

AMAZING PATH TO WELLNESS

John Bettens, NSW



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In 2003, John Bettens was an incredibly busy, career focused criminal defence lawyer. With his penchant for stress, an unhealthy lifestyle and a family history of cancer, his March 2003 diagnosis with prostate cancer was a shock – but not a complete surprise.

John decided to decline surgery (radical prostatectomy) and radiation therapy and instead embraced a natural approach to managing his condition. This fresh outlook led him to take part in Life and Living retreat in October 2006, followed by the five day follow up Life and Living -The Next Step six months later.

John says his participation in the retreat was life changing.

“I was already a vegetarian, but The Gawler Foundation reinforced the importance of nutrition and diet in terms of treatment. I was also blessed to learn meditation, which has now become an entrenched part of my daily life.”

John also appreciated the approach of advocating positivity and empowerment.

“The Gawler Foundation isn’t pushing any harsh ideology. They promote the importance of diet, lifestyle and meditation. I had declined surgery, but I was surrounded by other participants who were undertaking conventional treatment. The Foundation was equally as accommodating and respectful to everyone.”

Then John was diagnosed with follicular lymphoma in March 2007. This time he declined chemotherapy for this condition and instead chose a more holistic treatment path – with remarkable results.

“I had my latest scan in February 2012 and my lymphatic cancer was unable to be detected.”

John has also sought a more integrative approach to treating his prostate cancer. He has recently taken part in an Australia-first trial led by urologist Dr Donald Murphy into the use of photodynamic therapy in the treatment of localised prostate cancer and is excitedly awaiting the results.

Today John Bettens is still a very busy man – but in a very different way.

He quit his career in 2006 and now spends his time doing the things he loves. This has included the amazing feat of walking from Rome to Santiago de Compostela in the north-west of Spain, a pilgrim’s walk of about 2500 kilometres, between April and August 2011.

John can’t believe the contrast between his outlook now and his life before his cancer diagnosis.

“Life is just full of opportunities; I don’t think there is anything out there that could stop me now.”