



at Lancaster Cancer Center
A History of Caring

Warning...laughter may be hazardous to your illness....

There's not a lot that's funny about cancer and no one claims that laughter can cure cancer, but it certainly can reduce stress and enhance our quality of life and increase our sense of well-being.

Humor does have a physical effect because it has been proven to stimulate many systems of the body including the circulatory and immune systems. It can increase breathing, increase oxygen use, short term changes in hormones and certain neurons.

The earliest mention of the health benefits of humor is in the *Book of Proverbs* in the *Bible*, which dates back 2,000 years. In the early thirteenth century surgeons used humor to distract patients from the pain.

In modern times Norman Cousins is said to have cured his unknown illness with a regiment of vitamins and laughter induced by Marx Brothers films. "I made the joyous discovery that ten minutes of genuine belly laughter had an anesthetic effect and would give me at least two hours of pain-free sleep," he reported. "When the pain-killing effect of the laughter wore off, we would switch on the motion picture projector again and, not infrequently, it would lead to another pain-free interval." One of his famous quotations is "Laughter is inner jogging."

Laughter can help you feel better about yourself, the world around you and the hand you have been dealt. Laughter can be a diversion; when we laugh other thoughts cannot come to mind. By incorporating laughter therapy sessions into your

medical treatment we can develop the positive thinking and happy feelings that support the healing process.

It's alright if a patient can't find anything to genuinely laugh about, because laughter therapy is forced laughter...and it works!

Doctors urge family and friends of their patients to participate in laughter and humor therapy together. After all, laughter is contagious..."the more the merrier!" As laughter develops in a social situation fear is reduced and relaxation promoted.

We know that physical changes can take place as a patient engages in laughter therapy. The brain releases endorphins which are natural:

- ◆ Pain killers
- ◆ Mood enhancers
- ◆ Energy boosters

Laughter therapy can help us:

- ◆ Boost the immune system
- ◆ Boost the circulatory system
- ◆ Enhance oxygen intake
- ◆ Stimulate the heart and lungs
- ◆ Relax muscles throughout the body
- ◆ Ease digestion/soothes stomach aches
- ◆ Improve mental functions (alertness, memory, creativity)
- ◆ Balance blood pressure
- ◆ Improve sleep

Of course you can devise your own form of humor therapy: sit-coms, funny videos, books, u-Tube, listen to children play, go to a karaoke night, or throw a comedy movie night. Laughter can be your own best medicine! Remember:

He who laughs, lasts!

Mary Pettibone Poole

Charlotte DeGreen

As you know, *The Healing Journey* is a not-for-profit program generously supported by your contributions. In order to cut expenses, we will not be mailing the *Newsletter* unless you specifically request that we do so by leaving your name, address and e-mail on the list in the office, call 291-1313, Opt. 0 or e-mail: candydeg@aol.com. The *Spring Newsletter* will be easily accessed on the LCC website: www.lancastercancercenter.com

Our Vision

The diagnosis of cancer is a challenge not only to the physical body, but also to the mind and spirit of patients and their loved ones. As a result, patients and family members need to receive not only the most comprehensive medical care, but emotional and spiritual support as well. In fact, treatment is greatly enhanced has the patient becomes an integral part of the healing process.

At Lancaster Cancer Center our vision is to provide meticulous, uncompromising, medical oncology care as well as integrative support services and educational programs to meet the needs of our patients. We commit to honor those we have the privilege of serving in both body and spirit. We at the Lancaster Cancer Center are proud of our History of Caring.

Editor:

Charlotte DeGreen





Laughter Club !

First Thursday of every month, 5:30 to 6:30 P.M. at LCC

Elaine Boltz, a certified laughter leader, leads us each month in a form of laughter therapy, Laughter Club. She strives to help us use and enjoy playful laughter as a tool for healing. Our Club is not based on humor or jokes, but rather on forced or "fake" laughter as a form of physical exercise. Those who are new to the group may feel awkward at first, but the benefits soon become clear. As we laugh, the brain releases endorphins which serve as the body's natural energy-boosters, painkillers and mood enhancers. We find that after an hour of Laughter Club our vitality is increased, our oxygen level higher, our pain reduced remarkably, and our thoughts have gone beyond our cancer to a pleasant place. Laughter Club is open to all, cancer survivors, caregivers and any who want to receive the benefits of laughter. Spread the word. Bring a friend. You will be so glad that you did!

