at times because it is so exciting to be a part of something that does so much for others. There is not enough room in this article to give CICS justice for what it has accomplished over the years. This year alone CICS will be funding the design and construction of a chemotherapy unit for our patients. This is such a big deal as our patients can be comfortable and have peaceful surroundings while undergoing chemo treatments. The existing facility is simply inadequate and frankly is depressing for our patients. CICS has a wonderful relationship with our Health Services Authority and together we will ensure that our patients are made as comfortable as possible. It is so amazing to see our community give so much as all the funds that are donated to CICS are from the private sector including corporations and individuals.

I also continue to be inspired by patients. There is one little girl who was under 2 years when diagnosed with leukemia. She gave me

inspiration while I was undergoing chemo treatment. The leukemia is in remission and Charli is just a beautiful, active and delightful little girl. My colleague and his wife are also going through so much with their daughter who was diagnosed with a brain tumor last year at the tender age of 5 years. Hannah is so brave and notwithstanding the treatments, she still has her infectious laugh, goes to school and overcomes any obstacle that is put in her way, including her autism. I hope one day that the Cayman Islands will have facilities for children because to take them away from their homes is devastating for them and their families.

I believe I have changed and become a better person. I am not focused on work as much as I was and made changes to improve my life. In 2008, I no longer wished to practice family law as it was simply too stressful and it affected my family as I would work long hours and my phone would be ringing all hours of the night whenever my clients needed help. Although I feel that I did very well for my clients, there were other lawyers who could do the same and therefore, I changed employment. I am still a litigation attorney but more on a commercial level. I have learned that business is business and your employer is only going to do as much as it can within the ambit of their policies. There is nothing wrong with this and I very quickly changed my priorities and now put my family first.

I have also learned to better understand my health needs. Thanks to Dr. Yin, I have changed my eating habits and lost weight.

My emotional recovery didn't happen over night and took longer than my physical recovery. The experience with breast cancer helped redefine the strengths within my family and to make us stronger as individuals. We are still learning and growing.

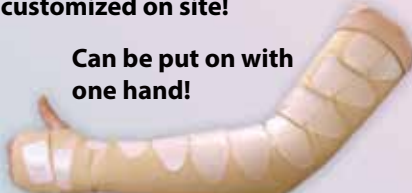
I wish to age gracefully; one way that is helping me accomplish this is that I now see that every day is an opportunity and I look for the blessings in each day. I celebrate my 50th birthday next year and plan to travel to Italy, my lifelong dream. ■



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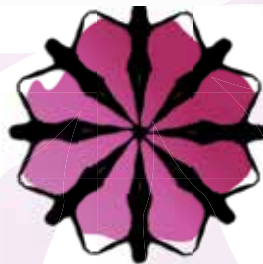
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Finding My *Voice*

THE HEALING POWER OF 'NO'

BY CHRISTINE PAGE, MD

You would have thought that after 35 years as a doctor, educator and women's healthcare advocate - many years of which were focused on life-changing diseases such as cancer and heart disease, that there was little more I could learn about illness. But last year, while writing my most recent book on empowering women to heal through listening to the wisdom of their bodies, I developed breast cancer.

That was when my true education began. I knew immediately this was no coincidence. This particular book was inspired by hearing the comments of a television reporter who said of a well-known personality; 'fancy her getting cancer, she is so nice.' That moment struck a cord, as I remembered all the 'nice people' I had known with cancer, including close members of my own family. Inspired by my understanding of the mind/ body connection in the face of illness, I shouted out to the television; 'that's the problem, she's too nice!'

After years of meeting thousands of people and listening to their intimate stories in my medical career, I recognized there was a definite link between cancer and people who had a tendency to want to please others, often suppressing their own feelings - especially resentment or anger - in an effort to keep the peace. This is especially true of women in our culture, who have been trained and admired for their kind and considerate manner. Now I was caught in the spotlight and couldn't ignore my own knowledge and experience. I was forced to ask myself the questions: Am I a pleaser? Do I suppress my anger to avoid conflict? Do I say 'Yes' when my heart says 'No'?

