

Untethered

By "JB" with Rose Gale-Zoellick

Untethered... to become released or freed from something restricting movement. It sounds good, but once you've dealt with cancer it creates yet another new, potentially fearful experience. JB poignantly explored this feeling with other women who had experienced gynecologic cancer during a recent visit to the Breast and GYN Health Project.

Last July, JB was living her busy life of mom, wife, sister, working professional, and caregiver for a family member when she was unexpectedly told "it's cancer." She had been dealing with an intestinal disorder and noticed a sense of fullness in her abdomen, but she had plans for vacation so off she went for two weeks.

While on vacation, JB's belly swelled and she felt a lot of discomfort. When she finally got home, her legs and ankles were very swollen in addition to her abdomen. Her daughter, a nurse, took one look at JB and asked her if she wanted to go to the Emergency Room either that night or the next morning. When she went to the Emergency Room, JB was immediately admitted to the Hospital. Two days later, JB was given the diagnosis of ovarian cancer.

The following day, JB met with her primary care doctor, who highly recommended surgery with a gynecologic oncologist. Unfortunately, at this time, our rural community does not have doctors who specialize in the treatment of gynecologic cancer. Several referrals to gynecologic oncologists allowed JB to make a very

important decision in the treatment of her cancer. She was grateful she was able to get cancer care from very experienced doctors. However, her busy life was completely thrown into a whirl, in a brand new direction by frequent travels out of our area for medical appointments.

After surgery, JB saw the medical oncology team at St. Joseph Hospital and a gynecologic oncology health team at Stanford. She began her treatment plan of chemotherapy at St. Joseph Hospital. Chemotherapy was once a week for 18 weeks. Additional shots were given four days a week, and a laboratory blood draw was taken the day before chemotherapy. She saw the nurses and staff six days a week and was grateful for their competent, compassionate, attentive care.

JB reflected on how far cancer treatments had come over the years and was grateful to benefit from the breakthroughs in cancer research. She learned the importance of speaking up to let the doctors know when she experienced strange sensations during her chemotherapy infusions and when she recognized potential side effects. JB felt fortunate that her gynecologic cancer experience was relatively smooth. She felt fatigue, and actively did what she could to take care of herself.

She had heard about the Breast and GYN Health Project, but had not thought it helped people like her who were dealing with ovarian cancer. She picked up a BGHP newsletter at a doctor's office and read that BGHP did indeed offer services to people like her

18th Annual VACATION BENEFIT RAFFLE

4 DESTINATIONS - 4 WINNERS

18th Annual
VACATION BENEFIT Raffle

Drawing: June 14, 2019
 7 PM - ARCATA EXCHANGE
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PROCEEDS SUPPORT
Breast and GYN Health Project
 A Cancer Resource Center

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THE BREAST AND GYN HEALTH PROJECT OFFERS SERVICES TO THOSE WITH BREAST OR GYNECOLOGIC CANCER CONCERNS. ALL PROCEEDS STAY LOCAL!

 Big Island, HI SEVEN NIGHTS WITH AIRFARE FOR TWO	 Steamboat Springs, CO SEVEN NIGHTS WITH AIRFARE FOR TWO
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MORE INFO AT WWW.BGHP.ORG THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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 Lucky winners will go to:

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and she called the office. JB's network of support immediately expanded.

JB felt like her cancer diagnosis and treatment had been on the fast track. In January, she was nearing the end of her chemotherapy treatments, and the reality of the past six months started to sink in. Soon she would no longer be seeing the chemotherapy staff six days a week. She would not have them reassuring her that "we've got you" and "your cancer is responding well to treatment." Soon she would be let loose, untethered from infusion machines for chemotherapy, literally untethered to lifesaving treatment for cancer.

JB realized that her feelings had been put on hold as she faced the crisis of dealing with cancer - as well as managing everything else in her life. She described feeling like life had been swirling around her. She imagined herself as a balloon that had been kept safe by being tethered to her treatments. Now, what would life be like? "Will I be wildly, aimlessly rushing about in my life, like a balloon that just had the air let out of it?"

