

Living your best life after a breast cancer diagnosis.



Resiliency: Emotional Wellness



#YSCSYMPOSIUM

PITTSBURGH,
PA

Objectives



- Definition
- Breast cancer dx – emotions
- Components of emotional wellness
- Developing emotional wellness
- Practice

#YSCSYMPOSIUM

PITTSBURGH,
PA

Emotional Resilience

Definition

- Faced with a significant challenge, an individual survives without lasting psychological difficulties.
- Ability to bounce back from negative emotions
- Emotional wellness: emotional self-awareness and acceptance

Why Talk About Emotional Wellness?

Survivors are challenged by medical and psychosocial consequences of cancer

Cancer can impact all aspects of an individual's health, particularly mental health

Stress of a cancer diagnosis

Cancer Diagnosis Impact on Mental Health

- Stress and worry
- Sadness and grief
- Emotionally distraught or overwhelmed
- Impacts self and relationships
- Risk of depression and anxiety symptoms

Emotional Distress

- Difficulty sleeping
- Difficulty eating
- Negative thoughts
- Depression
- Irritability, anger
- Impulsive behavior
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Fearfulness, anxiety, or nervousness
- Feeling emotionally numb or detached
- Inexplicable sadness
- Mood swings
- Difficulty making decisions
- Poor self-care

Resiliency: Emotional Wellness

- One still experiences difficulty or distress
- You feel emotional pain and sadness
- Some are better equipped than others
- Change behaviors, thoughts and actions
- Can be learned and developed

(APA, n.d.)

Aspects of Emotional Wellness

- Self-awareness of feelings
- Self-acceptance of feelings (What???)
- Coping skills to bounce back
- Active positive choices
- Positive relationships

Developing Emotional Wellness

- Get to know yourself
- Journal
- Practice optimism
- Express gratitude
- Use humor
- Improve stress management skills
- Seek professional assistance

Getting to Know Yourself

- Make friends with yourself post cancer dx
- Accept your fatigue, your body changes, “chemo brain”
- Explore your needs at home, at work, in relationships – personal and social
- Experiment with old and new routines
- Establish a “new” balance

Knowing yourself is the
beginning of all wisdom.

Aristotle

Journal

- Feelings
- Thoughts
- Experiences
- Plans
- Eating, exercise, sleep patterns
- Words, drawings, pictures
- Be creative