Websites of Interest on Humor Therapy:

- ◆ <http://www.cancer.org/Treatment/TreatmentsandSideEffects/ComplementaryandAlternativeMedicine/MindBodyandSpirit/humor-therapy>
- ◆ <http://worldlaughtertour.com/>
- ◆ <http://www.everydayhealth.com/cancer/humor-therapy-and-cancer.aspx>
- ◆ <http://www.emaxhealth.com/1020/51/27003/cancer-treatment-enhanced-through-laughter.html>
- ◆ <http://www.giggleboxes.org/> (website for children with cancer)

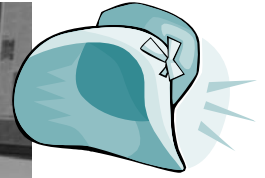
Liz Smedley has shared a bit of humor with us:

"After my double mastectomy, I was slowly getting acquainted with my expensive prosthetics. Wearing them as I exercised was definitely problematic, so in the middle of August, mowing my elderly sister's yard with them on was daunting. I changed into a large t-shirt and I left them on my bed as I headed out. After my "hour in the sun", I went in to shower and discovered that "the girls" were no longer where I had left them! Perhaps I was mistaken? I went downstairs and asked my husband if he had seen them.

"Perhaps that's what Misty (our Schnauzer puppy) has been running around with this past hour?" he chuckled.

Sure enough, there they (and the dog) were on our kitchen floor....not much worse for the wear, although I'm probably the only woman with teeth marks on "the girls". But with that bit of humor my breast cancer did not seem as frightening!

The most wasted of all days is one without laughter" ...e.e. cummings



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Pink Hat Club !

Last Wednesday of each month, noon at The Pressroom

This fantastic group of cancer survivors meets every month for lunch and fun. We began as a support group and became life-long friends. There is no agenda when we meet; the only expectations are that we treat each other kindly. We enjoy talking about everything, not just our cancers. We celebrate each others' joyful moments and encourage our friends in times of need. We speak of grandchildren, good books, politics (sometimes), and how we might "give back" to other cancer survivors. We welcome women who survive any type of cancer and look forward to meeting new members each month. Parking at The Pressroom is free in the Vine St. Garage.

If you have any questions, contact Candy DeGreen at candydeg@aol.com or 717-299-4777

Lily Oncology on Canvas

Art Competition



Lancaster Cancer Center is no stranger to the Lily Oncology on Canvas Art Competition. For years now we have arranged for some of these beautiful and thought-provoking artworks to be exhibited both in the community and in the Center. Accompanying every piece is a narrative of the artist's experience with cancer, usually a life-changing occurrence. We would be so proud if one of our patients or his or her caregiver submitted one piece of artwork in any one of five different genres (watercolor, oil, pastel, photography and mixed media). Express your cancer journey in your own unique way. You need not be a professional artists or writer—it's the sharing of your story that is important.

You must register as soon possible, but the deadline for registration is April 30, 2012; submissions must be in by June 29, 2012

Go to: www.lilyoncologyoncanvas.com

Mark Your Calendars

Our *Friends for the Journey* have planned great fun for you!



Thursday, March 15th

St. Patrick's Day Party

Come to our Irish celebration.

Wear green all day!

May the luck of the Irish be with you!

Wednesday, April 4th

Welcome Spring!

Celebrate Spring, its fantastic weather, flowers and yummy food like peanut butter eggs!! Wear "happy" clothing!



Important Website for You

<http://secure.seemychart.com>



This is an important website which will allow you to view your electronically recorded medical records. Lancaster Cancer

Center has been using EMR's for awhile now, and we are happy to share your secure chart with you. You must ask for registration and sign-in information when you are next in the office.

Lead Level in Lipsticks

(an additional "Did You Know?")

FDA limits the lead in color additives in cosmetics to a maximum of 20 parts per million but has not limited the amount of lead in lipstick. The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics, claims that no amount of lead in lipstick is acceptable because lipstick "builds up in the body over time. A little bit every day is adding up and staying with you." Lead levels therefore should be monitored by the FDA. Of particular concern are young girls "consuming" lipstick.