JB's feelings of fear after cancer treatment ends is familiar to most people who have had cancer. Family and friends congratulate you and tell you "now you can get back to your normal life." But, the cancer experience shifts reality for many people once they have been through it. Life has a "new normal" and the challenge is to find healthy, healing ways to feel "tethered" to it once again.



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Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to BGHP. Just search for "Breast and GYN Health Project" when prompted. It's easy! Visit: smile.amazon.com

From the Executive Director

When I first became involved with BGHP, I wondered "what is grassroots"? It is amazing - the power of grassroots community involvement has made it possible for BGHP volunteers and staff to help over 400 local people a year, free of charge. I thought, what an old-fashioned term. Now I get it.... Grassroots is "You" and "Me" - involved and active community members, volunteers, donors, clients (former & current) all in support of our cause.

The way to be successful with grassroots energy is by cultivating "new shoots to the grassroots" (I like the little rhyme!). What I mean by this is IF people in our community think that "someone else" is donating and/or volunteering, that you're not needed, please know that we DO continue to need you more than ever. Many of the old-timers who invested a lot of time and energy are no longer able to help at that level. BGHP not only wants your involvement, but needs your engagement to keep free available services for local people facing cancer.

BGHP's services change local cancer patient's lives and cancer experiences. Please consider reaching out to help... donate your time as a volunteer, if you can. If you don't have much time, but can donate in other ways, please do what you can.

We have a delightful monthly eNewsletter filled with volunteer opportunities and thank you's to those who help out. You can sign up via our website www.bghp.org, email us or call us to give us your email address.

If you have questions or thoughts about how to get more involved, please call at 707-825-8345 or email rosegz@hcbhp.org.

As always, thanks for supporting BGHP!

Rose Gale-Zoellick
Executive Director



BGHP Staff

Executive Director

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Thank you Safeway/Albertson's Foundation for the grant for outreach and client services.

Thank you Safeway customers for register contributions in April.

Strong and Empowered: Moving beyond Treatment

By Brenda Elvine-Kreis and Rose Gale-Zoellick, BGHP Staff

“Now that I’m done with treatment, I realize that I wasn’t so much concerned that I could have died from cancer, so much as, what do I need to do now to be healthy. It was like big red warning lights went off on the dashboard, my body was warning me that I needed to do things differently. So now that’s what I’m working on.”

Patti, gynecologic cancer survivor

The transition from cancer patient to cancer survivor is often not as easy as people think. Many BGHP clients tell us that, while they felt they had lots of information and support during their treatment, once treatment ended, they entered a whole new world— one filled with new questions, fears and concerns. Although there is relief that treatment is over, the impact of the cancer diagnosis and its treatment begins to sink in. New physical and psychosocial issues may surface post-treatment which are often exacerbated by the fact that, as a survivor, they are no longer surrounded by a team of medical providers monitoring and overseeing their care. In addition, social supporters tend to drop off once treatment is finished. Many are left feeling abandoned while wondering what just happened and what they should be doing now to prevent the cancer from returning. All of this can cause the transition from patient to survivor to be especially overwhelming and anxiety-ridden. Arming oneself with **information, knowledge and support** prior to the completion of treatment can make this phase smoother helping you to feel strong and empowered as you move beyond treatment.

“As time passes, it’s hard to remember the details of my treatment. I am also unclear about what I am supposed to do now that my treatment is finished. How will I know if it comes back?” BGHP Breast Cancer Survivor

Gathering **information about your diagnosis and the treatment** you received (along with dates) is the first step to moving on to healthy survivorship. Prior to the end of your cancer treatment, request a **Treatment Summary** from your oncologist. Make sure you understand your diagnosis, what treatments you were given and why. Now is the time to ask your doctor anything you didn’t understand. Often times people are so overwhelmed when they are first diagnosed that a lot of what their doctor tells them about their diagnosis isn’t absorbed or really understood by the patient. Although you may feel like you will never forget the details of your treatment, trust me you will! And that is a good thing! As long as you have a treatment summary, you can always go back to reference it should any future questions arise.

In addition to a Treatment Summary, you should also ask your oncologist for a **Care Plan**. There are many benefits to Care Plans for cancer survivors. A Survivorship Care Plan can help to coordinate communication and care between

(Continued on page 4)



We’re SOCIAL - follow us on FaceBook, please like and share!!

