

Winter 2012

"Sometimes our fate resembles a fruit tree in winter. Who would think that those branches would turn green again and blossom, but we hope it, we know it." — Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



elcome to the Winter 2012 issue of *Life to the Fullest*, the Swedish Cancer Institute's newsletter for survivors, and their caregivers and family members. Winter can be a time of reflection — looking back on the past and planning for the future. This issue is full of resources to help you reflect on your survivorship goals and how you want to accomplish them.

We hope you find this newsletter helpful. We encourage you to print a copy or forward this message to your family and friends who also might find it interesting and informative.

Survivorship and Your Career

Sandra Johnson, MSW, LICSW Oncology Social Work Supervisor

Adjusting to life after cancer is a unique journey for each patient. One key component of that journey is the decision a cancer patient who was previously employed must make regarding the future direction of his or her career. Generally, this decision takes one of three pathways:

- 1. Return to an existing job
- 2. Change careers
- 3. Stop working temporarily or permanently

No matter which path you choose, you will face a variety of hurdles and may benefit from information and assistance that is available online and through classes or personal counseling

Returning to your previous job

Some patients might relish the security of returning to a job where they have friends and an understanding and supportive boss. You may be returning to a familiar job, however, with less energy and a slower thought process. Depending on how much your boss and co-workers know about your medical leave, they may not understand this change in how you approach your responsibilities.

There is no legal requirement for you to share your diagnosis with your employer or co-workers — they just need to know that your doctor has recommended a particular schedule for a certain period of time.

Before initiating communication with your boss and soliciting his or her support for accommodation while you recuperate, read about the Family Medical Leave

Act, Washington's Family Leave Law and other laws describing your rights as a cancer patient. There are a lot of protections to help smooth your way.

Changing careers

For some patients, surviving cancer signals a fresh start — including a new job or an entirely new career. This may be an opportune time to seek the assistance of a counselor who can help guide you through your decision process. Whether you have the necessary



skills for a new career or may need to return to school for additional training, these specially trained individuals can help you assess the types of jobs that are most desirable and that might be most suitable to meet your personal goals.

The counselor can help you prepare for the interview process and determine how to approach the topic of your medical condition, and also give you tips on how to cope with your personal appearance.

You also may want to check out local community colleges and vocational schools, which often offer classes in choosing a career. The state's work source website at www.esd.wa.gov/findajob/jobtraining/improve-skills.php, provides job training resources.

Quitting work

And, finally, some patients may want to leave the work place altogether. This, too, is a step toward a fresh start and may represent a temporary - or permanent decision. Traveling, reconnecting with family members and/or focusing on volunteering may be more important to you after you have survived cancer. Give yourself permission to follow your dreams as long as you are able, but remember that you may experience the same limitations to your energy and thought process that patients returning to the work place experience. If you decide to travel and explore new destinations, you may want to enlist the support of a friend or family member as your travel companion. Check out the Spring 2011 issue of Life to the Fullest for other travel tips. All back issues of the newsletter are available at www.swedish.org/cancer/life-to-the-fullest.

Whatever your decision regarding employment, there are people and resources available to help you along the way. Carefully designing your goals as a survivor and describing how you see work fitting into those goals will help you take the step that is best for you. Changing your mind part way through your journey is perfectly ok, too.

Cancer and Your Career Resources

Website Resources

Access Washington http://access.wa.gov

American Cancer Society www.cancer.org/Treatment/ SurvivorshipDuringandAfterTreatment

Cancer and Careers www.cancerandcareers.org

Cancer Lifeline www.cancerlifeline.org

Hope Navigators

www.hopenavigators.com/managing-matters/after-care-matters/returning-to-work-after-cancer

Lance Armstrong Foundation www.livestrong.org

National Cancer Institute www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/coping/life-aftertreatment/page7

National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship www.canceradvocacy.org

Patient Advocate Foundation www.patientadvocate.org

U.S. Department of Labor www.careeronestop.org

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission www.eeoc.gov/facts/cancer.html

Washington State Family Leave Law www.Ini.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/LeaveBenefits/ FamilyCare/LawsPolicies/FamilyLeave

Working after Cancer www.workingaftercancer.com/

Swedish Survivorship Classes

(Call 206-386-2502 for more information or to register)

- · Life after Treatment
- ABC After Breast Cancer: What's Next?
- ACT After Cancer Treatment What's Next?

