



Touch of Courage

. Connection

Beyond Pink TEAM

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Resilience

By Chaplain Gloria Strickert, BCC

When times of tragedy or crisis come into our lives we become frightened, and wonder how we will survive. How we will go on? What will happen? As a chaplain I visit people every day who face new diagnosis, chronic debilitating conditions, and broken relationships, loss of meaningful work, grief and death. One of the things I try to help people do is to recall a time in their life when they experienced a similarly difficult time of crisis or struggle. I invite them to revisit that time and reflect on what it was that helped them cope. What gave them the strength, courage, help or comfort that they needed? Where did it come from?

We all have external and internal resources we access every day, often without much awareness. For example, if your car breaks down and you need to pick up your child at school you might call a friend or neighbor to provide a ride. These people are external resources. Many people name the loving support of family, friends and faith community as their primary external resources. For others it might be a pet, nature, exercise, music, art or a hobby. Your external resources in a sense provide the links to your internal resources. Internal resources are what you carry inside of you. What makes you, YOU. Your perception of life and the world around you, and what guides your approach and interaction with others, life and the world. These internal resources

include your morals and values, belief system, attitudes, personality traits etc. They are like the roots of the tree that keep you nourished and anchored in the earth. They are the origins of strength and hope, love and compassion, resilience and persistence, optimism, determination, perseverance, "grit" and personal strength. Once a person can identify the internal resource(s) they possess, they can once again access them and use them like tools to make it through the current crisis.

I have been a chaplain to persons with cancer for more than a decade and I often comment that I continue to learn from each of them. This summer when the disaster of flood hit my home and my life, I became acutely aware of the lessons I have been taught by cancer patients and their loved ones. I saw increasing parallels in my experiences and yours. Like cancer, floods can come with or without warning and they can be more aggressive and extensive than expected. The clean-up can be relatively small and it can be immense. The clean-up and recovery from a flood, like chemo and radiation treatments, can take months to years. The work of both clean-up and treatment leave your body aching and fatigued and the whole experience strikes with a hard blow to your spirit. One day while taking a break I sat on my front steps looked around me and asked myself if I had the strength to do it all. My

questioning took me back to several other long times of change, crisis and uncertainty in my life. In my reflection I revisited the internal strengths I possess with new awareness and appreciation.

I am a resilient, persistent woman! It is who I am by nature, nurture and the grace of God. My parents both lived with cancer for many years. Their resilience and fortitude shaped and nurtured mine. Their faith, wisdom, acceptance and peace strengthened and sustained me. I heard my mother say "This too shall end", one of her favorite sayings that got us as children to look beyond the present distress. I heard the voice of God assuring me of God's deep love and care for me "I will never leave you or forsake you", "You are precious in my sight...and I love you". Then I recalled the words of Mother Theresa of Calcutta "I know God doesn't give you more than you can handle...I just wish God didn't have so much faith in me!" I smiled, laughed inside and went back to work with fresh air in my lungs, the warmth of the sun on my skin and love surrounding me, strengthening me and sustaining me.

It is my prayer that you, too, will be able to reflect on your inner resources, find love, strength, support and hope for your journey with cancer and have a good laugh along the way!

Spring Inspiration!
by Cindy Harris

Is it just me or is everyone seeing green grass and flowers when they shut their eyes?! Well, it's time to get things ready for the wonder thing coming that we call SPRING. Remember the corn gluten? Time to

get that on. It needs to be on before the broad leaf weeds germinate. I hope some of you already have it on by the first of April, but if not, get to it right away. Elevators usually have it in large bags. For more information on the gluten go to www.gluteniastate.edu.

We all will be starting our spring cleaning soon. Vinegar and peroxide will kill more germs than most of the commercial cleaners and are so much safer. Use them 50/50 with water or full strength. If you want a different smell, go to the health stores and get natural oils to add whatever scent you want. When you are cleaning out the basement or the garage, try not to fill up the landfill with things that stay forever. Goodwill, St. Vincent DePaul and other places needing donations are a great place to take things you no longer can use. Did you know that Goodwill can sell the old shoes that aren't even wearable to a place that recycles them? Even "worst-shape" clothes are sold to companies that recycle them.



