

# **I BEAT CANCER AND NOW I'M HELPING OTHERS WITH THEIR CHALLENGES**

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Hearing that I had life-threatening, stage-three cancer was one of the scariest moments of my life. The doctor immediately booked me in for an operation to remove the cancer, but less than 12-months later, more cancer cells were found in my uterus and I then underwent a hysterectomy. About six-months later, more cancer cells were found in my lymph nodes, which lead to a major groin dissection removing infected nodes.

It was like a snowball effect, and I had no idea when or if it would ever stop.

There seemed to be very few options that were being offered to me. I started a 12-month treatment plan, where I was taking the drug Interferon. However, I felt terrible when I took the Interferon. I was losing a dangerous amount of weight and suffering from clinical depression as a side effect. I felt like it was doing more damage than good and my doctor was not acknowledging that it was making me more ill and that my body was deteriorating. I was made to feel like I should be grateful for the drug and I also was angry that none of my questions about the worrying weight loss and the depression were being answered. I felt worse and worse and I believed the drug was killing me. After six months of suffering and not feeling or getting any better, I decided to stop taking it. With no support from my doctors, it was a scary decision to make, but I was determined to find other options.

It was around this time that remembered Ian Gawler's story of how he battled his own cancer through lifestyle changes. As prescription medicine wasn't working for me, I decided to research Ian's approach. After reading 'You Can Conquer Cancer', I discovered an evidence-based approach to healing cancer. I believed this was a preferred option, so I attended a Living Well Program at The Gawler Foundation where I discovered how a healthier and nutritious diet, as well as meditation, exercise and a positive attitude, can help heal the effects of cancer.

I was blown away by the benefits of meditation. I had previously tried to meditate alone and but just got distracted but I found meditating in a group surrounded by people who are going through the same challenges was a great way to learn how to clear your mind. For me, the best thing about the program was learning the importance of being kind to myself and exploring other options of healing, while taking control of my recovery process. As a result I started walking, swimming and doing tai chi, which has kept me fit and active.

It has now been 13 years since I was first diagnosed and at the wonderful age of 58, I am happy, healthy, and a very grateful survivor. My doctors may choose to believe that my recovery was down to the six-month treatment of Interferon. But I believe the drug did more harm than good, and it wasn't until I stopped taking it and implemented the significant lifestyle changes recommended by The Foundation that I really started to recover and beat cancer. Even my oncologist told me that I would stay healthy as long as I keep my positive attitude. I don't regret having to give up my stressful legal job. I am happy and my life is much more relaxed, enjoyable and very rewarding.