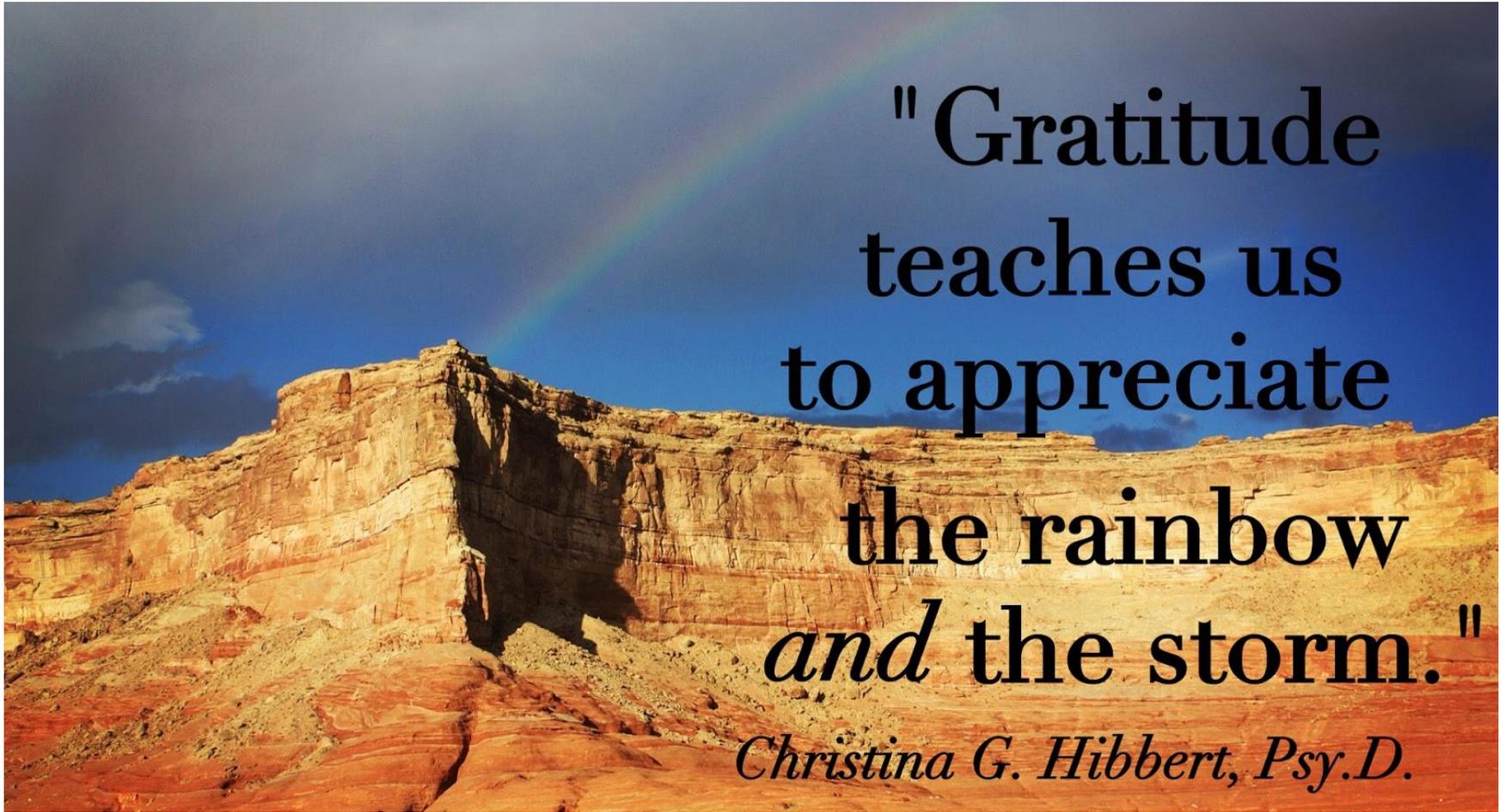


Optimism

- Glass is half full, make lemonade out of lemons
- Find the positives, reframe the negatives
- Reward yourself after a challenging appt/day/week
- Meaningful conversations
- Avoid “Debbie downers”
- Take control



Gratitude



"Gratitude
teaches us
to appreciate
the rainbow
and the storm."

Christina G. Hibbert, Psy.D.

Humor

I hope they call my name soon.
I can't stand all this waiting!

Wait, if they call my name I'll have to actually
do this. Never mind.

Smashed boobs, smashed boobs, smashed boobs...

They can't MAKE me do this, right?

Maybe there's still time to cancel.

Crap! That was my name.

Hospital gowns come in vest
form? Sexy.



Your Thoughts During a MAMMOGRAM

-Start to Finish

Stress Management

Mindfulness: awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally

(Kabat-Zinn, 2013)

- Start by focusing on the breath



Mindfulness Techniques

- Focus on the breath
- Body Scan
- 3 minute check-in
- Yoga
- Mindful eating
- Lake meditation/mountain meditation
- Loving kindness meditation

Mindfulness Qualities

- Non-judging
- Acceptance
- Patience
- Non-striving
- Gratitude
- Letting go
- Beginner's mind

(Kabat-Zinn, 2013)

7 Mindfulness Habits

for Calm and Focus



Experiential Mindful Meditation



Stress Reduction Strategies

- Exercise
- Progressive relaxation
- Deep breathing
- Guided imagery
- Aromatherapy
- Music

Stress Reduction Tips

- Nature
- Enjoyable/pleasurable activities
- Prayer – Let go, let God
- Hug your child
- Snuggle with your pet
- Light candles
- Curl up in a favorite spot w a soft throw

Resources

YouTube videos

- Mindfulness meditations/talks
- Yoga
- Progressive breathing
- Guided imagery
- Stress management
- Humor
- Ted Talk

Apps

- Calm (free, iOS and Android)
- Headspace (free, iOS and Android)
- Mindfulness App (free, iOS and Android)
- Simple Habit (free, iOS and Android)
- Stop, Breathe, and Think (free, iOS and Android)
- Humm.ly (free, iOS and Android)

Other Sources

- Jon Kabat-Zinn: books, CDs, U Mass website
- 10% Happier – Dan Harris (GMA)
- Palouse Mindfulness website
- Research articles
- Mindfulness Magazine
- MBSR 8 week groups

References

American Psychological Association, n.d. The road to resilience. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx>

Kabat-Zinn, J. (2013). *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain and illness* (revised edition). New York, NY: Bantam