

Have a friend or loved one with a recent cancer diagnosis? This might help and inspire...

Dear Cancer-friend,

Maybe you just got your diagnosis, or perhaps you are well into your cancer journey. Either way I can promise you this. Your time with cancer will be a time of fear and discomfort, maybe even pain at times. But it can also be a time of tremendous growth and metamorphosis in your life. Cancer isn't just something to beat or cure. It also has a tremendous amount to teach you if you are willing to learn.

Not long ago, my then 8-year-old son asked me, "Mommy was cancer fun?" I almost immediately replied, "No! Of course not!" But then I stopped and thought about it. In some ways, looking back from the other side of cancer, there were many parts of it that were fun. As tough as it was, cancer was the permission slip I needed to slow down, connect with what was important and accept the love and help others had to give me. It forced me to take toll of my life and make changes that have led to a fuller, much more fun-filled life. So yes, in a weird way, cancer can be fun.

It is no coincidence that the Chinese word for "crisis" is "opportunity." This crisis is a big one, and it hits you right in the center of your safety, your clarity about who you are and where you fit it, what's important to you and what you want your life to be.

Here's what I have learned that I hope will help you on your journey.

## **5 Rules of the Road to Start With...**

### ***1. Start putting yourself first...really.***

Here's your permission slip to say "NO!" With everything you do or feel you have to do, ask the question, "Does it tire me or inspire me?" If the prior, let it go! If it feeds your aliveness do it. If not, this is the time to say no...even just for right now. And boy will it feel good. It's time to practice some radical self-care. Whatever you need you are allowed. Stay home in your sweats all day. Get a massage instead of answering those emails. Let someone else cook you a delicious meal instead of cooking for everyone else.

### ***2. You can actually vote people off your cancer island!***

You must set boundaries or put an end to toxic, unhealthy relationships. If they can't roll, can't support, can't be there, you don't have to let them stay. This means not allowing emotional vampires too close. It doesn't mean you don't love them or care about them. It just means that during this journey, you have to care about yourself more.

### ***3. Be loud and proud***

Cancer affects everyone. There is nothing shameful about it. And I can tell you from personal and professional experience, that which you hide in shame holds negative

power, and that which you bring into the light just brings more light into your life. I am not saying you have to go around bald if you are loosing your hair (although I recommend it ☺), or that you have to tell everyone you meet your personal business. But being authentic about who you are and what you are going through is always good for your health and your heart. And when you put yourself out there, you will be shocked at how much love comes back to you.

#### 4. ***Say goodbye to shame.***

Shame is toxic for your mind and your body. When you hold onto shame, fear rather than love runs your life. Radical self-love is crucial if you are going to successfully carry out the radical self-care required to see you through the cancer journey. Whatever has happened in the past is in the past, It is time to forgive yourself completely and totally. Write those shameful secrets or flaws you imagine you carry down on some paper and burn it. As you watch the ashes float up into the sky, make a decision to let yourself off the hook. Even just for today. You and your body deserve it.

#### 5. ***Open your heart to love that others have to give you***

Expectations more often lead to resentments. And expectations are really stories we just make up about ourselves and others that are full of "shoulds." This goes for your expectations of others, but also theirs of you. When you have a cancer diagnosis it can be hard to witness the fear and grief of others. It's ok to be sorry you have cancer as long as it's about being sorry for their sadness, not blaming yourself. When you open your heart and let others help you and reach out to you in support you will be amazed at how much people long to give and how good it feels to receive. This is one time in your life where that is not only suggested, but also required.

