



Thunder Bay
Breast Cancer
Support Group



Newsletter October 2017 Issue 220

Opportunities to Give

Canadian Breast Cancer
Network

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Survivor Tea

Join us at the Second Survivor Tea taking place on Sunday, October 22nd from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM at Sweet Escape Cake Cafe & Bakery. Meet fellow survivors in a casual social setting to celebrate Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Tea, coffee and dainties will be served. If you are able to join us, please RSVP to bcsg@tbaytel.net or call the support line at 475-0025.



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Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month, which is an annual international health campaign organized by major breast cancer charities every October to increase awareness of the disease and to raise funds for research into its cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure. In honour of Breast Cancer Awareness month, we are asking you to send us your pictures showing how you celebrated. Pictures without people are acceptable and only include others if you have permission. Send your pictures to bcsg@tbaytel.net.

Save the Date

Please join us on December 13th for our 2017 Christmas party taking place at St. Michael's Church at 6:00 PM. More information to be included in the November newsletter.

Next Meeting
October 10th

7:00 pm at
St. Michael's Church
on Red River Road

Thunder Bay
Breast Cancer
Survivors Forum



Adjusting to life after treatment ends

CBCN Network News Spring 2017

Source

Your surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation treatments are finished. You think you should be celebrating your return to normal. But you don't feel the same as you did before your cancer diagnosis. Breast cancer has changed you in many ways: physically, emotionally, spiritually. Says Dr. Bonnie McGregor, a clinical psychologist at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, - The brain - your brain's representation of your body ? has to change, like the body has.

There's a disconnect. There's grief that happens, too. The old picture of who you were is not there anymore. There's a new picture, a new body. It's amazing we can heal and we can grow into these new bodies. But part of the healing process is emotionally getting back into your body and dealing with the hurt and the feelings of betrayal.

Some side effects of cancer treatment may not go away for some time after your treatment is over, and some side effects may surface even years later: lymphedema, pain, fatigue, difficulty with physical and cognitive functions, difficulty sleeping, osteoporosis, weight management, and social and emotional difficulties.

Your family and friends may be expecting you to take on all the activities you looked after before your diagnosis. It's important to decide for yourself how much you can handle, and to educate those around you about your capacity for activity. You may need to say "no" more often, ask for support, and schedule rest times, especially in the early days after treatment ends. According to the website Second Opinion, "It may take a year or more to regain a sufficient level of energy and sense of well being."

Your oncology team, which has worked with you so closely during treatment, will no longer be seeing you as often. You may need to mourn the loss of that connection, while building relationships with the doctors and nurses who will follow up with you.

Take care of your emotional health. Share your feelings and concerns with your family and friends, or write them down in a journal. Join a support group for survivors and read other survivors's stories for tips on how others have made meaning out of their experience. Take time for relaxation techniques, such as meditation, visualisation, yoga, or deep breathing. If sadness or anxiety are making it difficult for you to take part in daily activities, ask your doctor for a referral to a counsellor.

Some breast cancer survivors find their experience to have been life-changing. You may have new values or a new outlook on life. You may have found new meaning in your spiritual beliefs. You may decide to take on new activities, such as travel or a new career path. You may want to improve lifestyle habits, such as better nutrition or quitting smoking. Or you may want to share what you've learned from your cancer experience by volunteering and telling your story to other cancer patients and survivors.

Indeed, your life is definitely different now than it was before your cancer diagnosis, and over the next several months, you will develop a "new normal."



Gratitude Guilt

Canadian Living - October 2017

Source

Give yourself a mental break from gratitude

THANKSGIVING is a time for, well, giving thanks. It's no wonder, then, that as October rolls around, gratitude (from the Latin *gratus*, to be thankful) becomes grist for the mental health mill. And sure, without doubt, gratitude is great. But like any magical elixir, there can be too much of a good thing, and doubling down on giving thanks sometimes leads to an unhealthy emotional hangover: gratitude guilt.