Four hundred lipsticks were recently tested for lead levels by the FDA. Five lipsticks made by L'Oreal and Maybelline ranked among the top 10 most contaminated. Two Cover Girl and two NARS lipsticks also landed in the top 10, as did one made by Stargazer. The least contaminated lipstick was also the least expensive: Wet & Wild Mega Mixers Lip Balm.

Congratulations!

Natalie Suarez
Xavian Vargas
Born Dec. 16, 2011

Sarah and Scott Wilson
Married December 17th, 2011

Jon and Jessica Kane
Benjamin Edward Kane
Born Jan. 22, 2012

Janelle and Brad Burkholder
Owner/Operators Chick-Fil-A
Berkshire Mall, Reading

Emily Leese
Qualified for States in Gymnastics at age 9

Kayla Gerhart
1st Place in TSA Regional
"Go Green" Competition
Good luck at states!

Thank You Volunteers!

Aaron Sales and Lease
For the fantastic fundraiser

Anita Proctor
Florence Freedman
Our invaluable *Friends for the Journey*

Liz Smedley
For making all those "Dammit Dolls"!

Kelsey Gerhart
For making her beautiful Memory Pins

Nancy Oliver
West Willow United Methodist Church
For the beautiful hand-knit prayer shawls

And thank you to those who have generously financially contributed to

The Healing Journey
at The Lancaster Cancer Center
P.O. Box 10396
Lancaster, PA 17605

Full Cancer Living Support for Cancer Patients and Caregivers

The Healing Journey is proud to offer a professionally led cancer support group designed to address the psychological, social, and spiritual issues that are normal for people living with cancer. Cancer and its treatment place significant demands on relationships, on psychological and emotional wellbeing, and on a sense of life purpose. Addressing those challenges head on, living fully with cancer, or *Full Cancer Living* is what this group is about. It is now well known in the medical world that providing tools for mindful living and bringing together people facing similar challenges can have a significant positive impact on quality of life and possibly length of life.

The group is a structured one that will meet for six sessions for an hour and a half each. All cancer patients and a loved one are welcome at any time. You are encouraged to come to all six sessions since the subjects covered build on each other, and you will feel more connected to the other participants. A specific topic will be covered each session and (with hand-outs as appropriate) followed by an invitation to participants to share their thoughts and experiences. Sometimes optional experiential exercises will be offered.

Lead by Janneke vanBeusekom, MSW

When: Second & Fourth Thursdays

5:00 to 6:30 PM

Where: Lancaster Cancer Center

Cost: free

**Register now: Call Janneke at 394-6688 or
e-mail: candydeg@aol.com**

Group is currently running. A new group will begin in April once sign-ups are complete.

Evaluations at the end of the first session:

What did you like best about the group?

"...feeling understood."

"...the camaraderie and openness."

"...friendship and connectedness."

"...knowing others going through the same things."

"...openness to everyone without judgment."

"...attending these sessions helped pull me out of a depression that was ruling my life. Thank you!"

Friends for the Journey



Our goal is to ensure that no one will have to face cancer alone. At LCC, our program, ***Friends for the Journey***, is committed to providing friendship, kindness and compassion - not only to our patients, but also to their caregivers. When patients are diagnosed, they often fear the loss of their independence and refuse to ask for help. But when one seeks, and then receives, help from others, they often find it easier to cope.

Even though your family and friends help, you may also want to meet people who have cancer now or have had it in the past. Often, you can talk with them about things you can't discuss with others. People with cancer understand how you feel and can:

- ◆ talk with you about what to expect
- ◆ tell you how they cope with cancer and live a normal life
- ◆ help you learn ways to enjoy each day
- ◆ give you hope for the future
- ◆ provide a few humorous and comforting moments

At LCC, we have both former patients and caregivers who understand the journey you are on. We are here to make that journey as painless as possible by providing friendship. Please let the nurses know if you would like to talk to one of our ***Friends for the Journey***.

