



POWER OF THREE

THREE THINGS I WISH I KNEW WHEN I WAS FIRST DIAGNOSED



Hayley Dinerman

1. You are not alone! We are here fighting with you and for you.
2. You are stronger than you think.
3. There is more research underway than you can imagine. The treatment landscape is changing for the better.



Kristy

1. The internet can be a place of positivity and support. I am firmly in the "don't Google" camp, but avoiding the internet prevented me from finding a community. Once I started connecting with others I felt safer and more empowered. Knowing that other people can do this helped me trust that I could too.
2. You can handle things you never thought you could (or would have to). Chemo? Drains? Whatever part of this scares the crap out of you... you can handle it.
3. Cancer doesn't end, even if treatment does. This is less positive-sounding than the others, but knowing that it's normal to struggle through the transitions has helped me manage them.

Cynthia Washington

1. I wish I knew about ice treatments ahead of time.
2. I wish I had taken the shingles vaccine.
3. I didn't realize that being overweight and having poor eating habits could contribute to getting cancer.

Carrie Kreiswirth

1. Take things one day at a time (or an hour or a minute if you need to). Whatever helps keep moving you forward.
2. However you feel is the right way to feel. Anxious, confused, happy, sad. Whatever the moment, whatever the feeling, honor it.
3. Accept all of the help and support that is offered to you. You will need it - all of it. There is so much strength in allowing yourself to be vulnerable.





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Stacey Janeen

1. Focus on healing mentally. I spent so much time trying to heal physically that I neglected my mental health.
2. Cancer does not discriminate, it can happen to anyone even if you have no family history. It's not your fault.
3. Enjoy life, friends, and family.



Cathy Williamson

1. I wish I had known that not all breast cancers are the same.
2. I was a hypochondriac before my diagnosis and wish I'd known how strong I really was.
3. I wish I'd known more about healing and the power of positive words (at the beginning). I learned so much about that during my journey and would tell anyone facing any disease to speak life, healing, and positive words over your body.

Kelly Thomas

1. CONNECT TO OTHER TNBC THRIVERS. 2 years ago I started @tnbc_thrivers because I knew in my heart that there were women out there thriving after their TNBC diagnosis. I searched hashtags and invited everyone to share their stories on my platform. The grid on @tnbc_thrivers now has over 280+ posts from some of the most inspirational women in our community.
2. SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE FOR YOU + YOUR FAMILY. Patients don't go through cancer alone, so do our caregivers and family members. The @tnbcfoundation has a hotline in partnership with @cancercareus that offers free support by experienced Oncology social workers specializing in TNBC support. You can reach them at 877-880-TNBC.
3. THEIR STORY ISN'T YOUR STORY. It's nearly impossible to be on the internet and not come across a story of a fallen thriver sister and not feel triggered. This is your reminder that everyone's experience is their own just as each of our journeys may not mirror each other's. Never compare yourself with someone else!



LaTonya Davis

1. I wish I knew that chemo brain was real.
2. Wearing makeup.
3. Maintain who you are.





Nicole Edghill

1. Know your treatment, know the drugs they are putting in your body.
2. Don't be afraid to switch teams.
3. Vulnerability. Be ok with not being ok.



Karen Peterson

1. It was important for me to know about subsets.
2. I wish I knew about maintenance drugs.
3. I think it's important to find a research oncologist.

Brooke Clay Taylor

1. I'm not special. One in 8 women are diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime, which means if everyone following my account is female, that's roughly 1,200 of you. Goodness, that's... just ridiculous.
2. We're all so much stronger than we know. While I joke about the cancer class of 2019, I'm grateful to walk through the trenches with women who make tough look easy. We're built for great things, even if it's showing others around us what's possible.
3. It's not easy showing up everyday with a good attitude, but it's absolutely a choice. You can create a ripple of positivity even when you feel like you're standing in the eye of a hurricane.



Aliya Whipple

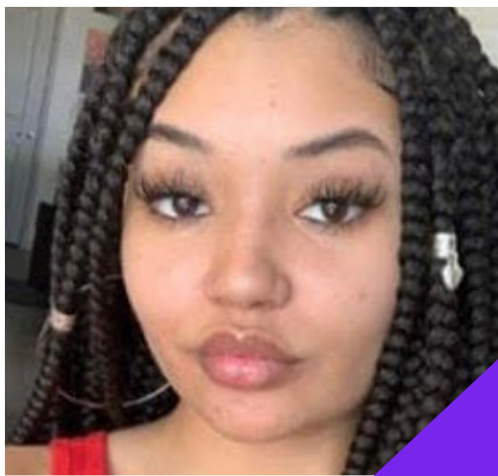
1. Breast Reconstruction Options: I had delayed reconstruction, but I wish I knew more about the pros and cons of the reconstruction process and options.
2. My treatment path: My first oncologist scribbled my treatment meds on a stick note. Y'all know he got fired right?
3. That intimacy and sex can and should go on. If you know, then you know. But I had to ask my doctor (the one I fired) if I could kiss my husband during chemo treatment. The answer was yes, but no one told me how the meds would or wouldn't affect us. A diagnosis doesn't remove your human needs and wants!