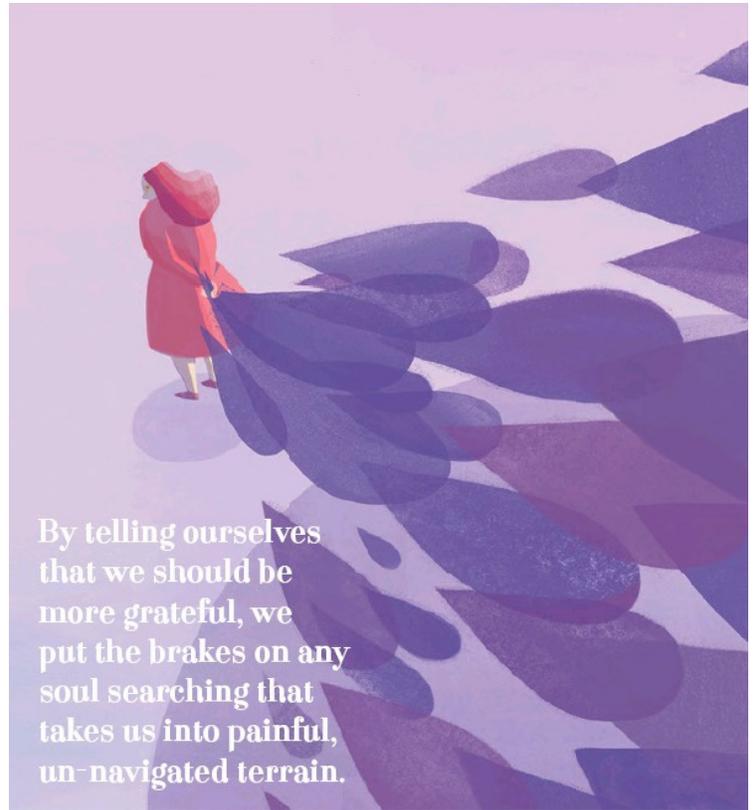
This is the name I give to that insidious byproduct of the thanks-giving trend. It sounds like this: "I should be more grateful for [insert favourite brand of guilt here]." "I should stop focusing on the negative and be more grateful for [everything, always]."

The Thanksgiving season packs a shouldload of gratitude guilt. It's a flavour of selfloathing that comes from not being grateful enough to meet some mythical bar. It's also a master manipulator; it not only erodes our self-worth by keeping us fixated on failures and imperfections but also distracts us from the true source of our pain. By telling ourselves that we should be more grateful, we put the brakes on any soul searching that takes us into painful, un-navigated terrain. We deny the intuitive voice that's trying to tell us something is wrong.

For example, instead of staring into the face of your soul-sapping job, you tell yourself to be grateful you have a job when so many are unemployed. Or, rather than lean into the lack of intimacy in your marriage, you remind yourself that lots of your friends are facing divorce.

What do I recommend? Stop shoulding on yourself. Sure, be grateful. There's ample data to support gratitude as a key component of mental health. In fact, a recent meta-analysis of 91 gratitude studies revealed significant benefits, including increased prosocial behaviour (the ability to have and maintain friendships), empathy and forgiveness. Some research suggests that practising gratitude boosts a sense of well-being and decreases depression.

So, by all means, cultivate an appreciation for what's right in your world, but do it without being wilfully blind to what isn't quite right. This Thanksgiving, how about taking your dose of gratitude with an equal shot of courage? How about going into the lion's den to face what scares you? How about giving the little voice you like to ignore a megaphone? This isn't a zero-sum game; you can value what you have and still acknowledge things that require fixing. You can focus on the positive and still unpack that should-load of baggage you're carrying around. Then, you can thank yourself.



2017 National Lymphedema Conference

Montreal • October 27-28

A bilingual conference co-hosted by the **Canadian Lymphedema Framework** and the **Lymphedema Association of Quebec** in collaboration with the **McGill University Health Centre** and **Concordia University**.