When you do have something that needs getting rid of but can't be sold, go to www://earth911.com. Put in the item you want to get rid of and your zip code and you'll find out where to take it. Keep that garbage as empty as possible. When we talk about Spring green, let's really mean GREEN. Our health depends upon it!

Good Friends
by Dee Hughes

Paula Pecenka has some pretty great friends in her community. Paula was diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 25. At that time, her friends and community had a fund raiser to help with her medical expenses. It has now been 5 years since she was diagnosed, and they wanted to do something for her again.



Paula receives the Dew Drop donation

On November 8, 2008, Paula's friends and the Dew Drop proprietors, Shelby McNally and Shannon Hames, held a chili supper, bake sale and raffle at the Dew Drop in Gilbertville. All the proceeds from the event, more than \$1,400, was donated to the Beyond Pink TEAM.

Paula is an active member of the Beyond Pink TEAM and is involved with the Young Survivors group. Her friends wanted to honor her work for others with breast cancer and raise awareness by doing this fund raiser. Thanks to everyone who participated in this fun event.

Printing donated by:
**Beyond Pink
TEAM**

**National Breast Cancer Coalition Fund
Awards Beyond Pink TEAM an
Advocacy in Action Grant
Christine Carpenter
Beyond Pink TEAM**

Beyond Pink TEAM is one of 20 organizations across the U.S. receiving an Advocacy in Action grant from the National Breast Cancer Coalition Fund (NBCCF). The winners, all member organizations of the National Breast Cancer Coalition, were selected by a competitive application process to assist them in forwarding advocacy locally. Each group received \$5,000.

“I congratulate Beyond Pink TEAM for this award and for its commitment to advancing NBCC’s priorities and its goal of eradicating breast cancer,” said Fran Visco, president of NBCCF. “The public policy work we all do is intense, complex, and vital. I am confident that Beyond Pink TEAM will use this grant to expand advocacy in the Cedar Valley and move beyond awareness to work for systemic change.”

These awards, which are generously funded by the Breast Cancer Fund of National Philanthropic Trust, will be utilized by Beyond Pink TEAM to fund four scholarships to send local breast cancer advocates to the National Breast Cancer Coalition’s Advocacy Conference in Washington, DC May 2-5, 2009.

The National Breast Cancer Coalition is a grassroots membership organization dedicated to ending breast cancer through the power of action and advocacy. Along with the National Breast Cancer Coalition Fund, its research and education arm, NBCC’s main goals are: to promote research into the cause of, and optimal preventive and treatment interventions for, breast cancer through increased federal funding, fostering of innovation and collaborative approaches, and improved accountability; to improve access to quality breast cancer care for all women, from screening through diagnosis, treatment and care, particularly for the underserved and uninsured, through legislation and change in systems of delivery of health care; and to educate and empower women and men as advocates, increasing the involvement and influence of those living with breast cancer and other breast cancer activists wherever and whenever breast cancer decisions are made.

Please visit www.StopBreastCancer.org for more information.

Beyond Pink TEAM is a non-profit organization whose mission is to increase cancer awareness throughout the Cedar Valley, thereby empowering people to make informed health care choices. Beyond Pink TEAM provides education, support, free and low-cost screening, and advocacy for cancer prevention. Members include representatives from health care organizations, public health, local businesses, and consumers.

Please visit www.cedarvalleybreastcancer.org for more information.

**Honoring Clara Dutcher
by Dee Hughes**

Clara Dutcher was recognized as the Member of the Year by the Beyond Pink TEAM at their annual luncheon in October 2008. Clara was selected for this honor for the many years she has dedicated to the *Touch of Courage* breast cancer support group.



Clara Dutcher with Dawn Colbert at the October 2008 annual luncheon

Clara has been faithful in attending support group meetings, has provided rides for members with no transportation and always gives a listening ear. She gets to know the new members and often makes follow up calls. She is a loving, caring, compassionate woman who is genuinely concerned for all the support group members she has had an opportunity to meet.

Thank you to Clara and all support group members for being there for one another. You are strong and amazing women.

Relay for Life by Jill Roberts

Relay for Life is coming upon us quickly. There is still time to join the cause.

