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Bill, you're listening to the cancer assist podcast hosted by Dr Bill Evans and brought to you by the cancer Assistance Program. Wherever you are in your experience, we're here to provide help and hope as you navigate cancer prevention, treatment and care, help when you really need it.

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Welcome to the cancer assist Show. I'm your host, Dr Bill Evans, and it's a pleasure today to welcome Andrea Floyd to our conversation about cancer. Now, if you've listened to the cancer assist show, previously brought to you by the cancer Assistance Program, you'll be aware that we've talked a lot about various types of cancer, and we've talked to a lot of individuals who provide support to cancer patients. We haven't talked to anyone who's both provided support to cancer patients and has had the experience of cancer themselves, and that's Andrea's story, and it's going to be an interesting conversation, because that perspective is one that we really need to share. And Andrea is on the board of the cancer Assistance Program, and recently brought forward a little essay that she called, apply your own oxygen mask first, about self care, and I thought that was such a great title to have a conversation about. So welcome Andrea.

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Thank you, Bill. It's really a pleasure to be here. I'm honored and grateful to be here. Thank you.

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Well, it's going to be interesting for our listeners to hear your perspective, because, you know, oftentimes people fall into the diagnosis of cancer, but there haven't been a care provider, and they may be a care provider, but not in a professional role. They could be a kind of in that sandwich generation where they're providing care to elderly parents, or they're already have children, or they got both, and they're sandwiched in between, but But you are in the position of of being a primary care nurse practitioner. So maybe just to start, let's tell our listeners a bit about yourself and how you got to be a nurse practitioner and what kind of role you play in our community today.

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So you know, there was a time when I really didn't consider my health. We really take that for granted, especially as caregivers. And as you mentioned with the sandwich population, they often caring for others and so putting themselves last. So there was a time when I just like every breath I took, every step I took, I would just took for granted. We have a tendency to take self care for granted and to see as a sort of a selfish act, some sort of a selfish act. But have you ever wondered what it would take to mitigate the risks of burnout, compassion fatigue, or even being diagnosed with a serious illness. Self care is not only that, not selfish, it is self preserving, for sure, self respectful and also having self compassion. These

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are learnings you've had from your own experience. So just back it up a little bit, though, because just tell us a little bit about your your work before your diagnosis of cancer. So you were a primary care provider, and maybe there's some things in your personal life. Perhaps you were in that sandwich generation too. What was going on prior to your your diagnosis of cancer? Well, Bill,

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you know, I'm blown away that I, a teen single mom, was able to accomplish a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a nurse practitioner certificate while working full time as a critical care nurse. I then became successful in investing in real estate, and I acquired my MBA. And like you know, I I really enjoyed saving lives, taking care of clients, and being part of this, the healthcare journey for 1000s. And you know, those that know me, they see me as being strong, courageous and healthy. But it wasn't always that way. In November, on November 2, in 2021 I received a call. I was like, in my car, and I pulled over, I said, Yes, hello, I can take this call. And they said, Yes, Andrea, it's the it's the doctor's office. The specialist officer said, okay, my my thoughts are racing, and my mouth felt dry and my heart was racing because a couple months prior, I had something appeared on my hand. It was red and icky, and I realized I've got blood on my hands and but I didn't take take it too seriously, because I'd had similar symptoms a year prior, and it turned out to be nothing. I was experiencing some fatigue, but I was always so busy, so I didn't see it as being that important. Then I said hello, and they said to me, grade two cancer, grade two cervical cancer. Can't. Me,

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not me. It was been a huge, huge shock to get that over the phone while you're driving your car.

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I was like, you know, um, is he was talking about next steps, and I was having trouble like you said, getting over this first step, yes. And

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even processing the fact that the word cancer had come into the conversation, right? And

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I thought to myself, you know, my stomach was in knots. And I thought, you know, I had was some breathing trying, like, I'm getting anxious. And I thought, Oh, please, God, please help me. And I thought, you're not gonna die.

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So one of the first thoughts that you had was like, not

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the immediate first thought, but as I'm processing, you know, I realized, you know, what I learned from this whole experience was that you can always find strength. Because I was feeling weak, because when I was weak, I became stronger in faith. I felt I learned that the healthcare journey to overcome is required to be holistic, and I learned that it is really important to receive help and to accept help, because we can't always do it alone. It's

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such an important message and and you're telling it from the perspective of a woman. I can tell you, men are terrible at this, and often try to project a strong image and contain their emotions and don't want to share the fact that they're really hurting inside and very worried and so on. And it's a message for everybody, but I would emphasize that men are particularly in need of hearing this message, of being willing to accept help and support, and that can come from many sources. You've already mentioned one, and that's your spiritual beliefs, your faith, if you have a faith, and that can be very sustaining, reassuring confidence and in what the future will hold for you, and I think that was important to you.

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Yeah, absolutely. And the spiritual aspect for everybody looks differently, like if we're not talking about, you know, indigenous folks, it may be smudging and drumming, and you know, different folks, it's different some for some, it might be meditation, you know. But the important thing is to understand, to become self aware, and to understand what's your values and beliefs and what gives you purpose, because these very thoughts and ideas is what will help you with making decisions in your life, for for your health and for for your health life journey.

