

WHEN LIFE GOES SIDEWAYS

“I was 30 years old, working in higher education, saving for my first home, and applying for graduate school. Then I was diagnosed with cancer and my whole life went sideways in ways I never could have imagined.”

Melissa Prichard, cancer survivor, opened her presentation to 350 guests at Cancer Lifeline’s “Breakfast with Friends” at The Westin on March 9th with these prophetic words.

Cancer isn’t welcome at any stage of life, but the struggles and difficulties that come with a diagnosis as a young person who is just launching their career and finding their personal independence is devastating. It has lasting repercussions not only to their health but to their life’s trajectory. Five years after her diagnosis, Melissa admits that many of her personal and career goals are on hold as she continues to focus on her health and paying off the debt from her cancer treatment.

Cancer Lifeline’s Young Adult Support Group which Melissa helped launch in 2015, is one of the limited support resources available to cancer patients aged 20-35 in our community. “I never saw another person my age on the chemo ward” states Melissa. “It was incredibly isolating; having that support community at Cancer Lifeline meant the world to me.”



The Young Adult Support Group is just one of over 800 classes and groups which are funded in part through Cancer Lifeline’s annual Breakfast with Friends event.

Honorary Chairperson, Jeannie Nordstrom reinforced Melissa’s story calling Cancer Lifeline a “safe haven” for people living with cancer. “Wouldn’t it be wonderful if every single person struggling with cancer had access to the information, emotional support, and financial resources they needed to live their best possible life?” asked Nordstrom of those attending the Breakfast. “That’s what this incredible organization does every day.” Breakfast with Friends raised almost \$200,000 to support Cancer Lifeline programs in 2017.

For more information on classes and support groups or to make a donation, go to www.cancerlifeline.org or call 206.297.2100.

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SUPPORT BLOSSOMS FOR CANCER PATIENTS



Frequently on a Wednesday afternoon at the Dorothy O'Brien Center you will find a dozen or more cancer patients and survivors gathered around a table piled high with flowers and greenery. Reverently they select a flower, discovering and appreciating the shape, line and form of each stem and bud while the vision of an arrangement slowly takes shape. This is an Ikebana class facilitated by volunteer Nobuko Relnick.

Nobuko Relnick grew up in a traditional Japanese household where she was taught to cook, sew, conduct traditional tea ceremonies and practice Ikebana --- the Japanese art of flower arranging. Since her university days, she has been perfecting her craft and sharing this 7th century structured art form with people in Japan and the United States, including 15 years at Cancer Lifeline.

Nobuko credits her experience at Cancer Lifeline with giving her the strength and skills she needed to support her mother, a 25 year cancer survivor, and in 2008 to accept her own diagnosis of thyroid cancer. "Cancer can affect anyone but through this class and the wisdom of my students I found a lifesaving network of support."

More than simply putting flowers in a container, Nobuko teaches that Ikebana is a disciplined art form in which nature and humanity are brought together. The artist's intention behind each arrangement is shown through color combinations, natural shapes, graceful lines, and the implied meaning of the arrangement. Almost spiritual in nature, Ikebana teaches patience and tolerance of differences, not only in nature, but also among people and within one's own body. As the student begins to identify with the beauty of the art form, they experience relaxation and comfort for their mind, body, and soul.

"Art is a very positive thing and these classes allow people experiencing cancer to think more positively and to remember that they are not alone," states Nobuko. "As long as there are students and I can carry my buckets of materials, I will teach this class."

Nobuko offers classes every quarter at Cancer Lifeline. To learn more about Nobuko Relnick and her many classes go to: <http://www.sogetsukebana.com>.

Let's GiveBIG Again

The Seattle Foundation's annual GiveBIG event is only a few weeks away, Wednesday May 10th. Last year over 130 friends and supporters like you contributed to Cancer Lifeline nearly \$25,000 online in just a few short hours. Gifts ranged from \$5 to \$5,000 but every dollar was important to someone with cancer who was seeking understanding, acceptance, and support during perhaps the most difficult time of their life.

At Cancer Lifeline your donation accomplishes more. Each \$200 contribution allows one cancer patient to receive free support services for an entire year! Through professionally facilitated support groups, education, referrals, and financial assistance, Cancer Lifeline helps nearly 8,000 individuals impacted by cancer overcome the emotional side effects of a devastating disease.

Put May 10th on your calendar. You won't want to miss the opportunity to make a big difference in a cancer survivor's life.

MORE THAN EVER.



THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN TREATMENT AND SUPPORT

There is more to surviving cancer than treatment. The emotional stress of living with a diagnosis of cancer, the side effects of treatment, the fear of recurrence, and the stress imposed by living with daily illness can create debilitating psychological concerns for patients, family members, and caregivers. These impairments can also lead to social problems, such as the inability to work or fulfill other roles such as parenting or maintaining friendships. Like falling dominoes, being unable to continue to work at your pre-cancer level often leads to financial distress and worries over paying bills or feeding one's family. In the end, many people experiencing cancer report feeling guilty, out of control, angry, sad, confused, and fearful for the future (Stanton et al., 2001).

Improving quality of life by giving individuals living with cancer an opportunity to express and address these psychological and social factors has been Cancer Lifeline's mission for 43 years. Long before research confirmed the importance of cancer support services, Cancer Lifeline has addressed the emotional aspects of cancer through education, nutrition & movement classes, support groups, creative expression, and family meetings --- making a difference in the lives of nearly 8,000 men and women each year. "Cancer patients and caregivers need the knowledge, skills, and abilities to manage the psychosocial effects of cancer and function at their highest possible level. When these resources are not available, the ability to manage one's illness and health is decreased." (NCI, 2014)

A cancer diagnosis may also create additional stress at home and in the work place. The stress felt by family members and caregivers may interfere with their ability to provide the emotional or logistical support patients need. This can exacerbate the patient's stress and lead to the cascading consequences and less than optimal treatment outcomes. (Lederberg, 1998). Family Meetings, Share-the-Care, and Workplace Consults are all ways that Cancer Lifeline can provide support and information to caregivers and potentially improve treatment outcomes.

For a complete listing of programs for patients, family members, and caregivers go online or call 206.297.2100 for the new program catalog, May through August 2017.

"Psychological and social aspects of life, which have been collectively called psychosocial factors, have long been known to play an influential role in shaping physical health and disease."



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IT'S COMING

Cancer Lifeline's new Eastside event!

Join us for cocktails, appetizers, live music
Performances by cancer survivor, Kile Jackson and The Edsels
And
Humorist, author and survivor, Terri Tate

SAVE THE DATE



Friday, June 23rd
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Bellevue Botanical Gardens

Watch your mailbox for your invitation.