Black Hawk County Relay for life will be held once again at the beautiful Hawkeye Community College Campus on June 19 with kick off at 5:00 pm. This event is held annually to raise money for the American Cancer Society. Once again, they will have the team-themed campsites, the children's activities area and music provided by local radio stations.

The survivors' dinner and walk is a big part of the relay. If you would like to be involved in this memorable event please contact the American Cancer Society at 272-2880 for more details.



Relay for Life 2008

Save the Date!

- April 6** 6:30 Reception/7:00 Program
Sandra Steingraber, PhD.
UNI Center for Energy and Environment Health
- April 21** 4:30-7:00 p.m.
Young Suvivors Event
AEA 267 Cedar Falls
2101 Kimball Ave, W'loo
- June 19** Starts at 5:30 p.m.
Relay For Life
Hawkeye Community College

Young Survivors Event by Dee Hughes

The next event for young women living with cancer is coming up. It will be Tuesday, April 21 at the Area Education Agency 267, 3712 Cedar Heights Drive in Cedar Falls.

Registration and refreshments will start at 4:30 p.m., with discussion tables available from 5:00-6:00 p.m. At 6:00 p.m, Jeanne Mullen, social worker for Covenant Cancer Treatment Center, will speak on "Mommy's Got Cancer." From 6:30 – 7:00 p.m. there will be sharing time. This can be a one-on-one, or return to a discussion table.

This event is open to any woman living with cancer, not just breast cancer. No pre-registration required. We know schedules are busy, so feel free to come and go as your schedule allows. Some of the refreshments will be donated by Panera Bread Bakery-Café.

You may contact Paula Pecenka with any questions at 319-230-9972.

Young Cancer Survivors on Facebook! by Andrea Wubbena

We now have a group set up on Facebook where the Young Cancer Survivors of the Cedar Valley can "mingle".

Our page will contain the current postings of our upcoming events and a place for you to find other survivors. Check us out, post on the wall – and become a member of the group for the most up-to-date info about Young Cancer Survivors.

To find us in the search bar on Facebook, just type Young Cancer Survivors and look for the Waterloo, IA group. Once you are on our page, click "join group" and you are in!

See you in cyber space!



A Survivor's Story by Cynthia Garcia

One morning while getting dressed, I had an itch on my left breast. This itch turned out to be a lump. I thought, "this can't be anything." I had a cyst drained in the same spot eight years previously in Costa Rica where we were living. My immediate response was I'm 59 years old, my mother is living with me and my husband for two years with severe Alzheimer's and I don't have time for this!

My husband, Johnny, made an appointment that day with our doctor. I then had a mammogram. In about two week's time, I had a biopsy, lumpectomy and met with the oncologist. Everything went very fast. I am grateful it happened that way because I know myself. I would have put everything off. I didn't have time, or so I thought.

My husband and I are very fortunate that he was able to stop working. He now became my house-husband. He took control of getting respite care for my mother and enrolling her in an adult day care facility. He also took care of everything in the house. We did end up with white clothes turning blue and a few strange meals! For the first time in my adult life, however, someone was taking care of me. He has gone to every doctor appointment, chemotherapy and radiation treatment. He truly is my rock.

Johnny shaved his head when I had the lumpectomy. He wanted to show his support that I wouldn't be bald alone. The most

traumatic moment was when he shaved my head. I had waist length blonde hair that he loved and after starting chemo I had my hair cut very short. Over a three-day weekend, my hair began to fall out and I couldn't wait to go to the beauty shop. Johnny shaved designs, gave me a Mohawk, all with a lot of pictures, laughter and tears – mainly from him. My hair has begun to grow back now, but I was comfortable with my bald head. I only wore my wigs a few times because I was too hot. At home I went bald and when going out I wore a hat. My husband let his hair grow back because winter was coming and his head was freezing.

I consider myself very fortunate. I didn't have complications that others had during my chemo, only some bone pain and a bit of neuropathy in my feet. My radiation treatments were a breeze. We just kept saying how blessed we were not to have the complications, pain and emotional stress that some have.

We are now attending exercise classes and again, I can think of a million reasons why I can't go. My husband can work out while I'm there, so with more laughter, he has asked me to stay longer so he can stay longer.