Conversely, you may be interested in giving back as a "friend". As a "friend" you can:

- ◆ visit patients as they receive their treatments.
- ◆ help plan family and office events
- ◆ make "treats" to "nourish the soul"
- ◆ encourage attendance at *Healing Journey* programs.
- ◆ provide transportation
- ◆ come up with ideas of your own to help out!

To Volunteer call:

**Susan Davis, Volunteer Coordinator
at 399-4960 or cell: 575-8343 or
susand48@comcast.net**

Did you Know?

◆91% of adults over 65 have at least one chronic condition.

◆A caregiver provides care for a loved one for an average of 4.6 years.

◆It is estimated that 42 million family members are unpaid caregivers for adults who stay at home and need assistance.

◆The **Million Veteran Program** is researching how genes affect the health and illnesses of those who have served in the armed serves. For more information, call **1-800-441-6075**.

◆To apply for low cost prescription drug coverage for Medicare beneficiaries, call **1-800-772-1213** or go to **ssa.gov/pubs/10525.html**.

**AARP Bulletin, Jan./Feb., 2012*

◆Bottled water, vitamin-enriched water, and sparkling water are not healthier than tap water. Studies have shown that bottled water can contain mixtures of bacteria, fertilizers, and pollutants

**Environmental Working Group, Oct. 2008*

◆Many rigid, transparent water bottles contain bisphenol A (BPA) an environmental estrogen which can leach out through heat, wear and harsh detergents. Use a stainless steel or glass container or BPA-free models

◆Drinking milk and/or eating dairy foods does not increase mucus production. Having the flu or a cold does not mean to avoid these foods.

**The American Review of Respiratory Disease*

◆Fever does not harm the body or brain. In fact, it shows that the immune system is working well. For the cancer patient, however, over 103 degrees F is cause to call the doctor.

◆Experimental psychology has shown that showing ones frustration or anger through "harmless" expression (punching a pillow, screaming) can increase rather than decrease harmful behavior.

**newsvine.com*

◆The CDC reports that 9 in 10 adults eat more sodium than they should, raising their blood pressure and risk for heart disease and strokes. Most eat 3300mg./day. Guidelines are for only 2300mg. (1 tsp. table salt/day). Be especially careful of processed foods and look for low sodium foods.

◆Women who have estrogen-receptor positive breast cancer should limit soy intake because the estrogen in soy can stimulate cancer growth.

◆Share your journey at **www.Caringbridge.org** a website on which you can journey your own healing journey and share with loved ones.

Home remedies that really work:

◆For a sore throat mix honey, lemon and fresh grated ginger in a cup. Add boiling water and drink while still warm.

◆For sinus congestion: simmer veggie broth with as much fresh garlic and chili powder as your taste will tolerate. Keep warm in a thermos.

◆General ill health: Slice ginger and half a lemon into a can of coke. Boil 8-10 minutes; strain out ginger and lemon and drink.

◆More than 40 million Americans have trace medications in their water. Do not throw meds in the toilet or the trash. Drop off at Household Hazardous Waste Facility (batteries also, no charge for either) at 1299 Harrisburg Pike, Lanc.

◆People who eat 2 oz. of yoghurt a day cut their risks of advanced gum disease in half. The good bacteria in yoghurt makes lactic acid that attacks the gum disease-causing bacteria.

◆Consuming trans fats (French fries, store-bought cookies, etc.) may up the chance of a woman developing breast cancer by 50%.

◆For increased mental alertness and energy, eat plant or animal based protein; it contains tyrosine, an amino acid that elevates brain chemicals dopamine and norepinephrine.

◆Research shows that you get a rush of endorphins that lasts four hours when you volunteer.

(See Friends for the Journey pg. 5)

◆If you have trouble sleeping, create a restful bedroom: fully darken the room, not too hot or cold, and use white noise (fan, quiet music).

◆Younger people use only one side of the brain. Older people often use both sides as the brain adapts to a slower processing speed and reduced neuron pathways.

◆Physical exercise and mental stimulation, however, can increase brain cell survival rates.

◆Evidence tells us that sitting for a long time increases the risk of obesity, cancer, diabetes and even early death (even for people who exercises regularly). Yet Americans sit an average of 10 hours a day. The Institute of Cancer Research suggests that we take "mini-breaks" from our sitting every hour.