### **What You Can Do to Fight Cancer and Support Your body:**

So much of your care is in the hands of your doctors. But as a "recovering type A," I made it my business to learn about everything I can do (or not do) that would prevent cancer and help make sure it doesn't come back. The two keys are immune support and reduced inflammation of the cells

We can't control our genetic pre-disposition to cancer, but there is growing evidence that we actually might be able to play some role in whether or not those genes turn on and whether or not we get cancer again. Here are some places to start

#### ***The Power of Your Thoughts:***

Many scientists are now proposing that *emotion* plays a role in turning on or off different aspects of our DNA and the general health of our cells. Emotion may be the key that determines how our DNA encodes in our body. For instance, a while back there was a study that came out in the Journal of Advancement in Medicine that looked at the physiological and psychological effects of compassion and anger. They studied subjects' immune systems over a 6-hour period, by looking at the immune parameter of S-IGA, present in saliva and in mucous membranes in the mouth and upper respiratory

systems. In the presence of anger, the immune response was repressed up to *5 hours* after the incident. As anger was reconciled/resolved, the S-IGA production increased and continued 5-6 hours after the healing incident. Positive emotions also increased S-IGA levels. It turns out when we are sad; it is not just our brain cells that are experience sadness. In fact there are receptors that react to antidepressants in the skin, kidney, stomach lining, etc. Research has already demonstrated that sadness and anger create a compromised immune system. It has also been established that loneliness puts one at greater risk for heart attacks or cancer.

Who knew our thoughts could so deeply influence our health and well-being? Deepak Chopra proposes that the body is brimming with intelligence, which is not just in the brain or neurons, but also in every cell of your body. Does that mean that your thoughts created your cancer? I wouldn't go that far. But they sure seem to do a lot to help your healing.

I know it's not always that simple to just flip a switch and become Pollyanna in your attitudes. But I have some recommendations of some great books that can help you look at the ways in which you may carry shame, sadness, guilt and self-criticism around and how to let go of it. (see bibliography at end).

### **Supporting Your Immune System and Diminishing Inflammation**

Cancer cells are born every day in everyone's body. Growing evidence supports the idea that reducing inflammation in your cells and supporting your immune system not only helps in fighting cancer, but in preventing it as well.

**\*Note; be sure to talk to your doctor before making any dietary or supplement changes**

**THE LIVER IS KEY:** When the liver is toxed out or just under stress processing food and drink that requires a lot of energy and work, it get's tired and inflammation occurs in the tissue. Inflammation believed to put us at risk for cancer as well as a number of degenerative diseases. The key is to focus on foods that support liver function.

#### ***What is Liver supporting and friendly?***

##### ***Vitamin B***

Especially vitamin B-12, which significantly reduces jaundice, serum bilirubin, and recovery time.

##### ***Lots of veggies and greens***

The fiber and abundant nutrients in vegetables are great for the liver. Vegetables are essentially fat-free. And, they are rich in the B-vitamin folic acid.

### ***Eat less fat***

Your liver normally makes 250 to 1,000 ml (over a quart!) of bile DAILY. Most (about 80%) of your bile salts are reabsorbed by the intestinal tract and returned to and recycled by the liver. This is how your body, with about 3.6 grams of total bile salts in it, can secrete 4 to 8 g of bile salts per single fatty meal. Saturated and trans fats are especially difficult for the liver to process. Fatty liver is much more common than you would expect. 25% of people have this condition

### ***Stay Away from dairy***

Dairy is also very difficult for the liver to process and has some of the unhealthy fats. Better to get calcium from Coconut milk (evidently also really good for pH-see below), almond milk, hemp milk etc. as well as all the leafy greens you are eating for reasons above.

**EAT FOODS CONTAINING SHORT CHAIN FATTY ACIDS:** Root vegetables, legumes, asparagus, oats, apples. These have lots of nutrients and are easy for the body to process.

**PH IS ALSO A BIGGIE:** The pH scale goes from 0 to 14, with 7 being neutral. Below 7 is acid and above 7 is alkaline. The blood, lymph and cerebral spinal fluid in the human body are designed to be slightly alkaline at a pH of 7.4. The higher your body's pH, the less stress on the liver as well, the less inflammation, less health risks including cancer. There is a growing body of research supporting that at a pH slightly above 7.4, cancer cells become dormant, and at pH 8.5 cancer cells die while healthy cells will live. This has given rise to a variety of treatments based on increasing the alkalinity of the tissues such as vegetarian diet, the drinking of fresh fruit and vegetable juices, and dietary supplementation with alkaline minerals such as calcium, magnesium, potassium, cesium and rubidium.

