



Cancer Society
**DAFFODIL
DAY**

Cancer Society New Zealand
Kahui Matepukupuku te o Aotearoa

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August 2008

The Journey

People with cancer often talk about their 'cancer journey,' and the many unknowns they face. Living with uncertainty is part of the cancer diagnosis. No one can know what to expect or even how they will feel from day to day.

Initially the emotions may include being frightened, loneliness, anger or depression -of which also affect family, friends and the wider community we all live in.

For 80 years the Cancer Society of New Zealand has been there to support many hundreds of individuals throughout their personal cancer journey.

The first visit to the Cancer Society can be a daunting thought for some.

"I tiptoed nervously into the Cancer Society after my lumpectomy. The Cancer Information Nurse lent me some excellent library books and talked me through some of my fears. She gave me a 'silky pillow' which really helped me to get comfortable in bed. I picked up the CanTalk newsletter and saw exciting possibilities. We talked about chemo (I was terrified) and she referred me to a contact from Cancer Connect (this person talked me through the lead up and first chemo)."

The Cancer Society supports family and friends.

"Fortunately, the Cancer Society provided a suite of options of programmes and support which reflected and responded to me and my partner's changing needs - from diagnosis, treatment to beyond."

The Cancer Society provides counselling.

"My needs grew and changed markedly throughout my breast cancer journey. During chemo, I found it so difficult to cope and had counselling sessions arranged. The counsellor also helped me navigate my way through work and treatments. My partner later attended counselling too as we realised that 'others' didn't seem to understand our specific cancer related issues."

The Society provides meaningful social contact

"I attended the Living with Cancer course. That opened my eyes to so much I didn't know about cancer and how to deal with 'everything.' I met a new group of cancer girlfriends. We still meet and share stories and support. I learned about wigs and makeup with Look Good Feel Better as my hair and eyebrows fell out (my God that is hard)."

The society feeds the soul

"During radiation I started art therapy and took a writing course. I loved both of these activities. They felt like treats for my soul and well needed therapy. The Cancer Society became a sanctuary for me; a place where I could be normal, and experience inspiring activities and practical support."

The Cancer Society helps with financial support

"As treatments increased, hours of work decreased and financial pressure increased. I was assisted by a welfare payment for which I was very grateful to have."

The Cancer Society minimises the impact of cancer

"I am back working full time now and am nearly back to the 'new normal.' I continue to see the counsellor to discuss different issues as they arise. I am damned lucky to have received such targeted support. I don't know what I would have done without it. I say a huge thanks to the Cancer Society and to anyone going through something like this, there is help there!"

with **YOUR** help there is hope

The comments in this media release were made by a 39 year old Wellingtonian who came to the society in 2007 following a diagnosis of breast cancer. After many months of treatment and support from the society she is once again back to discovering a 'new normal' and living a healthy life.

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