During the week following the initial diagnosis, I let myself fall into deep emotions of grief, facing my own mortality and anxiety about an unknown future. I happened to be attending a conference located on the beautiful sandy beaches of South Carolina. It was there I walked, sat and cried, letting my tears merge with the mighty waters of the Atlantic

Ocean, her presence making me know I was not alone, and that many women had experienced such grief before me. In particular, three close friends of my mother came to mind, all of whom had died from cancer, but whose love enveloped me now, helping me to make healthy plans for my recovery.

When I first qualified from medical school, I truly believed I had all the tools in my hands and that physical illness could be cured by physical means, such as changing diet, increasing exercise or stopping smoking or drinking. However, within five years, I realized that unless we took time to explore the patient's whole life and not just their presenting symptoms, we were only touching the surface of their true healing. I knew that telling someone to 'keep taking the pills' was often only covering over the cracks. This was not the reason I went into medicine. I wanted people to live up to their full capacity, enjoy life and be independent of drugs. There are many reasons why people get sick, most of which are not linked to the individual doing something wrong in their life, like eating an unhealthy diet. In many situations, illness is a way of getting our attention, showing us that the path we're on is no longer nurturing us or supporting our true selves. The illness itself provides space and time to review our life and make the appropriate changes.

With this in mind, I knew I needed to create space for my own inner work. So I made appointments with a highly experienced medical team, organized acupuncture sessions



and then delved into the depths of my psyche. It soon became clear there were several issues to be considered, the first of which involved self-love and self-nurturing, especially as there is a popular belief that breast cancer is due to lack of self-love. Many of us think this means self-pampering such as receiving massages, taking long, lazy baths or having a pedicure. But real self-love means listening to your inner voice and following through on your heart's desires rather than just satisfying the ego or doing what everybody else tells you to do. Sometimes your heart may tell you to rest, while at other times it may require to make well-overdue changes in your life. Unfortunately too many of us, as busy moms, daughters or wives, find ourselves ignoring our own inner messages and going along with the demands of others to avoid conflict, suppressing any resentment we may feel about our needs being ignored. During my inner reflection, it became apparent that I was very good at taking care of and loving others, but in the process I had stopped listening to 'me', and that didn't feel good at all!

I realized that the pattern of not listening to my heart, especially in my relationships, had begun in early life. As a young, very sensitive child, the world appeared chaotic, full of unspoken emotions and impressions, causing me to feel unsure of myself, shy, lacking in self-confidence and often preferring to hide away from the company of people. Slowly over the years, I learned to relate to and fit in with others by intuitively reading their needs and attempting to do what was required to be liked and accepted whether by a group or an individual. I was proud of my chameleon-like nature and that my parents beamed when they were told; 'she's such a pleasure to have around, she so undemanding.' Any time I did voice a personal opinion or express anger about an unbalanced situation, I was quickly told that the quieter Christine was much preferred. My need to fit-in and be accepted was far greater than my need to stand my ground and say, 'no' to unreasonable requests, so I continued to keep the peace, saying 'yes' and being 'nice.' But the resentment doesn't go away; it just simmers under the surface and gets embedded in the body. Eastern medical teachings see anger as the energy which promotes change; when we feel irritated, we're being asked to make changes to our lives. I

have learned over and over, as I am sure have you, that if we ignore this messenger, then change will be foisted upon us, possibly in the form of illness, loss or depression.

It became clear that many of my decisions were based on meeting the needs of others while my own needs often appeared irrelevant and even unknown, to me. My self-identity had become associated with external sources such as my job and my relationships, providing me with a feeling of worthiness as long as people continued to need me; I had become a pleaser, ignoring my festering resentment inside. Little did I know the problems I was creating for myself, which would have to be faced much later in life.

In the early 1980s, much attention was given to the immune system and its relationship to cancer, fibromyalgia, allergies and auto-immune illnesses. One researcher described the immune system as the means by which the body decides who or what will nurture the individual and therefore what should be accepted and what refused entry and rejected. When an individual develops a disease associated with

their immune system, it is not uncommon for them to have poor psychological personal boundaries, a poor sense of self or 'I' and even a belief they have no control over their environment often perceiving the world as a fearful and dangerous place, a situation common in those with allergies.

