

Healing Journeys

2014 SPRING
NEWSLETTER

support healing activate hope promote thriving



support healing, activate hope, promote thriving

upcoming events

The Cancer-Fighting Kitchen: Nourishment for Life

May 30 – Macon, GA
With Lise Alschuler, ND
& Laura Pole, RN, MSN

July 12 – Seattle, WA area
Bastyr University
With Lise Alschuler, ND
& Laura Pole, RN, MSN

20th Anniversary Celebration of Thriving

September 5 – San Jose area
Evening – FREE program
(Pre-registration suggested)
With Emmett Miller, MD
and Susan Mazer & Dallas Smith

Cancer as a Turning Point, From Surviving to Thriving™

September 6 – San Jose area
One-day FREE conference
(Pre-registration suggested)

Presenters:

Beth Nielsen Chapman
Lise Alschuler, ND
Jonathan Ellerby, PhD
Jonna Tamases
Julie Interrante, MA
... and more

Love Me Tender

October 11 – San Jose area
Workshop
With Julie Interrante, MA

Transformation from Within

November 22–24, Sonoma, CA
Westerbeke Ranch
With Jonathan Ellerby, PhD



Jan Adrian

Director's Reflections

Jan Adrian, MSW

It's Healing Journeys 20th anniversary! Our first *Cancer as a Turning Point, From Surviving to Thriving™* conference was in March, 1994, on the beach in Monterey. I couldn't imagine then that it would still be going strong 20 years and 32 conferences later, having served more than 25,000 people.

I am feeling so blessed to have had 20 years of meaningful work, and grateful for the amazing people I have connected with through this work. I believe we can find silver linings in any cloud, and cancer has given me many gifts in the past 25 years, the biggest one being the direction it took my career. Healing Journeys started out as a "hobby" while I made my living owning a furniture store. Since 2002, Healing Journeys has been my full-time passion (although I'm doing my best to not work full time anymore).

We are offering a beautiful evening of music and guided imagery to celebrate our 20th anniversary on September 5th, the night before our conference. **We are excited to offer this free, one-day *Cancer as a Turning Point* conference near San Jose, California, on September 6th. We're still short of the funding needed to pay for this conference and are counting on your help. You can send your contribution in the enclosed envelope or donate at www.healingjourneys.org. Thank you!**

We are offering two *Cancer-Fighting Kitchen: Nourishment For Life* workshops in 2014, one in Macon, Georgia, and one in Seattle, Washington. With the understanding that diet is but one aspect of lifestyle that contributes to greater health and cancer risk reduction, this workshop also includes experiential presentations on movement and guided imagery.

Healing Journeys will also offer a new workshop, called *Love Me Tender*, led by Julie Interrante, MA. It will be an opportunity to explore what it means to love oneself in the midst of illness and how to cultivate tenderness in the midst of fear.

The response to the three retreats we have sponsored with Jonathan Ellerby, PhD, the past two years in Mexico, has been incredible. A representative comment from one participant was, "This trip was one of the highlights of my life – inspiring, expanding, invigorating and greatly empowering!" To make it more accessible, this year we are offering a retreat with Jonathan Ellerby at Westerbeke Ranch in Sonoma, California.

I will end with a quick update on my personal healing journey. The cryoablation I had in November 2012 was a success. The tumor in my lung gradually showed less activity over last year and by the December 2013 PET/CT scan it was 0 – gone.

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VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is that EVERYONE touched by cancer or any life-altering condition be empowered to move from surviving to thriving.



How Cancer Led Me to Happiness

by Jen Campisano

More than two years after I was diagnosed with Stage 4 breast cancer, I was lucky to have a friend and fellow mom treat me to an all-inclusive health resort and spa that was offering a weekend happiness retreat. What better way to cultivate joy than a weekend of relaxation? I was also celebrating a clean PET/CT scan, so we had ample reasons to be happy.

My friend and I filled our days with yoga classes, guided meditations, hikes in the surrounding desert, and workshops on how to incorporate more happiness into our lives.