Swedish Cancer Support Groups (Call 206-540-0477 for more information)

One-on-One Counseling at Swedish

(Free for Swedish Cancer Institute patients) 206-540-0477

Navigating Online Survivorship Resources

Shannon Marsh, American Cancer Society Resource Navigator

Living with the emotional, physical, spiritual and/ or financial effects of a cancer diagnosis can feel overwhelming. While health-care professionals and community groups work hard to connect survivors with support and resources, survivors also have the option of utilizing online resources on their own time and terms.

Identifying Reliable Sources



Navigating the Internet is no easy task. Search engines can produce a list of great websites interspersed with websites that may contain false and misleading information. Therefore, it is important to carefully consider the source of the information and to discuss this with your health-care provider.

There are several key points to evaluating health information on the Internet:

- A website should make it easy for people to learn who is responsible for the site, the original source of information that is posted on the site and when the information was last updated
- Health-related websites should give information about the medical credentials of the people who prepare or review the material on the site
- Websites that ask users for personal information should explain exactly what the site will and will not do with that information
- E-mail messages should be carefully evaluated.
 The origin of the message and its purpose should be considered.
- The Federal Trade Commission and the U.S.
 Food and Drug Administration are government agencies that help protect consumers from false or misleading health claims on the Internet

Shortcuts to key survivorship websites

The American Cancer Society (www.cancer.org), the National Cancer Institute (www.cancer.gov) and the Lance Armstrong Foundation (www.livestrong.org) provide information and support relating to all aspects of survivorship. There are, however, other sites that tailor their web content to specific issues. The following list of online resources provides a foundation for locating web-based information about survivorship.

After-effects of cancer treatment

www.asco.org (American Society of Clinical Oncology)

Information on late effects of treatment and longterm follow-up care, and questions about late effects survivors can ask their doctors.

www.chemocare.com (Scott Hamilton CARES Initiative)

Search by the chemical name, brand name or acronym of a particular drug. Information includes long-term drug effects on the body, how to manage these effects, suggestions on when to contact your health-care provider and self-care tips. Information on the site is also available in Spanish.

Legal, insurance and financial resources

www.disabilityrightslegalcenter.org (Cancer Legal Resource Center)

Information and resources on cancer-related legal issues, including health insurance, employment, government benefits, estate planning, advanced health care directives, family law and consumer assistance.

www.insurance.wa.gov/shiba (Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner)

This website is a local resource for residents of Washington seeking information about health-care insurance. This office provides free, unbiased counseling about health-care coverage for people of all ages. In addition to the website resources, the office also provides a toll-free HelpLine (800-562-6900).

https://shiptalk.org (The National SHIP [State Health Insurance Assistance Programs] Resource Center)

SHIP provides free one-on-one counseling and assistance via telephone and face-to-face interactive sessions to people with Medicare and their families. The website includes links to local SHIPs for various states.

www.patientadvocate.org (Patient Advocate Foundation)

The foundation provides effective mediation and arbitration services to patients to remove obstacles to healthcare including medical debt crisis, insurance access issues and employment issues for patients with chronic, debilitating and life-threatening illnesses.

http://healthwellfoundation.org (HealthWell Foundation)

The website of a charitable organization that addresses the needs of individuals with insurance who cannot afford their copayments, coinsurance and premiums for important medical treatments.

www.patientservicesinc.org (Patient Services, Inc.)

The website of a non-profit organization that evaluates an individual's financial, medical and insurance situation to determine who is eligible for premium or co-payment assistance. Patient Services Representatives can walk through the online application process, as well as mail appropriate forms and informative literature.

Survival and fear of recurrence

www.apos-society.org (American Psychological Oncology Society)

Information about resources for survivors and their families, including a toll-free help line for patients and their caregivers to help them find psychological resources in their communities.

www.canceradvocacy.org (National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship Cancer Survival Toolbox)

A free, self-learning audio program to help people develop important skills to better meet and understand the challenges of their illness. "Living Beyond Cancer," offers a discussion of issues that are specific to life beyond the diagnosis and initial treatment of cancer, including the emotional aspects of cancer.

www.cancercare.org (CancerCare, Inc.)