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Help spread the news by retweeting and sharing our posts.

We want to get our story out there—we want to reach people—

we need your help to do it!!

Be ambassadors to our community!

cancer specialists and primary care providers so that cancer survivors can receive appropriate medical care throughout their lifetime. We recommend patients make a list of questions and be specific: Find out which providers to see, how often, and what sorts of follow-up tests are needed when. Be aware that some cancer treatments can result in lingering side effects and survivors often may not recognize or know how to deal with the long-term effects of treatment. By gathering and confirming information, a plan can be made with primary care providers and the oncology team to determine who will do breast exams and order mammograms, monitor and treat for conditions that might be side effects of treatment. Health promotion strategies such as smoking cessation, alcohol and dietary modifications and weight bearing exercise should also be addressed in your plan.

Once you have your Treatment Summary and Care Plan, it is time to heal! Moving beyond treatment requires healing from your cancer (note, this is not the same as being cured from cancer). In order to heal we need **support!** Support comes in many shapes and sizes. One is in the form of our family, friends and other cancer survivors. As we mentioned earlier, often times non-survivors don't realize that this transition can be difficult. It is your responsibility to *communicate your needs to your supporters!* We all want to appear strong and we certainly don't want to appear ungrateful that our treatment is over, but people don't know that we may be feeling scared or unsure of our future unless we tell them. Reach out. Your supporters want to help – they just don't know how. Consider seeing a therapist who can offer valuable guidance as well. And remember, BGHP offers a variety of support groups for cancer survivors.

The other component of support comes from the inside out. The cancer experience often causes people to adjust to a “new normal”, thus needing to re-evaluate their priorities and goals. At BGHP it is common to hear people completing cancer treatment speak about feeling self-consciousness and the desire to regain self-confidence. Clients sometimes speak about feeling that their bodies have betrayed them, and that

treatments caused additional problems. After treatment, it's time to build new trusting relationships with one's body. Nutrition, exercise, yoga, meditation, and stress reduction activities can help achieve goals toward the development of a new normal.

Moving beyond treatment takes time and is a joint collaboration between you and your care team. Putting together a Survivorship Care Plan serves as a valuable tool in this process. Gathering information about your cancer diagnosis and treatment, acquiring knowledge about what to expect after active treatment ends, and then making a plan to support yourself as you heal can empower you to regain some of the control you may have felt you lost during cancer treatment. This will help you and your family make plans, lifestyle changes, and important decisions about the future.

Resources (in alphabetical order) to find more information about cancer survivorship and care plans:

American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) has a lot of credible, thoughtful information for cancer patients. ASCO has developed two types of forms to help people diagnosed with cancer keep track of the treatment they received and medical care they may need in the future: a Cancer Treatment Plan and a Survivorship Care Plan.

American Cancer Society (ACS), hosts the [National Cancer Survivorship Resource Center](#) a collaborative effort to shape the future of cancer survivorship care and improve the quality of life of cancer survivors as they transition from treatment to recovery. In 2015 ACS published a Breast

Cancer Survivorship Care Guideline to help breast cancer survivors and their doctors manage their care long term. ACS also has information about online communities and support.

BelongLife app offers lots of information and tools. It includes chat boards where people with cancer can pose questions which are answered by other cancer survivors and healthcare professionals. Because the site is moderated by healthcare professionals and cancer advisors the contents are reliable and accurate.

Cancer.Net has survivorship resources.

CancerCare offers cancer survivorship educational information, webinars, as well as on-line support groups.

Journey Forward is a survivorship care plan initiative in partnership with UCLA Cancer Survivorship Center, the National Coalition of Cancer Survivorship (NCCS), Wellpoint and Genentech. This is a downloadable tool and has a patient toolkit.

Livestrong offers a Survivorship Care Plan

National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship has resource information about a lot of topics, including care plans. They also have current information about government policies which affect cancer patients.

National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) has information about follow-up care for cancer



RESOURCES FOR MAMMOGRAMS, PAP TESTS & OTHER WOMEN'S HEALTH EXAMS

Women without insurance or with high patient costs and who may meet income guidelines can call BGHP to learn more about the following programs:

CDP- Every Woman Counts: All local hospitals and many doctors' offices/clinics participate.