One of the presentations we chose was an introduction to spirituality. Neither one of us is particularly religious, so I was curious. What was my spiritual path? Did I even have one? Since being diagnosed with cancer, I'd been often asked if I was taking care of my spiritual self, but I never knew how to answer. *What did that mean?* I wondered. *Did yoga count?*

As I sat in the workshop, I perked up when the woman leading the conversation mentioned relationships/community as a spiritual pathway and writing and yoga as spiritual practices. It wasn't just about meditation or reading spiritual texts. It was about being present and paying attention to the regular activities I was already engaging in. *I could do this*, I thought. *I was doing it.*

I was glad to learn I'd been taking care of my spiritual self this whole time, even subconsciously. Since my diagnosis, I'd been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support from friends, family, and strangers who'd been through cancer themselves and understood my family needed meals, encouragement, and extra love. I'd been nurturing this community ever since, feeling deeply committed to giving back some of the care that was doted on us in those scary first months. I did this by connecting friends together who learned their cancer had spread or walking other young women through the terrifying days after a diagnosis.

In the wake of my diagnosis, I had also begun to write. At first, I wrote to keep friends and family up-to-date about my chemo schedule, what side effects I was experiencing, and how I was coping with a breast cancer diagnosis at the age of thirty-two, just five months after becoming a mom. Later, the writing became a source of healing for me, too. I wrote to share my experiences, to educate, to express part of the ever-fluctuating landscape of emotions that I was facing, and to offer hope to others.

I am much more aware of my spiritual journey now, and maybe this has been a gift of cancer. I practice mindfulness in my relationships, in my yoga, and in my writing in a way I didn't before cancer. Cancer does not make the journey any easier, but it showed me quite clearly that living in the present, fostering my community and relationships — and for me, writing — is the surest path to happiness.



JEN'S BIO

Jen is a first-time mom who was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer at the age of 32, when her son was just five months old. She writes about navigating the intersection of motherhood and cancer-land at www.boobyandthebeast.com. More than two years after her diagnosis, she is still in active treatment, but also actively enjoying watching her son become a little boy. She hopes she will be lucky enough to see him become a man.

Healing
Journeys

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Mission Statement

Our mission is to support healing, activate hope, and promote thriving.

Vision Statement

Our vision is that EVERYONE touched by cancer or any life-altering condition be empowered to move from surviving to thriving.

Our Commitment to Diversity

Healing Journeys is committed to diversity and pledges to include, welcome, and support all individuals of any race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, socioeconomic background, religion, sexual orientation, and disability.

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Thank You for Your Contributions

We appreciate the following individuals and organizations for contributing to Healing Journeys in 2013.

While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, please accept our apology if there are any errors or omissions with your name or gift.

If your listing requires correction, please contact us at info@healingjourneys.org or (800) 423-9882.

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**IN-KIND DONATIONS**

"It takes a village" to create our events, and we'd like to thank some of the people and organizations who gave their time, goods, services, and hearts to Healing Journeys. We are grateful for the following in-kind contributions in 2013.

Chili Smith Family Foods -

Cancer-Fighting Kitchen: Sacramento, CA

First Presbyterian Church - Cancer-Fighting Kitchen: Greer, SC**Karen Haas -** Graphics support**Kerry Freeman -** Coordinated volunteers at events**Linda and Dr. F. Towne Allen -**

Requested a donation from The Boston Foundation

Maria Arcara - Our long-time office volunteer**Nancy Welch -** Cancer-Fighting Kitchen: Greer, SC**Pat Farquhar -**

Requested a matching donation from her employer, Verizon

Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op -

Cancer-Fighting Kitchen: Sacramento, CA

Sugar Plump Fairies - Sold raffle tickets at benefit concert**Susan Fetcho -**

Requested a donation from the Lois E. & R. Duke Miller Foundation

TAO Foundation - Healing Journeys Tropical Retreats: Mexico**Totally Tapioca -** Performed a benefit concert**Tracy Avvakumovits -** Worked with Stand Out Talent to present the benefit performance of *Unbeatable***Trader Joe's -** Cancer-Fighting Kitchen: Sacramento, CA**Director's Reflections** *continued from page 1*