Presenting key topics related to **CHRONIC EDEMA** and **LYMPHEDEMA**:

Obesity, Lipedema, Pediatrics, Self-Management, Exercise, Compression, Measurement, Skin Care, Surgery, Wound Care, Psychosocial and Clinical Services.

www.canadalymph.ca

2017 National Lymphedema Conference

Montreal, QC, October 27-28

This bilingual event is co-hosted by the Canadian Lymphedema Framework and the Lymphedema Association of Quebec in collaboration with McGill University Health Centre and Concordia University. Join health professionals and patients in Montreal at the Omni Hotel Mont-Royal on October 27 and 28 for an exciting and robust agenda.

Registration: <http://canadalymph.ca/conference/registration/>

*I am so thankful for
very new and old friend
I have met on this
journey.*

*Every day I feel the
love, inspiration and
prayers from my
sisters. ♥*

*I hope this provides
you with the same*

*Graci
XOXO*

Encouragement Cards

In October 2016, the Breast Cancer Support Group and the Butterfly Story co-hosted a 'Survivors' Tea' at Sweet Escapes Cake Café and Bakery. By all accounts, it was a great event! Survivors who attended were asked to fill out cards with words of encouragement for other survivors. Over the next few months, we are going to share some of those of sentiments.

Sauteed Brussels Sprouts with Bacon & Onions

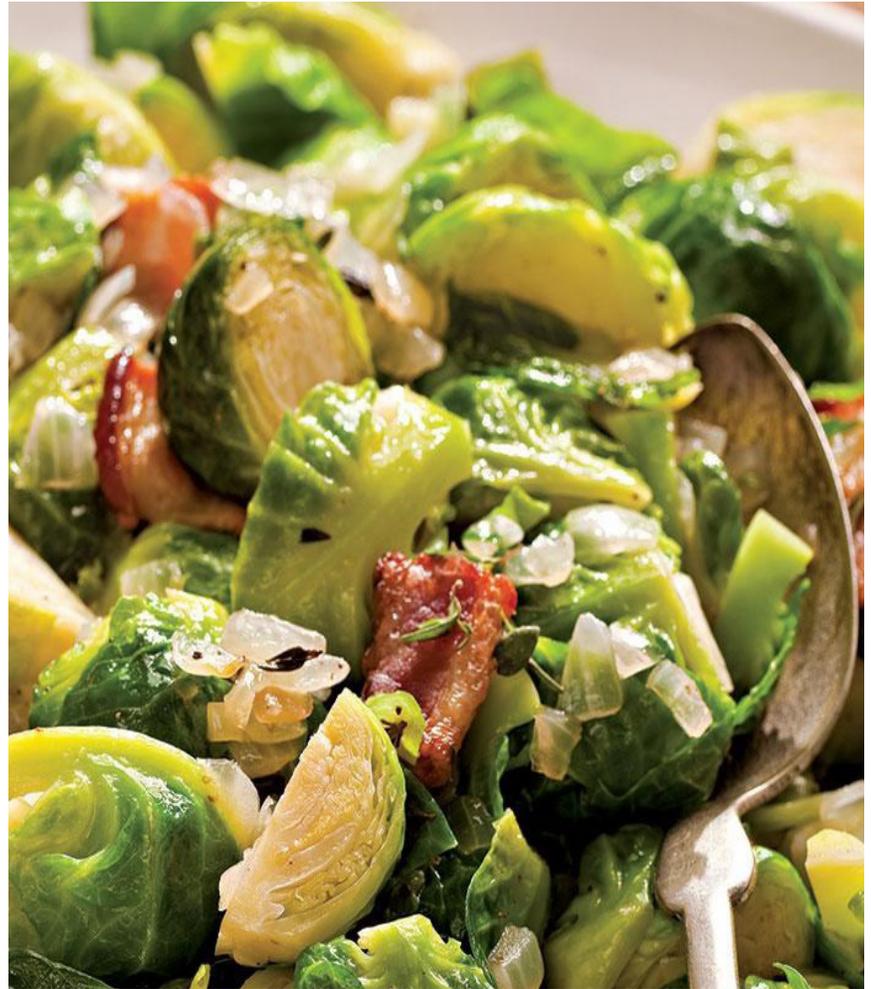
Source

Fresh herbs, onion and bacon pair beautifully with Brussels sprouts. This vegetable loves the cool weather of fall and early winter. If you can find them still attached to the stalk, don't be intimidated—buy them, as they're likely more fresh. All you need to do is slice off each sprout with a paring knife. However you find them at the market, this is a delicious way to prepare them. Recipe adapted from *The Art of Simple Food* by Alice Waters.

Preparation Time: 35 Minutes

Ingredients

- 2½ pounds Brussels sprouts, trimmed
- 4 slices bacon, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 4 sprigs thyme or savory, plus 2 teaspoons leaves, divided
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice (optional)



Directions

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. If sprouts are very small, cut in half; otherwise cut into quarters. Cook the sprouts until barely tender, 3 to 5 minutes. Drain.
2. Meanwhile, cook bacon in a large heavy skillet over medium heat, stirring, until brown but not crisp, 3 to 6 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon to drain on a paper towel. Pour out all but about 1 tablespoon bacon fat from the pan.