Family PACT: Many doctors' offices/clinics participate.

Mad River Hospital's Free Mammography grant from the National Breast Cancer Foundation.

Under the Affordable Care Act, preventative health care, including screening mammograms and pap tests, are covered, at no-cost to patients, in health plans.

Tax Free Giving

By Carolyn Lehman, Past BGHP President

The new federal tax law that passed last year has made it difficult for most taxpayers to take a federal tax deduction for charitable giving. How this will effect donations to non-profits like BGHP is yet to be seen.

For those of us lucky enough to be 70½ or older, and lucky enough to have an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), there is a nifty work-around that allows us to contribute tax-free. I just learned how to do this and used it for the 2018 tax year.

Here's how it works:

If during your working life you put money aside in a traditional tax-deferred IRA, the year you turn 70½ you must start withdrawing that money or face a hefty fine. You must draw down at least a specific amount every year—your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD).

The money you withdraw is taxable

as regular income at your current tax rate.

But if you give money from your IRA directly to a qualified non-profit, it will not be taxed as income. That's called a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) and it has to be done in a specific way.

The money must not touch your hands—or your bank account. However, your IRA custodian can make the distribution for you. (You can gift more, up to a total of \$100,000, from your IRA each year.

Timing is important when it comes to RMDs. Each year the funds must come out of your IRA and be transferred directly to your chosen charity by your RMD deadline. The first year, that deadline is April 15 of the following year; it's December 31st for every year after that.

You can find a table to help you determine your RMD by using the

“Required Minimum Deduction Worksheet” at https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-tege/uniform_rmd_wksht.pdf.

Your IRA custodian or financial adviser is the right person to advise you on your personal financial situation.

Here's how it worked for me. I made a list of the charities I wanted to benefit and the breakdown in dollars and gave it to the broker that manages my IRA. They sent a check directly from my IRA to the BGHP and the others.

This charitable giving was a sweet reduction in my federal tax bill. The best thing about it is that the BGHP and our community will benefit.

Thanks to Peter Lehman, Spencer Pena and Ginger Weber for contributing their expertise.

Breast and GYN Health Project is pleased to sponsor a free upcoming educational workshop for our supporters and the community!

Enhancing your confidence and financial peace of mind through planning

Tuesday, May 21st
5:30-6:30 PM (5:00 pm arrival)
Refreshments provided

Humboldt County Library
313 3rd Street, Eureka

Guest speakers:

Areas our guest speakers will cover:

- ✓ Resources that will help you to build a legacy of wealth for you and your family
- ✓ Learn about the importance of staying invested and navigating changes in the stock market
- ✓ How to evaluate and select professional advisors
- ✓ Important estate planning and gifting techniques to enhance your legacy



Ginger Weber, CFP®
President, Financial Advisor
Premier Financial Group



Teresa Conley, CFP®
Vice President,
Financial Advisor
Premier Financial Group

For questions, or to RSVP, please contact Barb Sage at BGHP 707-825-8345 x-130

This meeting is not library-sponsored and the presence of the group in the library meeting room does not constitute endorsement by the library. This meeting site is accessible to the disabled.

Volunteers Make Our Community a Better Place Thank you!!

In 2018, volunteers contributed over 4,000 hours of time to help!



McKinleyville High Girls' Volleyball Coaches Jocelyn and Janis Grondalski taught community service through the "Dig Pink" fundraising for their annual breast cancer awareness game. The 23 athletes on the JV & Varsity Teams raised over \$6,000. Thank you to the young women, the coaches & generous community sponsors!

Big thank you to Kathi and other volunteers who attended health and community fairs to represent the Breast and GYN Health Project. These volunteers answered questions and encouraged people throughout Humboldt and Del Norte Counties to get needed health care and to take care of their health in general. Good work all!



Thank you to all the volunteers who staffed our information tables at the Eureka Natural Foods stores in McKinleyville and Eureka in September.

During the weeklong "Change for Change" fundraising campaign, shoppers at both stores donated to support our 100% local cancer resource center services. Big thanks to Eureka Natural Foods for your investment in our local non-profit, to ENF customers and to our volunteers!