There are two other small tumors that are growing slowly, one in the middle of my chest that is probably a lymph node, and one under my arm, also a lymph node. Because they are slow growing, my oncologist agrees that there is no danger in my trying an experimental treatment for 6 months. Under the supervision of Lise Alschuler, ND, I'm doing intermittent fasting along with heavy targeted supplement use during the two fast-ing days each week. In June I will have another PET/CT scan to determine what the effects of this treatment have been.

I write periodically about my personal healing journey in *Jan's Blog*, which you can find on our website.

The Power of Diet

by Lise Alschuler, ND



Despite the fact that diet is considered responsible for over 1/3 of all cancers, the role of diet in cancer control is still controversial! Just take a look at the typical chemotherapy infusion center where there is a plentitude of cookies, sodas and candy but rarely a fruit or vegetable. This really doesn't make sense. There is an increasingly

robust body of scientific data that supports the important cancer risk reduction role of plant-based diets with generous amounts of vegetables, fruit, fiber and healthy oils (such as from fish, flax, olive and coconut). And, even beyond prevention, the role of diet as a critical part of a cancer treatment plan is a fast-emerging area of focus. Using diet to control, and even reverse, cancer growth moves diet from a foundational health promotion strategy to a critical weapon targeted against cancerous tumors.

Understanding how to use diet to alter the trajectory of cancer is based on the concept that cancer exists, not in isolation, but in relationship to its environment. A cancerous tumor evolves in response to the signals and messages that it receives from the body. In order for cancer to grow, it responds to these messages in a way that supports its own growth.

Where do these messages come from? One of the most influential sources of information to cells is our diet. Food is more than calories. Food is information. Food contains thousands of molecules, each with specific influences on cell behavior. There are many

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Love Me Tender

Loving Ourselves through the Experience of Cancer

by Julie Interrante, MA

When touched by cancer, everyone faces fear and doubt.

We are launched into a deep experience of uncertainty. Uncertainty and self-doubt can contribute to feelings of self-blame, wondering what we might have done wrong or whether there was something we could have done to avoid it. Illness is not meant for self-recrimination or blame. It is meant for tenderness, self-acceptance and love.

It is why being touched by cancer is such a powerful catalyst. We can use it as the practice ground for cultivating true gentleness and love. An experience of illness magnifies the places within us that need light and kindness. Living with life-altering illness is a brilliant opportunity to cultivate tenderness through a softened

heart. It is about being fully human. Accepting the limitations and gifts of being a human being are rooted in a softened heart.

As we soften toward ourselves, we soften toward life. As we soften toward life, we experience acceptance and surrender. In short, we come to love life just as it is. We live more fully, recognizing everything as an opportunity to be tender, intimate and present. We see with greater clarity and take ourselves less seriously, giving ourselves a chance to laugh more easily, love more freely and let go more gently.

The journey of loving ourselves is the most important journey of our lives. It makes life make sense. Being tender with one's self makes it possible to love others and to have an authentic intimate life. Learning tenderness through the experience of being touched by cancer significantly changes and enriches our lives.

I hope you will join us for the *Love Me Tender* workshop, an opportunity for all of us to encounter tenderness in the midst of life-altering circumstances.