In breast cancer, there is also often a belief that you're only loved for what you do and how you perform and not for just being you. This perception merely strengthens the amount of effort used to gain a sense of identity through external achievements, activities and relationships, which unfortunately only drives us further from our true self and leaves us totally dependent on outer identities.

In 1980, the research of American psychologist, Dr. Larry LeShan, revealed that cancer is much more likely to appear following the dissolution of a group or cessation of an activity, from which the individual has gained self-worth and identity, including the departure of children to college, death of a loved one or loss of a job. Naturally, such disruption is often met with symptoms

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I had stopped listening to 'me' and that didn't feel good at all!

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of loss, especially, fear, anger or blame. However, if these emotions are not expressed, integrated and released they can later contribute to the onset of illness. Other researchers have suggested that it is the mere stress of such events which precipitates the onset of illness, but I believe that the painful cutting of such ties leaves the individual questioning: who am I now?

During my cancer induced introspection, I also reflected on the purpose of the breasts, which exist far beyond the need to augment my appearance as a woman and even beyond the delivery of breast milk. A woman's breasts create a safe, nurturing and soft landing into the world, for the baby who has just been delivered from their watery womb. Over time, the mother lovingly weans the infant from the breast not only physically but also emotionally, so that around the age of five, the child is secure and confident and ready to stand on their own two feet upon Mother Earth, eager to experience all she has to offer. Problems arise, in terms of love and the potential of breast disease, when the child is either pushed from the breast too early, leading to an overly independent individual who trusts nobody, especially other women, or is kept too long at the breast failing to develop the self-confidence required to develop a healthy sense of 'I'. My situation was the latter. My mother was my rock in the midst of the chaos, protecting and shielding me from scary situations. But in retrospect it would probably have been wiser for her to have pushed me out into the world, teaching me how to develop healthy boundaries and value the uniqueness of my inner self.

As is often the case, the appearance of cancer began an inner healing journey which may not have happened without the illness. Due to the programming of the medical treatments, I had to cancel certain events, which was difficult for someone who always wants to dutifully follow through on her commitments, but it felt so good to be taking care of me for a change, despite what others may think. When others tried to offer advice about my healing and condition which did not resonate with my intuition, I politely said; 'No thank you' when in the past I would

have thought; 'they're only trying to help, you should accept their advice even though you won't follow it!' I spent time reviewing my relationships, assessing which ones valued me a person and which only liked my pleasing persona or wanted something from me, slowly disconnecting from the latter with honesty and love. I also healed relationships which,

in retrospect, should never have been broken, recognizing that the past is finished and today is a totally new day. Finally, I made a contract with myself not to agree to work for which I am not paid, a previously selfless act which I erroneously believed made me a better and more "spiritual" person, but which in fact just led to deeper unacknowledged resentment.

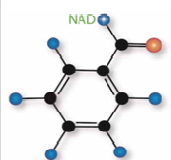
In retrospect, I see the cancer as a great teacher,

despite the challenges of the experience. I learned to establish healthy boundaries and priorities for myself which enable me to experience real self respect --valuing my time, what I offer, what I know, who I am. For me, any illness offers an opportunity for deep healing, which we can choose to take advantage of or not. In both situations, our symptoms may disappear and the illness can go into remission, but true healing occurs when we have the courage to do our deep inner work, standing in the truth of who we are. The cancer experience also changed the makeup of my book, giving me deeper insight into the ancestral woundedness of women and how to restore wellbeing. During the weeks of treatment I rewrote many chapters based on the wisdom and experience I had received, which I like to think was given to me by the cancer itself. ■

In 1984 Christine Page MD founded one of the first integrative health centers within the British National Health Service. She also began a 10-year educational career, teaching doctors, nurses and other medical personnel about complementary therapies including mind/ body and energy medicine. Christine is trained as an MD and a homeopath, but she was raised amongst traditional healers and has always had the gift of inner sight, giving her

the capacity to connect intuitively to others and access information from different realms of consciousness. The truth of her message -- real healing and health comes from listening to your heart, living your truth and enjoying the deepest connections possible -- has deep resonance with those who come in contact with her. She lives in Northern California with her husband.
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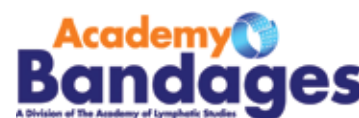


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