Tamara Z

1. You are not alone! 15-20% of breast cancer cases are TNBC and @tnbcfoundation has an amazing community of people in all stages, all over the world that you can connect with!
2. It's ok to not be ok. This is hard. There's no question about it, and if you're sad, angry, upset, depressed, confused, in the dark - that's ok. Write it down. Reach out (see the first tip!). Lean in. You'll have good days and bad days and tomorrow will always be a fresh start.
3. Ask ALL the questions! Be your own advocate! If you have questions about lymphedema, DIEP, genetic mutations, fertility, aesthetic flat closure etc. ASK THEM and keep asking until it's clear. Chemo brain is real but it's your right to understand and have the knowledge! If your doctor doesn't have answers, don't just accept that, ask them to use their resources and get back to you. Also, get as many opinions as you need to feel comfortable with a plan. It's your treatment and body and you and your care team should be 100% aligned!





Arianna Apodaca

1. Wish I had more beauty tips. Also, figuring out how to fix a wig.
2. Having a dietician or having someone prepare my diet better because I was on steroids and nobody really told me that I could gain as much weight as I did.
3. Finding a group of people to help support you.



Kelsey

1. Everyone's treatment for #TNBC is different.
2. You will lose some friends (and maybe family).
3. Advocate for yourself until you turn blue in the face, if you have to. ADVOCATE ADVOCATE!

Rifka Coleman

1. Healing isn't linear. Healing physically and mentally take time (and work). You may feel better one day and then not the next. That's normal. It does get better.
2. Mindset is everything. Acknowledging and processing your emotions is essential to a positive mindset. Whatever you are feeling is valid. Embrace the thoughts and emotions. Keep trying, focus on gratitude. Practice makes permanent.
3. You are not alone! There will be an outpouring of love. Friends and family will rally behind you. Connect with other thrivers; we will lift each other up!



Jess Stachitas Beard

1. Never let cancer take over who you are. Stay true and soldier on.
2. Love yourself. Cancer takes one hell of a beating on your body. Give yourself grace for all your body has endured. Hair and a slim body aren't everything. Living to see another day with your loved ones is.
3. Accept help. You never know how someone can impact you unless you let them.



Shayla

1. What is TNBC? This breast cancer is the most aggressive, most likely to recur, and most difficult to treat. TNBC tumors are estrogen-receptor negative, meaning they do NOT exhibit any of these 3 known receptors that many medications and treatments can target.
2. 15-20% of breast cancer cases are triple negative. TNBC disproportionately strikes younger women, women of African, Latinx or Caribbean descent, and those with BRCA1 mutations.
3. Approx. Every half hour, a woman in the US is diagnosed with TNBC.



Melissa Stone

1. The mind is incredibly powerful. I was angry at my body when I received my diagnosis. I thought it had failed me, and I would not recover from the heavy treatments and surgeries. Mental health is just as important as physical health. The mind-body connection is real, and it is a powerful thing. I changed my perspective and focused on healing and strength instead of fear and anxiety.
2. Cancer is a rollercoaster. I am the type of person who always likes to have a complete plan. Unfortunately, with cancer, plans change. I made the mistake of giving myself a treatment timeline when I was diagnosed. I learned the hard way that treatment plans might change. I had many bumps along the way. I had to switch chemo, had delays in chemo, switch surgeons.... You will have ups and downs. Good days and bad days. It was a lot easier to move forward on my journey when I learned to just take it one day at a time.
3. Outside support really helps. I was very hesitant to share my diagnosis at first. I thought outside support wasn't for me. Wow, was I wrong! There are so many great resources available. I wish I had been proactive from the start. I find it extremely beneficial to talk to other women who are going through what I am. I hope to continue connecting with other people affected by this disease.

@ladyinwarriorpink

1. That reconstruction was a thing! Yes, I was one of those few women who didn't know reconstruction was a "thing". So, when I was told on Nov 5, 2019 after meeting my oncologist for the first time that I may lose 1 or both of my breasts at the age of 23... I was shattered. I instantly pictured myself looking and feeling like a boy and that image broke me. I cried and couldn't stop. The next day my fiancé went digging through my huge binder of information and came across a section on reconstruction. He was so excited to show it to me. It instantly made me feel better knowing I can still have that "image" of having breasts if I choose and that my insurance would pay for it.
2. That freezing your eggs isn't usually covered by insurance. Why? Simply because it isn't their main 'concern'. I know, seems wrong huh? It is. If we choose to have our eggs frozen, why shouldn't we have that right for it to be covered and not pay thousands of dollars? So, I didn't freeze my eggs, mainly because being stage 4 from the start I didn't feel like I had the luxury of time.
3. That consuming weed on a 1-1 ratio helps immensely. It has helped me with keeping a decent appetite and settling my nausea for the past 8 months without having to take anti-nausea meds, which means no constipation! It all around helps me function during the day and stay asleep at night! It's insane how many people hate on #marijuana but it has been so helpful for so many side effects! If it's legal in your state or you can get it somehow, it's worth trying.



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