JULIE'S BIO

Julie Interrante, MA, is committed to the evolution of the self through the power and wisdom of one's own soul. She has more than 25 years' experience in working with people in the midst of life-altering circumstances. Julie is a speaker, minister and writer and is the author of *The Power of a Broken-Open Heart*. She offers classes, workshops, and individual and group counseling in Sacramento, California. A gifted speaker and teacher, Julie brings humor, compassion and a deep respect for life to all that she does. She will teach the *Love Me Tender* workshop for Healing Journeys this year.

www.julieinterrante.com

The Power of Diet *continued from page 4*

examples of this. A diet that regularly includes cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, kale, etc.) provides a significant quantity of sulfur compounds called isothiocyanates. These compounds exert predictable and specific effects that include: stimulation of cellular antioxidant defenses, reduction of chronic inflammation, and modification of hormone metabolism. A diet that provides excessive calories (more calories than are expended) will disrupt blood sugar balance, increase fat deposition, reduce immunity and even alter the bacteria that colonize our intestinal track. On the other hand, a diet that provides a reduced overall caloric intake stimulates cellular repair, reduces insulin resistance (a pre-diabetic state), and promotes genes that are associated with healthy aging.

Understanding the power of food to convey information that, in turn, changes cellular behavior, allows us to utilize diet as a healing tool. A plant-based, unprocessed, low sugar and low salt, Mediterranean-style diet is associated in many human studies with decreased cancer risk. A diet that includes fasting during chemotherapy has been shown to significantly reduce side effects and may promote the anti-cancer effects of chemotherapy. A calorie-restricted diet, such as one that includes periodic fasting, has been clinically shown to reduce insulin resistance, to prolong healthy aging, and is under investigation as an anti-cancer strategy. A ketogenic diet, which is another form of a calorically restricted diet, reduces carbohydrates, the source of glucose, to negligible levels. During a ketogenic diet, fats are broken down into ketones, which

are the main source of energy. Malignant cells, however, cannot utilize ketones to generate energy. Thus, a ketogenic diet selectively deprives cancer cells of the energy that they need to grow. The ketogenic diet was first discovered as a treatment for epilepsy and has notable anecdotal success against gliomas (brain cancer).

The bottom line is that our diet matters. What we eat influences our health on a cellular level. We can use our diets to improve our health, to lower our risk of disease, and even as a weapon to fight existing disease. Of note, any diet that involves fasting, ketosis, or any other significant restriction should be done under the supervision of a qualified healthcare practitioner. The practitioner will determine the safety and appropriateness of a specific dietary approach.

DR. LISE'S BIO

Dr. Lise Alschuler, ND, FABNO practices naturopathic oncology out of Naturopathic Specialists, LLC. She is the co-author of *The Definitive Guide to Cancer* and *The Definitive Guide to Thriving After Cancer*. She co-hosts a radio show, *Five To Thrive Live!* Learn more at www.drlise.net. Dr. Alschuler will teach two *Cancer-Fighting Kitchen* workshops for Healing Journeys this year, and present at the *Cancer as a Turning Point* free conference in San Jose, CA.



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Where Is God?

By Mark Nepo

It's as if what is unbreakable—the very pulse of life—waits for everything else to be torn away, and then in the bareness that only silence and suffering and great love can expose, it dares to speak through us and to us.

It seems to say, if you want to last, hold on to nothing. If you want to know love, let in everything. If you want to feel the presence of everything, stop counting the things that break along the way.



Mark & Mira

MARK NEPO is a poet and cancer survivor who has taught in the fields of poetry and spirituality

for forty years. A *New York Times* #1 bestselling author, he has published fourteen books and recorded eight audio projects. These poems are from his recent book, *Reduced to Joy* (2013). As a cancer survivor, Mark devotes his writing and teaching to the journey of inner transformation and the life of relationship.

Please visit Mark at:
www.MarkNepo.com and
<http://threintentions.com>

Way of the Dolphin

by Mark Nepo

Standing in the harbor, these slick wonders slip their fins in and out of early sun. I close my eyes and remember being wheeled into surgery all those years ago; believing my job was to meet my surgeon at the surface, so the rib he had to remove would slip out, like a dolphin of bone, as soon as he would cut me.

I've learned that everything that matters goes the way of the dolphin: drifting most of the time out of view, breaking surface when we least expect it.

And our job—in finding God, in being God; in finding truth, in being truth; in finding love, in being love—is to meet the world at the surface where Spirit slips out through every cut.