

## Re: my neighbor's cancer update

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**From:** J ([plaid\\_at\\_example.com](mailto:plaid_at_example.com))

**Date:** 03/18/05

Date: Fri, 18 Mar 2005 04:56:53 -0500

Sharon and Mike wrote:

> "J" <[plaid@example.com](mailto:plaid@example.com)> wrote in message  
> .  
>> Sharon and Mike wrote:  
>>  
>>> I am new here, but thought maybe someone could answer a question.  
>>>  
>>> I have a neighbor, who has just been diagnosed with liver cancer. She  
>>> didn't even know she had cancer, and for a year she would have some back  
>>> pain, not knowing what it was. So she was prescribed pain killers, and no  
>>> doctor ever went any further with it.  
>>> So she found out she had cancer cells in her liver, and surrounding lymph  
>>> nodes. They believe it started in her ovaries. But she kept up a normal  
>>> life for over a year, worked full time, and wasn't bothered by anything  
> much  
>>> but some back pain, which was the cancer.  
>>>  
>>> They have given her a year with treatment, which she takes once every 3  
>>> weeks. She says she feels great, and intends to beat it and prove everyone  
>  
>>> wrong.  
>>>  
>>> My question is, is it possible that she could beat it? I am hoping this  
> for  
>>> her, because she is one who is a very positive person, and loves her life,  
>>> her garden, her family. I want the best for her, but when she and I talk,  
>>> and she talks about how she will beat this, I don't know what to say. If  
>>> there is a chance that she could beat it, then I could be more positive to  
>>> her.

<snip>

>> It's a difficult thing to step lightly (being encouraging), without giving  
> false hope.  
>> You can say positive things, where applicable such as:  
>> I'm glad that you're up and around  
>> Good to see you out in the garden; the garden's looking lovely this year.

> > *I'm pleased to see that you are still able to (insert here activity – work,  
> take  
> > care of the home, attend church, visit with your grandchildren, go on a  
> cruise,  
> > etc).*  
> > *I'm glad that your pain is better. etc.<snipped>*

> *I took your advice and it worked extremely well. Before in the past, my  
> neighbor, who is named Ruth, would act as if she were insulted if people  
> around her didn't agree that she would beat it. So today when I visited  
> her, I complimented on how good she looks, and how nice her house looked,  
> and her pretty flowers. This seemed to put her at ease, and we talked for a  
> long period of time, longer than we have before. Before, I was  
> uncomfortable, because I didn't know what to say. I watched my father beat  
> his cancer, which was caught in time. So since she and him are friends, it  
> was like, your father beat it and so will I. But today, your advice worked  
> wonders, and I got around talking about natural treatments, which I'm  
> uncomfortable discussing. She sometimes brings that up to me, but I myself  
> know that my father was cured because of the medical treatment he received.  
> So I wanted to write and say thanks, I have a new way of approaching her  
> now, and a new way to get around talking about her beating it. Maybe she  
> will, I don't know. If not, I will take comfort that I had a great  
> relationship with her, and was a friend.*

Hello Sharon, I'm pleased to read that my suggestion seems to be working well.  
Treat her like a person first; a person with cancer next; she'll be ever so  
grateful to have you as a confidant.

I'm also pleased to read that so far Ruth's doing well.

I'm also uncomfortable with the "natural treatments" discussions for a number of  
reasons:

1) false hope 2) costs which can snowball, if she realizes that cure isn't  
possible, panic can set in and start a buying spree of every known "natural  
treatment" anywhere in the world 3) potential interference by same with the  
established treatment.

I suppose if she notices that you're skipping over the subject, you could say  
"I'm not sure that you want to hear the reasons why". and if she does want to  
hear why:

- 1) my father never took them
- 2) I'm not knowledgeable about them (there are 1,000's of products/claims)
- 3) I've talked to someone who reads about them (for many years) on various  
newsgroups and who has read and posted (for many years) on 3 cancer newsgroups,  
for years now AND who has never seen anyone cured by any of these products; and  
has witnessed the devastation effects of "chasing rainbows" (in patient  
testimonials who have since died; in friends/relatives who died despite wasting  
time/money/hope on such products)
- 4) out of concern for you that you make sure that your oncologist knows exactly  
what you are trying.
- 5) I don't want to destroy your hope but want to protect you from a big  
disappointment

sci.med.diseases.cancer: Re: my neighbor's cancer update

Sharon, it's very kind of you to befriend Ruth.

Please make sure though that you take care of your needs too.

Sometimes we can get too involved with others problems and one day wake up and realize that our "own house" is crumbling; health/relationships/work (etc). Hope you understand what I mean?

A separate reply is coming to you,

Keep in touch and let us know how you're both doing, OK?

If I'm not around, an option is to post to alt.support.cancer especially if you'll be one of her main confidants.

J