Cancer Essay, Research Paper

Running head: CANCER

Cancer

Lots of things happen around us and sometimes we never stop to take a moment and look at everything we have and be thankful. Women in this century are very concerned about their looks and careers. They compete with each other at work, in social gatherings, and even at school. But if any one of them had been diagnosed with breast cancer, they come together to bring support to each other. The word cancer can bring so many feelings that it can take the wind out of you.

It is estimated that 182,800 women and 1,400 men in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2000. Though rare in men, breast cancer accounts for 30% of all cancer diagnosed in women. When the doctor has just told you that your diagnosis of breast cancer is most definite, it typically triggers a whirlwind of feelings and concerns. From the most emotional thinking, How will I survive this cancer? to the most practical one saying, How will my life change after this? Caring and support can be found from the women who are surviving and managing their lives despite having breast cancer. The most common feeling is self-esteem. Self-esteem is not having any love for yourself. Self-esteem is a one s feeling of high or low self worth. You have no control over your feelings, always thinking less of yourself and having doubt in all aspect of life.

A typical person can go through a lot of ordeals in a short time. Losing a part of the body is not an every day thing, especially a breast. The first signs of breast cancer appear on mammograms, they cannot be felt by the fingers or as symptoms. A lump or a mass will know more obvious symptoms. Either you get a lumpectomy or a mastectomy. A lumpectomy is an excision (removing of) of a breast tumor with a limited amount of associated tissue. A mastectomy is excision of a breast.

A lot of women deal with it differently. Some deal with it hands on and others are scared to admit that they have cancer. Mourning for the loss of your breast is very scary, you think about your scars and your new body image. You wonder if you should get implants, you also consider how will it affect your sexuality, will it change from this point forward and how will you deal with it. Through all their painful loss, they go through the changes of acceptance of their image. They begin to wonder if their new body image would ever feel normal to them again.

Terri was the most upset when she had to say good-bye to her body and go through the operation. She went through a lot of pain after the operation and she fell in a very deep depression. She had both of her breasts removed, so the cancer would not come back. She started to always question herself, What are they going to think about me? How am I going to look sexy enough? and, Why are they looking at me like that? Sometimes people can be very cruel; if they don t know what is going on in your life, they can be very judgmental. She started feeling low about her self and not able to associate with anyone; she would just lock her self in the house and feel miserable. She would drink heavily and eat junk food, not caring enough for herself or her family around her.

When a woman goes through the ordeal of having breast cancer she has to have a lot will power. She goes through the changes of not only losing her breast but also losing weight and her hair. My friend s mom, Rubina, also went through breast cancer. She had long, thick, light golden brown hair, and when she was diagnosed with cancer is was very traumatic for her because her hair was one of the reasons her husband had married her. She had to go through a lot of chemotherapy to get the cancer out of her body. Everyday she was losing a clump of hair and everyday she was getting very self-conscious, her self-esteem was not one of her strong points to help her through it. When she was finally over with her ordeal she did not have much hair left. So one day she went and got her head shaved. It had not hit her until her husband complimented her on one of her wigs and that was her breaking point, at that moment she started to cry like a baby. Even though she was crying, she did not know why, but after a while she realized that ever since this happened she had not taken the time to mourn for loss of her hair and her body image. She also realized that she had loved her hair as much as her husband did. From then on she would cry openly about her loss, instead of keeping it all inside. She dealt with it openly.

While I was growing up I noticed that my grandmother did not have one of her breasts. At that time, I was young enough not to ask her business, but after a few years later when I was 17, it happened to Rubina, my friend s mom. That is when I asked my grandmother what had happened to her. She told me that when she was young, she had felt a lump in her right breast, so she and the doctor decided to remove the breast. She did not go through chemotherapy and self-esteem issues because the doctor caught the problem very early on. I still remember that she always wore a padded bra when we use to go to parties or someone s house. This was so others would not be able to guess her business, but when she was home with her family she did not bother to disguise her image. Because she made the decision to remove her breast, she lived 45 years more and had four kids.

Regardless of the kind of surgery one has, mourning for what is a painful process of breast cancer but is necessary for everyone. You will get through it by yourself, and with the support of family, friends, therapists, and fellow patients. Accepting your loss and grieving in your own way can get you through it all. My field of career is Sonography and I will be the one examining the patients. I will be dealing with the denying and the acceptance part of being examined for possible breast cancer. My job will be to reassure them about the process and explain to them as to what I am doing on the ultra sound. I can teach them how to cope through the process of being examined. The most important part of all will be listening to the patient and making them feel as comfortable as possible. Being the one who knows what is going on in their body I can talk to them and tell them to find out more information about breast cancer before them make any major decisions.

Resources

1. http://webmd.lycos.com/content/dmk/dmk\_article\_6462954

2. http://webmd.lycos.com/content/dmk/dmk\_article\_3961311

3. http://webmd.lycos.com/content/dmk/dmk\_article\_5963015

4. http://www.cancercare.org/campaigns/breastcancer1.htm