◆Our Lending Library has a new DVD which may be interesting (and fun!) for you. Check out ***Jonna's Body, please hold, a Cancerous Dark Comedy***. Remember, laughing is good!

◆Lavender contains the alcohol linalol which kills bacteria and viruses and can be applied directly to heal burns and sunburns. It also contains keytones and esters which reduce inflammation and ease swelling and soreness.

Moving Forward as a Survivor

Finding Your “New Normal”

You’ve (or soon will have) completed your cancer treatment. You probably look at things differently now and feel grateful for your life and health. But you are concerned about what comes next? What will my “new normal” be like? What follow up care will I need?

Cancer survivors need to be at peace with the choices they made and this “wait and see” period is difficult. Time is a part of healing and will help us build confidence. Everyone copes with survivorship differently, but we all need to figure out how to do it.

Melanie Rice, CRNP and Dr. Peter DeGreen will be giving three evening seminars to help you and your loved ones answer these important questions. They will address:

- ◆ How to finding your “new normal”
- ◆ Knowing what questions to ask in follow up care
- ◆ Maintenance therapy
- ◆ Long- term side effects
- ◆ Emotional support
- ◆ Living with metastatic cancer
- ◆ Establishing a network with other survivors (especially during the seminars!)
- ◆ Creating a survivorship plan

We will also be attended by a physical therapist and nutritionist to help you move forward.

A light and healthy supper will be served.

Be sure to set aside and register in the LCC office or at 396-8679 for the Survivorship Seminars:

Monday, April 2nd, 5:00 to 7:00 P.M.

Monday, June 1st, 5:00 to 7:00 P.M.

Monday, September 10th, 5:00 to 7:00 P.M.

The Five Wishes

We are happy to offer to you the *Five Wishes* document which you and your loved ones can complete. This document gives you a chance to control how you will be treated if you get seriously ill. Once the form has been filled out and properly signed, it becomes a legal document in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Most importantly, you will be helping your loved ones in times of difficult decision making.

It is important to note that you need not be attended by a hospice agency in order to complete and file this advanced directive.

Ask one of the nurses to discuss *The Five Wishes* with you or research at www.agingwithdignity.org/fivewishes.php or www.hospiceoflancaster.org.

May is **National Skin Cancer Awareness Month**. Watch for our community partnership in a day-long symposium to discuss prevention, diagnosis and treatment of skin cancers like melanoma.

And to “leave ‘em laughing”:

A frog goes into a bank and approaches the teller. He can see from her nameplate that her name is Patricia Whack. “Miss Whack, I’d like to get a loan to take a holiday.”

Patty looks at the frog in disbelief and asks his name. The frog says his name is Kermit Jagger. Patty explains that he will need to secure the loan with some collateral.

The frog says, “Sure, I have this,” and produces a tiny porcelain elephant, about an inch tall, bright pink and perfectly formed. Very confused, Patty explains that she’ll have to consult with the bank manager and disappears into a back office. She finds the manager and says, “There’s a frog out there who wants to borrow money and he wants to use this as collateral.” She holds up the tiny pink elephant. “I mean, what in the world is this?”

The bank manager looks back at her and says.....“It’s a knickknack, Patty Whack. Give the frog a loan. His old man’s a Rolling Stone.”

The Healing Journey

1858 Charter Lane

Lancaster, PA 17601

www.lancastercancercenter.com/heal.htm.



Healing Journey Programs

Laughter Club: March 1, April 5, May 3, June 7
5:30 to 6:30 P.M.

Pink Hat Club: Feb.29, March 28, April 25, May 30
Noon luncheon, Pressroom

Full Cancer Living: Feb. 23, March 8, 22,
If enough have registered, the new group
session begin again April 12

Survivorship Seminars: April 2, June 1, Sept. 10
5:00 to 7:00 P.M.

St. Patrick's Day Party: March 15
Chemotherapy Room

Welcome Spring Party: April 4
Chemotherapy Room

First Thursday
Call 396-8679 or candydeg@aol.com

Last Wednesday
Call 299-4777 or candydeg@aol.com

2nd and 4th Thursday
Call 394-6688 to Register

Mondays
Call 396-8679 or candydeg@aol.com

Thursday
No need to register

Wednesday
No need to register