Services include counseling, support groups, education workshops, publications, limited financial assistance and resources to address emotions concerns and fear of recurrence.

Peer-to-peer support

www.acor.org (Association of Cancer Online Resources)

ACOR offers access to numerous mailing lists that can provide support, information and a network of communities for everyone affected by cancer.

www.imermanangels.org (Imerman Angels)

Imerman Angels is an organization that carefully matches and individually pairs a survivor with someone who has fought and survived the same type of cancer.

Nutrition and exercise

www.thecancercommunity.org (The Cancer Community)

The website of an international non-profit organization that provides multiple resources for cancer survivors, including guidance on eating the right kinds of foods before, during and after treatment to feel better and stay stronger. The nutritional information provided represents a composite of the current research and recommendations for good overall health.

www.aicr.org (American Institute for Cancer Research)

Information on the website includes a nutrition hotline, healthy recipes for survivors, and the Food for the Fight online video/DVD featuring personal accounts, nutrition information and cooking demonstrations for cancer survivors and caregivers.

Career resources

Please refer to the article "Survivorship and Your Career" in this issue for a list of online resources to help survivors through their career decisions.

There are many other resources relating to specific cancer types, peer-to-peer support groups for patients with the same type of cancer, age of diagnosis, and other cancer-related issues. If you are seeking specific information and need assistance navigating the Internet, please contact American Cancer Society Resource Navigator Shannon Marsh at shannon.marsh@cancer.org or 206-215-6557.

About our Authors

Sandra Johnson, MSW, LISCW, is the oncology social work supervisor at the Swedish Cancer Institute. She has worked at the SCI since December 2006. Sandra provides supportive counseling and support group facilitation, as well as program planning and supervision.

Shannon Marsh left the practice of law to become a patient advocate. She joined the Swedish Cancer Institute as the American Cancer Society patient navigator about two years ago. As a cancer survivor and previous caregiver to several cancer patients and their families, Shannon brings a special appreciation and unique outlook to her responsibilities, which includes connecting patients to American Cancer Society support programs and local and national resources to make the cancer journey more manageable.

Patient Education Classes

Are you getting cabin fever? Think about signing up to take a class — it's a great opportunity to break free from the confines of your winter home and meet new friends while learning something new. Below is a list of some of the scheduled classes, which are made available to assist you, your family and your caregivers in making treatment decisions, managing your symptoms and accessing complementary programs to help your mind, body and spirit to heal.

Registration: Registration is required for all classes unless otherwise indicated. To register, call 206-386-2502 or go online at www.swedish.org/classes.

A winter reminder — if the weather has made driving conditions hazardous, check the classes website to ensure your class has not been cancelled or postponed.

Class Locations: Although most classes are offered at one of the following locations, some are held at local community facilities and sometimes a class is held in several locations on different days. Always confirm the location of the class you want to attend.

Swedish/Ballard Campus:

5300 Tallman Ave. N.W., Seattle

Swedish/Cherry Hill Campus: 500 17th Ave., Seattle

Swedish/Edmonds Campus:

21601 76th Avenue West, Edmonds

Swedish/First Hill Campus: Arnold Building, 1221

Madison Street, A-Floor West, Seattle

Swedish Issaquah Campus:

751 N.E. Blakely Drive, Issaquah

Class Videos: Many classes are videotaped and made available in the Swedish Cancer Institute's Cancer Education Center Loan Library collection after the date of the class. The Cancer Education Center is located at the Swedish Cancer Institute, Arnold Building, 1221 Madison, A-Floor West, Seattle.

Class Schedule

"Busting" Myths about Breast Cancer

Dr. Tanya Wahl from Medical Oncology and Dr. James Spiegel from Radiation Oncology will debunk myths about how to prevent and treat breast cancer. They also will review the latest treatment approaches, with emphasis on chemotherapy, hormonal therapy and radiation therapy. Plenty of time will be available for you to ask questions.

Date: Tuesday, Jan. 31 **Time:** 7-8:30 p.m.

Location: Issaguah Library (10 W. Sunset Way)

Music Therapy for Relaxation

Join music therapist Sha'ari Garfinkel, LICSW, MSW, MT-BC, FAMI, as she provides information on the beneficial effects of music on the body and how to apply music effectively to decrease anxiety and/or depression. Musical and experiential examples will be provided.