**STAY AWAY FROM SUGAR:** Turns out cancer cells have 9 times the glucose receptors than other cells have! Better to use Stevia or agave nectar as sweeteners.

**EAT CULTURED FOODS:** These include non-dairy yogurt, sauerkraut, miso, tempeh, kim chi, kombucha. These all have been shown to support immune and healthy cell function.

**WATER!** Try to drink 1/2 your weight in oz./day. Helps detox liver, feed cells, prevent inflammation etc.

**SUPPLEMENTS:**

I'm giving them all to you, but don't feel compelled to take them all. It's an insane list! They have all been shown to provide numerous benefits to liver function, Ph and immune support. Here's what I have learned you can eat or take in the form of supplements to support your health, and fight cancer.

**\*\*Be sure to show this list to your doctor and make sure he or she is on board!**

**-Blue Green Algae**

**-Spirulina**

**-Chlorella**

**-Aloe Juice**

**-L-theanine** (500mg 3 times a day)--the main benefit found in green and white teas

**-Orthomega** (3,000 mg EPA/DHA-4 daily!)

**-Probiotics-**

**-Magnesium glycinate** (120 mg 3 before bed)

**-Melatonin** 3mg (a few studies have found it may help prevent breast cancer and definitely works great as a natural sleep aid!)

**-B6 complex** (250mg a day)

**-Vitamin D3**

- **Modified Citrus Pectin**. It can be expensive but is made from the seeds of citrus fruits and is a powder you mix with water. Pectin in its natural form cannot be absorbed by the body and is considered a type of soluble dietary fiber, whereas modified pectin can be absorbed into the bloodstream. Animal studies and a couple of human studies have found that MCP may inhibit the spread of prostate and breast cancer and melanoma to other organs. Proponents claim that a compound found in MCP strengthens the cancer cell-killing ability of T-cells, cells that also protect against germs and helps protect against the spreading of cancer....

#### **FOR HEALING AFTER SURGERY:**

**Homeopathic Arnica 30C:** 3 pellets under tongue 3 times a day after injury or surgery to reduce swelling, bruising and inflammation

**Vitamin C 10000mg:** 1 capsule 3 times daily

**Zinc picolinate 30 mg:** 1 capsule 3 times daily

(see books to read on changing your diet and nutraceuticals at end)

So there you have it; my tome of cancer free living. May your cancer journey be swift and effective and hopefully inspiring and fun in the end as well.

Much love,

Laura Berman

## Recommended Reading

***Books that will change the way you look at yourself and the world (for the better!)***

Katie, Byron & Mitchell, Stephen. (2003). ***Loving What Is: Four Questions That Can Change Your Life.*** Harmony Books

Brown, Brene (2012) ***Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead.*** Gotham Books.

Chopra, Deepak (1990) ***Quantum Healing: Exploring the Frontiers of Mind/Body Medicine.*** Bantam New Age Books

Rankin, Lissa (2013). ***Mind over Medicine: Scientific Proof You Can Heal Yourself.*** Hay House.

Singer, Michael (2007). *Untethered Soul: The Journey Beyond Yourself*. New Harbinger Publications/ Noetic Books

***Books that will help you heal and change your body!***

Brantley, Timothy (2008) *The Cure: Heal Your Body, Save Your Life*. Wiley Press

Carr, Kris (2007) *Crazy Sexy Cancer Tips*. Skirt Publications

Katz, Rebecca & Edelson, Mat (2009) *The Cancer-Fighting Kitchen: Nourishing, Big-Flavor Recipes for Cancer Treatment and Recovery*. Celestial Arts

Redford Young, Shelley & Young, Robert (2010) *The pH Miracle: Balance Your Diet, Reclaim Your Health*. Grand Central Life and Style.