

Making the Decision

You have cancer. Probably one of the worst pieces of news you can ever receive, although I truly can think of a few others. So many people, even after all our modern technical advances in medicine, consider this the final sentence. It does not always have to be so. Your decision can affect this.

18 years ago, I can recall in extreme detail, down to the mauve color of the wallpaper in the examination room and ugly medical office furniture, my husband's diagnosis of Stage IV Melanoma. We didn't get the news from the doctor however; for as we waited at length for biopsy results in this tiny, stifling room, I noticed that the staff had left my husband's folder on the table. After about 30 minutes of waiting I opened it and saw the diagnosis on the top page. At that time, I remember the screaming going on inside my head – whether to tell my husband Jon or not or wait for the doctor. After about 2 minutes, I decided to tell him.

Keep in mind, at that time I knew almost nothing about cancer. I only knew that it was serious indeed. Jon was upset but did not process the news completely. The doctor finally came in and discussed the diagnosis with us. We scheduled with a surgeon that same day to remove the tumor.

But that evening was the absolute worse. We both cried for a long time as we processed this news. After lengthy conversations and emotional trauma, at the end of the evening we came to a big decision. We were going to fight this!

Cancer is a serious illness, yes. But at the same time, it is also a serious battle and a large part of this campaign is a psychological one. It's not just physical. Your mental attitude and mindset can greatly impact the outcome.

The decision of course is a personal one and it can be different for each and every one - to fight it or not. But the decision you make is where your road and/or battle begins.