Date: Wednesday, Feb. 1

Time: 7-9 p.m.

Location: Sammamish Library (825 228th Ave. NE)

Healing the Whole Person: Body, Mind, and Spirit

Explore Dr. Jeremy Geffen's Seven Levels of Healing. These provide guidelines that can greatly enhance the lives of those living with cancer and those who have completed treatment, as well as their family members.

Date: Thursday, Feb. 9 Time: 10-11:30 a.m.

Location: Swedish/First Hill Campus — Donald A. Tesh,

M.D., Conference Rooms A and B

Acrylic Painting

Join art instructor Tiffany Thiele to make your own work of art in this acrylic painting class. All materials provided and beginners are welcome.

Date: Monday, Feb. 13 **Time:** 10 a.m.-noon

Location: Swedish/First Hill Campus — Donald A. Tesh,

M.D., Conference Rooms A and B

Screening Options for Colon and Rectal Polyps and Cancer

Join Dr. Darren Pollock to learn why screening is important, who should be screened and when screening is appropriate. Dr. Pollock will also talk about the preparations and details of the procedure. Questions are welcome!

Date: Wednesday, Feb. 15

Time: 7-8:30 p.m.

Location: Sammamish Library (825 228th Ave. NE)

Meditation for People with Cancer

Join Swedish physical therapist Carolyn McManus for a two-week session that teaches mindfulness meditation.

Date: Tuesday, Feb. 21 and Tuesday, Feb. 28 (two sessions)

Time: 3:30-5 p.m.

Location: Swedish/First Hill Campus — Donald A. Tesh,

M.D., Conference Rooms A and B

The Anticancer Lifestyle

Explore recent findings on ways to increase your resistance to cancer with health educator Carol Robl. Learn how to create an anticancer lifestyle by eating beneficial foods, protecting yourself from environmental threats, and enhancing your physical and emotional wellbeing.

Date: Tuesday, Feb. 28 **Time:** 7-8:30 p.m.

Location: Lake Hills Library (15590 Lake Hills Blvd.,

Bellevue)

Music Therapy for Creativity and Self Expression

You don't need to be a musician to play music! This class, led by Sha'ari Garfinkel, LICSW, MSW, MT-BC, FAMI, will provide simple ways to add music to your daily life, such as keeping a musical journal through songwriting, connecting with others through improvisation and consciously using music to calm you, as well as give you energy.

Date: Wednesday, Feb. 29

Time: 6-8 p.m.

Location: Swedish/First Hill Campus — Donald A. Tesh,

M.D., Conference Rooms A and B

Ongoing/Multi-Session Classes for Cancer Survivors

Life after Treatment

The completion of cancer treatment offers opportunities for personal growth and new challenges. Join health educator Carol Robl to explore and share personal experiences. This course is three sessions. Please call 206-386-2502 to register for the next available session.

The Anticancer Lifestyle

Explore recent findings on ways to increase your resistance to cancer with health educator Carol Robl. Learn how to create an anti-cancer lifestyle by eating beneficial foods, protecting yourself from environmental threats, and enhancing your physical and emotional wellbeing. Please call 206-386-2502 to register for the next available session.

ABC - After Breast Cancer: What's Next?

This eight-week group session is for women who are preparing to live life after breast cancer treatment. The group meets on Wednesdays, January through October. Advance registration is required for this group. Please call 206-386-2502 to register. 2012 sessions include:

Swedish/First Hill (Wednesdays, 4:30-6 p.m.)

• Jan. 11-Feb. 29

March 21-May 9

Sept. 26-Nov. 14

Swedish/Edmonds (Thursdays, 4:30-6 p.m.)

• Jan. 12-March 1

March 22-May 10

Sept. 27-Nov. 15

ACT — After Cancer Treatment: What's Next?

ACT is an eight-week group session for all patients who are preparing to live life after cancer treatment. For more information, please call 206-386-2502. The 2012 sessions includes:

Swedish/First Hill (Tuesdays, 4:30-6 p.m.)

- Jan. 10-Feb. 28
- March 20-May 8
- July 10-Aug. 28
- Sept. 25-Nov. 13

Art Therapy: An Approach for Healing

These ongoing weekly sessions are by appointment only at Swedish/First Hill, A-floor West, Cancer Education Center. Art therapy is a confidential, supportive and individualized experience for visually and verbally examining health issues through self-exploration. Prior art experience is not a requirement. Please call 206-386-3200.

