

For the Newly Diagnosed Person with Cancer & Their Loved Ones

Cancer referrals are one of the most frequent calls we receive and many of us have been touched by the diagnosis in one way or another. With this in mind, Healthnetwork Foundation recently partnered with *The Gathering Place*, in Cleveland Ohio. This non-profit organization's mission is to support, educate and empower individuals and families touched by cancer through programs and services provided free of charge.

Here *The Gathering Place* offers this advice for the newly diagnosed person with cancer or their loved ones:



Your emotional health:

- Whatever you are feeling right now, it is normal. It could be anger, fear, sadness, anxiety, or even denial. In time you may experience all of these emotions, in varying intensities.
- For your emotional health, we suggest you reach out for help. If you have close family or friends that understand you, that is great. If you don't, think about getting involved in a cancer support group or a center like *The Gathering Place*.
- Talking about your emotions and feelings can be very helpful in normalizing the situation and lessening the intensity of your feelings.

Your physical health:

- You may or may not have symptoms from your cancer, and you will most likely have side effects once you embark on the surgery, chemotherapy and/or radiation treatments offered for most cancers.
- Your physical health may be challenged or compromised, so we suggest you look at gentle exercise and healthy nutrition. Regular gentle exercise can help you gain mobility back faster after surgery. Proper nutrition can help your immune system stay strong.

Informational needs:

- Ask questions any time you feel confused, and ask again if the answers are not forthcoming.
- The language of cancer and its treatment can be confusing and hard to decipher. Hopefully you will find someone in your doctor's office or on your treatment team that you trust and feel comfortable with, who will take the time you need, even being willing to repeat the answers. If you don't find someone like that, turn to a medical librarian like the one at *The Gathering Place* to help you decipher the language that confuses you.
- You may not be able to concentrate on a book, but the librarian will suggest websites or pamphlets, or look up whatever you need to make informed decisions.

For more information on this valuable cancer support resource which is available to all Healthnetwork members, please contact Healthnetwork Foundation:
866-968-2467 | 440-893-0830
or email
help@healthnetworkfoundation.org.

Spiritual health:

- Whether or not you have a religious affiliation or a faith base, your willingness to look at and explore the bigger picture, the larger goals of your cancer experience and the meaning of life can be helpful.
- Your pastor, priest, iman or rabbi are all trained and comfortable with this line of inquiry.
- Learning how to relax through yoga, tai chi, massage or reiki can help you sleep better and take less pain medicine.

Take a deep breath:

- This may be the hardest thing you will ever do.
- There is no one right way to cope with cancer, so avoid people who are pushing you with 'shoulds'. You get to choose what is right for you.
- There is a lot of good information out there, but it can feel overwhelming.
- Focus on the next task at hand, and realize what is not in your control. There are many others who have walked this journey before you and have much to share.