

Breast Cancer Awareness Month



October is

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

I know from personal experience, cancer is a devastating shock to any household. On October 7, 1977 my Father died from colon cancer. On June 12, 2008 my Mother died from pancreatic cancer. On October 2, 2009, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. It is hard to believe it has been 9 years since my diagnosis. I still remember the day, the call, where I was and who I was with when I learned I had cancer.

For people in intact marriages or a marriage in the process of breaking up, a cancer diagnosis changes so many things. The patient needs help that perhaps they never needed before. The caregiver, who often has the harder journey, has to assist with decisions that they may never have had to make before and perhaps would prefer not to. No matter what the home situation, a cancer diagnosis is frightening, time consuming and physically taxing...an immeasurable challenge. Both men and women have to deal with the personal and relational conflict surrounding the diagnosis...and it is not easy.

With cancer and breast cancer in particular, women and men may not be ready or able to deal with or communicate the emotions and conflict that comes with the diagnosis. Loving husbands and wives may have a difficult time accepting that cancer struck the body of the woman or man they love.

The patient conflicted, shocked, and overwhelmed by the diagnosis and decisions to be made may sabotage their intimate relationships. It may be easier to leave a challenging marriage than work out conflicts or deal with the hard issues as well as manage everyone else's emotions. The soul searching decisions, the treatment, and the life changes any cancer diagnosis requires rearranges life's priorities. A cancer patient who is dealing with their personal fight to destroy the cancer may have an especially difficult time

Making Strides of DuPage

October 7, 2018

Cantigny Park
1S151 Winfield Road
Wheaton, IL

8:00 am Registration

9:00 am Walk

For event information, visit:

[Making Strides of DuPage](#)

*For cancer support and
resources visit:*

**[American Cancer Society IL
survivingbreastcancer.org](http://AmericanCancerSocietyIL.org/survivingbreastcancer.org)**

4th Annual Ken Duffield "Don't Drink Even if Your Ass Falls Off" Memorial Golf Outing

Sunday, October 14, 2018

Village Links Golf Course
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

Tee Times begin at 12:35

Dinner at 5p

Register or Questions?

Contact Leslie O'Connor
lesanded@wowway.com

Lawyer's Assistance Dinner

November 1, 2018

Keynote Speaker

managing a difficult marriage.

In honor of **Breast Cancer Awareness Month**, here are our Top 5 Conflict Resolution Tips for the Patient and The Patient's Spouse:

1) To Thine Own Self be True and Be honest with those around you. State your truth. Your feelings are your feelings...they belong to you whether right or wrong for anybody else. As a result of my Father's 1977 diagnosis and death from colon cancer, I held a lifelong belief that if I was ever diagnosed with cancer, I would not undergo surgery, chemotherapy, or radiation. But in 2009, my husband and family had other ideas. Ultimately, I underwent all three. Being true to myself, honest with my family, and working through very different ideas of how to approach the diagnosis requires everyone to be honest, open minded and willing to be tolerant of other's belief. The ability to say yes or no to what is right for you and be respectful and caring about the impact on those who love you is important for the long term health of relationships.

2) Don't try to read each other's minds. Trust what they say is what they mean. Be open to each other's thoughts, feelings and anxieties whenever possible. They will be different and will be processed in a different timeline. It is very easy to think you know what is going on in someone else's mind but in reality, whether you are the caretaker or the patient, you do not.

3) Educate yourself on the facts and the medically proven treatments. The literature is overwhelming, the doctors opinions differ and the treatment options are many. Add to that, the many well-intended people who will have opinions on what you "should" do; all of those increase the chances of conflict. Knowledge can be a powerful tool for couples, and the right knowledge may reduce that conflict.

4) Be life-assuring and marriage-affirming whenever possible. Positive thinking will reap physical mental, and spiritual benefits. It is difficult to be supportive or even present when a spouse is sleeping 24 hours at a time, is weak, or can't remember conversations due to the common side-effect of some chemotherapy. Conflict breeds when there appear to be no real good solutions and there is fear, anxiety and worry.

5) Seek outside help, Join a support group. Individual therapy, couples therapy, support groups can be beneficial. Sharing experiences with those who have walked the walk can make the journey less onerous. Though it often feels like it, you are not alone. Hearing how others got through the anger, the denial, the emotion, and the conflicts, all may minimize, not eliminate, the risk of conflict. Below are two excellent outside resources for cancer patients and their loved ones:

John J. Cullerton, Illinois
Senate President
5:30 - 8:30pm
The Union League Club of
Chicago
65 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60603

Register - Contact LAP at
312.726.6607



442 Williamsburg Ave, Geneva IL
<https://livingwellcrc.org>

The Wellness House
131 N. County Line Road, Hinsdale, IL
<https://wellnesshouse.org>

There are many more conflicts and ways to reduce conflict when a medical crisis hits. A few things to consider:

A.) Make sure your Power of Attorney for Healthcare and your General Power of Attorney exist and are both up to date and accurate.

B.) Make sure your Medical provider has the contact information for the person who will be your point person on your behalf.

Do you have a conflict resolution or support tip for Breast Cancer Awareness Month you want to share? Let us know by emailing us at brigid@brigidduffield.com.

"We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust our sails." -- Unknown

To Your Health,

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