3. Add oil to the pan and heat over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring often, until soft but not browned, reducing the heat if necessary, about 4 minutes. Stir in thyme (or savory) sprigs, salt and pepper. Increase heat to medium-high, add the Brussels sprouts, and cook, tossing or stirring occasionally, until tender and warmed through, about 3 minutes. Remove the herb sprigs. Add the bacon, thyme (or savory) leaves and lemon juice, if using, and toss.

Butterfly Story Fund

The Butterfly Story fund is now accepting applications! Looking for ways to thrive as a survivor but need a little financial help? The Butterfly Story is here for you! Want to attend the Luncheon of Hope, We-Did exercise classes or another great event? Fill out an application and it will be considered for funding. It can be challenging to ask for help sometimes, but please know the applications are kept in the strictest confidence! If interested, please check out the application form [here](#) OR email thebutterflystory@hotmail.com OR contact Michelle or Shannon to discuss privately.

Upcoming

2017 National Lymphedema Conference

Montreal, QC, October 27-28

Survivors Tea

Sunday, October 22nd from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Sweet Escape Cake Cafe & Bakery (271 Bay Street)

RSVP: bcsg@tbaytel.net or call the support line at 475-0025.

Christmas Party

December 13th

St. Michael's Church at 6:00 PM



Network News

Don't forget to check out the Spring 2017 edition of Outreach News brought to you by the Canadian Breast Cancer Network.

[Click here to check it out!](#)



Next Meeting
October 10th

7:00 pm at
St. Michael's Church
on Red River Road

For Support and Encouragement



As fellow support group members, we would be happy to hear from you.

435 Heather Cres
Thunder Bay, ON P7E 5K8

(807) 475-0025 (Voice Mail)
bcsg@tbaytel.net
breastcancersupporttb.com

Sharing the Journey

Along your journey you have found support and encouragement from our support group. If you have two hours to spare a month, we encourage you to consider becoming a Steering Committee Member. The wisdom gained from your experience can help us strengthen the group and will help to ensure the continued success of the Breast Cancer Support Group. Call a Steering Committee Member at 475-0025 to learn how you can take part or email bcsg@tbaytel.net.



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**Breast & Hereditary
Cancer Support**

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**Thunder Bay Regional
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Foundation**

The Thunder Bay Breast Cancer Support Group gratefully acknowledges the funding support of the Northern Cancer Fund of the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Foundation. All gifts made to the Foundation stay in Northwestern Ontario to benefit its residents.

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