Knit for Life™

This network of volunteers uses knitting as a healing experience to enhance the lives of cancer



patients, and their families and caregivers during treatment and recovery. It provides a supportive environment for beginning and experienced knitters.

All materials are provided. The group meets Mondays from 6 to 8 p.m. near the hospital lobby Starbucks at Swedish/Cherry Hill, and on Thursdays from 1 to 3 p.m. on the first floor of the Swedish Cancer Institute at Swedish/First Hill. So the organizers can ensure they have the appropriate materials, please register by calling 206-386-3200.

Support Groups

The Swedish Cancer Institute offers a variety of support groups that provide an opportunity to meet with others having experiences similar to your own. An experienced Swedish Cancer Institute support group facilitator oversees each group. These gatherings are open to all people in the community, regardless of where they have received their cancer diagnosis or treatment. Unless otherwise noted, please call 206-540-0477 for more information, including locations and directions.

Art Therapy Open Studio Group

For people with cancer and the loved ones who support them. Haven't played with art supplies since elementary school? That's okay. Join us and experience the expressive, healing nature of art in a confidential and supportive group setting. A variety of art materials will be provided. No art



experience or confidence required. Please grop in:
Meets Tuesdays, from 1 to 3 p.m., at Swedish/First
Hill, A-Floor West, Conference Room C.

Caregivers Support Group

A drop-in group for caregivers. Meets weekly on Thursdays, from 1:30 to 3 p.m.

Couples and Cancer

A six-week group for couples confronting the chal¬lenges of cancer together. Meets on Tuesdays, from 4:30 to 6 p.m., at Swedish Ballard. Advanced registration is required for this support group. Please call 206-405-6547 to register.

Gynecological Cancers Support Group

A group for women with gynecological cancers. Meets weekly on Tuesdays, from 10:30 a.m. to noon.

Linking the Cancer Connection

This support group meets the first and third Tuesday of each month, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m., at the Swedish/Issaquah campus. Please call 206-540-0477 for location.

Goals for the group:

- Encourage patients to connect with one another along the common ties of cancer
- Establish a small, closely knit community of support for local patients and families
- Learn from other patients about their cancer journeys and new and different coping strategies

Sample topics for discussions:

- · Method of self-care
- · Home cooking and cancer care
- Social life and cancer
- Incorporating cancer into the family dynamic
- Maintaining independence and individuality while accepting the support of others

For additional information please contact Emma Hughes, M.S., LMFTA, at 206-416-5574 or emma.hughes@ swedish.org, or Meghan Wilkins, M.S. candidate, at 425-313-4224 or meghan.wilkins@swedish.org.

Living with Cancer Support Group

A support group for those living with any type of cancer. Meets weekly on Thursdays, from 1:30 to 3 p.m.

Oral and Head & Neck Cancer Support

Support for People with Oral and Head and Neck Cancer, Inc. (SPOHNC), hosts monthly meetings to offer information, support and encouragement to newly diagnosed oral and head and neck cancer patients, survivors, family members and friends. The group meets the third Thursday of each month, from 6-7:30 p.m., in the 1 East Conference Room at Swedish/First Hill, 747 Broadway in Seattle. SPOHNC is a patient-directed, self-help organization that was founded by an oral cancer survivor. It is a nonprofit organization dedicated to meeting the emotional, physical and humanistic needs of patients and their caregivers. For information, please contact Joanne Fenn at 206-215-1770 or joanne.fenn@swedish.org, or Susan Vetto, R.N., B.C., at 206-341-1720 or susan.vetto@vmmc.org.

Prostate Cancer Educational Support Group

Meets the third Thursday of the month, from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., in the Swedish Cancer Institute A-floor West. For more information, please call prostate cancer survivor Leo Ward at 425-957-7440.

Share the News and Your Ideas

We hope you have enjoyed this issue of *Life to the Fullest* and that you will consider sharing it with your friends and family members. Anyone can join our mailing list by sending his or her name and e-mail address to full.life@swedish.org.

We also encourage you to let us know about topics you would like us to include in future issues or questions you would like answered by our experts at the Swedish Cancer Institute. Send your ideas and questions to full.life@swedish.org.