We are Forever Grateful to Our Contributors & Supporters

Thank you to 865 individuals and businesses who generously donated since September.

Space allows a partial listing of foundation, business and event supporters.

- All you Monthly Donors
- AmazonSmile shoppers
- Andree Wagner Peace Trust
- Arcata Artisan's Cooperative for 11 years of Arts!Arcata partnership
- Arcata High for Volleyball, Cheer and Football event partnerships
- Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria
- Behrens & Hitchcock for wine
- BiCoastal Media
- Bidding for Good item donors, sponsors and bidders
- Buddy's Auto Center's Pink Tow Truck in Arcata and Willow Creek
- California Cancer Crushers for Wings for A Cure proceeds
- City of Eureka for Party in Pink Zumbathon
- Donors to the Mary Scott Angel Fund & Integrative Wellness Fund
- Drs. Cobb and Mahoney for all the ways they support the Project
- Employees & Employers participating in Matching Programs-Bank of America, General Electric, PG&E, and Umpqua Bank
- Eureka High School Cheer and Football event partnerships
- Eureka Natural Food for 'Change for Change' partnership
- Facebook Fundraisers – Thank You!
- Ferndale High School Cheer and Football event partnerships
- Green Diamond Resource Company for grant assistance
- Healthcare Providers
- Heidi Bourne & Terry Bean-Iverson for Mindfulness Meditation Classes
- Humboldt Dutch Brothers Coffee
- Humboldt Herbals for "I Love Me" Tea in ChemoKits
- Humboldt Redwood Company for the Medical Record Binder grant
- Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Social Action Committee
- Jitter Bean Coffee for selecting BGHP as a "Super Hero" partner
- KHSU
- KHUM/Lost Coast Communications
- Mad River Radio Group
- Madrone Taproom & Brick Oven Pizza for a non-profit benefit night
- McKinleyville High for Volleyball, Cheer & Football event partnerships
- McKinleyville Lion's Club
- MikkiMoves Real Estate Non-Profit Collaboration
- Redwood River Resort
- Richard & Emily Levin Foundation
- Patricia D. & William B. Smullin Foundation for client services grant
- Safeway Foundation for client services grant
- Sales for Survivors Sponsors & Participating Businesses
- Scrapper's Edge
- ShopSmart & Ray's Food Place (C&K Markets) for register donations
- Six Rivers Running Club for Atalanta Walk & Run Partnership
- Soroptimists International of Eureka and Humboldt Bay
- St. Bernards High School Cheer and Football event partnerships
- South Fork High School Cheer and Football event partnerships
- The Central Office
- Times Standard for media support
- Vacation Raffle trip donors, sponsors, volunteers & ticket buyers
- Vehicle donations via C.A.R.S. (Charitable Adult Rides & Services)



To receive a copy of our 2018 Annual Report with a complete listing of contributors, please contact us at (707) 825-8345.

Calendar of Activities

This is a partial list – please see www.bghp.org, eNews & Facebook for more

- | | |
|---------|---|
| May 12 | Atalanta All Women's Walk & Run |
| May 18 | Healing Journeys "Trusting Your Inner Guidance" |
| May 21 | Financial Planning Seminar |
| June 14 | Vacation Raffle Drawing at Arcata Exchange |
| Sept 21 | Fall Concert at Calvary Lutheran Church |

Support Groups

Meetings held at the Project Office, 987 8th Street, Arcata, unless otherwise noted. Meeting times may change. Call 707-825-8345 to confirm or to add your name to the reminder call list.

Arcata Breast Cancer Support Group

2nd & 4th Thursdays, 4:30-6:00 p.m.

Gynecologic Cancer Support Group

2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 3:00-4:30 p.m.

Young Women's Cancer Support Group

2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 4:30-6:00 p.m.

Mindfulness Meditation for People with Cancer

Please call to be added to list

Advanced Disease Group

For those living with Stage IV Disease. Every Monday, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Write/Heal/Live: Expressive Writers Group

1st Fridays, 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Lymphoma & Leukemia Group hosted by BGHP

1st Tuesday, 4:00-5:30 p.m.



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Client Services Drop-in Hours
 Monday-Friday 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
 After hours by appointment
 Administration 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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