I've gotten through this with a lot of love and laughter from my husband. We have always kept a positive attitude and I know that is what has gotten me through to this point - - a positive attitude, along with all the support and care from the medical staff and everyone involved from the beginning until now.

Touch of Courage Breast Cancer Support Group

The Touch of Courage Breast Cancer Support Group continues to meet on the first Monday of every month at the **Kimball Ridge Center on 2101 Kimball Avenue** at 1:30 p.m. In the next few months, the group will meet on April 6, May 4 and June 1.

The Support Group invites any woman or man who is dealing with breast cancer to attend the support group meetings. Spouses and significant others are also welcome.

KWWL's Buddy Check 7 By Gabbi DeWitt

On the 7th of each month, KWWL-TV features Buddy Check as a reminder for all women to do their monthly breast self examinations and have annual mammograms. They also have a story related to breast cancer.

On April 7, the Beyond Pink TEAM will be featured on Buddy Check 7. We appreciate the publicity, as we want everyone in the Cedar Valley to know who we are, what we do, and that we can be a resource in a variety of ways. The entire Cedar Valley is doing a lot to help women and men living with breast cancer, and it is wonderful to have KWWL informing their viewers of all that is being done.

Keep watching KWWL news, and you may see more stories featuring the Beyond Pink TEAM and our activities.

Iowa Breast Cancer Edu-Action

Iowa Breast Cancer Edu-Action includes breast cancer survivors and their supporters. We are members of the Beyond Pink TEAM. **Our mission** is to: take Action, Educate, Advocate, Make a difference (TEAM).

What We've Done

For the last ten years we have:

- ❖ Visited with Iowa congressmen to secure their commitment to breast cancer research.
- ❖ Participated in email and phone call campaigns to Congress to secure guaranteed access to quality care for all.
- ❖ Created the Iowa Breast Cancer Resource Guide, secured funding, and distributed 9000+ free copies
- ❖ Translated the ACS Guide "For Women Facing Breast Cancer" into Serbo-Croatian for the Bosnians in Iowa

We Meet:

When: 6:30 p.m. on the 4th Thursday of each month, except November when we meet the 3rd Thursday, and December when we do not meet.

Where: UNI Center for Energy and Environmental Education on the UNI Campus at the corner of Campus Street and Jennings Drive in Cedar Falls.

Need more Information?

Email or call:

Christine.carpenter@cfu.net
(319) 266-0194

Support and Rehabilitation Programs

Care and Share	Support group for anyone dealing with cancer. Meets the 1 st Tuesday of every month at 1:30 p.m.
Touch of Courage	Breast cancer support group. Meets the 1 st Monday of every month at 1:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.
Reach to Recovery	Provides information and support for women who are faced with breast cancer. Visits available before and after surgery.
Look Good...Feel Better	Consultation with a trained cosmetologist to help a cancer patient feel more comfortable with the physical changes that occur during treatment.

For more information call the American Cancer Society at 319-272-2880 or 888-266-2064.

Resources Available:

Information, support, counseling, and educational materials are available from the following:

Allen College of Nursing Library and Media Center 1825 Logan Avenue Waterloo, IA 50703 (319) 235-2005	American Cancer Society 2101 Kimball Avenue, Suite 130 Waterloo, IA 50702 319-272-2880 or 888-266-2064 1-800-ACS-2345 (available 24 hrs)
Breast Care Center at United Medical Park 1753 West Ridgeway Waterloo, IA 50701 319-833-6100	Covenant Cancer Treatment Center 200 E. Ridgeway Avenue Waterloo, IA 50702 319-272-2800 Include Cancer Information Library
National Cancer Institute 1-800-4CANCER	National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship 1-505-764-9956
National Lymphedema Network 1-415-923-3680	Y-Me 1-800-986-8228
Covenant Lymphedema Therapy 319-272-7894	Physical Therapy Partners Lymphedema Therapy 319-233-6995

Connect with us...

A donation for Touch of Courage is both needed and appreciated. All donations go to support the services of the Cedar Valley Cancer Committee and are tax deductible.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

\$ _____ amount of donation

General Donation Newsletter Donation NBCC Scholarship Fund

Make checks payable to the Cedar Valley Cancer Committee and send to 1607 Heath Street, Waterloo, IA 50703