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Can you describe that a little more for yourself, just personally?

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So for me, for for the spiritual aspect, like I said, I gained strength through my faith. So through prayer and through reading the Bible, I found strength through that, and I was raised with with that to find strength. And my grandmother, like she was a mentor to me, and she's a very she was a very resilient woman and very God fearing woman. So it was already instilled. So that's where our values and belief usually comes from. Is from, you know, our growing up and what we're exposed to, so definitely that helped me to gain strength and to gain courage throughout my life, and you know, and then even more so, when I received this time, you

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even brought a bit of your grandmother with you today. Yes,

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yeah, where her her church had church hat,

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very appropriate for the conversation today. That's great. Returning to one's faith or a spiritual dimension can be very important as a form of support. You found some other things to be very valuable in terms of thinking about how to support yourself as a caregiver who now has to face a diagnosis of cancer. What were some of those other things

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earlier I said, I mentioned that a holistic approach is required. It needs and I mean that in every aspect. So when you when we talking about mental health, you know it's like there's a grieving that happens, where we feel like our life is not ever going to be the same. So we're grieving the loss of what we thought our life would be, the plans that we had may look different, but we have to remember that we will go through some grieving and have some difficulty with with with that. And so we need to have find self compassion. And what I found was that when I was around between the age of 13 and 16, I went through some childhood trauma at that time, and I actually like, I won't go through that right now, because that gets a whole different podcast, but I actually had to go back to that place and speak to Andrea at the age 13 to 16, and say to her that you know what what you went through was not your fault. You are loved, you are resilient, you're beautiful, and I'm going to bring you along with me on this journey, because I couldn't be who I am today if it wasn't for you, the alternative to that would be to leave her back there bleeding. So my that's my ideology about that holistic approach to care that that's that would be a wound that would be still open, and so that's a part of you that's still not healing. So you're on a journey of trying to recover and to overcome a serious illness. And so all aspects of you to be, to become your best self, all aspects of you have to be on that healing journey. So

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I'm sure there are many people who, when they encounter diagnosed with cancer, have issues in their lives that are very unresolved, shall we say, very conflicted, very traumatic events that have never been resolved in entirety. So in that situation, what do you think is it important to get them resolved, along with having the cancer dealt with? You think that you can't really be healed in a holistic sense without dealing with the baggage of other issues that are going on in your life? That's

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a great question. Bill, it's a continuous journey. It's you're continuously evolving going through those traumas. Sometimes, you know, people are diagnosed with like a complex trauma, so they've got multi layer of trauma, and it can take a lifetime to overcome. But what's important is to develop that mindset where you want to overcome and you're facing those those traumas, and getting the counseling that you need. You need help along the way, doing the things that will help you to heal give puts you in a mindset where you're ready to overcome and heal in all aspects, like holistic research. So it's having that mindset. It impacts every aspect of your life. The body keeps a score, right? So when you think of oncogenesis, where the cells are targeted, and we don't know what will actually cause oncogenesis to occur, where tumor cancer will occur, but it like it can be environmental physical, it could be so many different things that could trigger that that process to happen in our body, because our body keeps a score. So that's why I think it's so important to be mindful of all aspects of our of our of our health.

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I guess you're touching on an area that I would regard as kind of a deficiency in our health care system, because I know, as an oncologist, you know, we take a history and do a physical examination and look at images and so on, and we make a diagnosis and proceed to treatment. But our our in depth examination of a person, sort of emotional status, past traumas and so on, is superficial at best, and perhaps non existent. So you really don't know what has happened in a person's prior life experience that may impact how they experience the cancer diagnosis, and it's something that probably need to give a lot more thought to as care providers. And so it's good that we're having this conversation, but really it's something that probably should start with the primary care physician having a full knowledge of the patient, because it's certainly true that the way a patient reacts to the diagnosis is influenced by their their past life and their experiences of life, and it is not helpful for a patient combating cancer to be depressed, to be overly anxious, etc. You really want them used to talk to them about you probably all got to be on the same team working to to get better and to get better, you need to be getting better mentally and physically, as well as having the cancer shrink with in response to treatment. So it's interesting that you raise this aspect and reference your own past experience about issues that perhaps you managed to get resolved before you got on your cancer journey and successfully. So they weren't kind of an impediment to to that journey you were, in fact, stronger, having resolved them in the past, and better able to face the challenges of going through cancer treatment bill. I

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love it that you brought that up because that that's your bang on in my nursing practice, as a nurse practitioner in primary care, they the nursing fundamentals of Nursing is a holistic approach to care anyway, and we find that it is important to take those, all those aspects of the being, to know how their their journey will be, and to support them in that journey. We don't know how to support them if we don't have that information. And you're right that you know if. Are dealing with mental health concerns is, then the journey is more difficult. We, if you don't know what support systems they have involved, then the journey again, is a lot more difficult. You can't be proactive, that you're, you're you're more reactive in their care, and that it is always what is it is always chaos. And this is, this isn't a good way, a good journey, for that, those clients. And so I'm very glad you brought that up. There was, there's a American psychology psychiatrist by the name of Bruce Perry, and he went to New Zealand, and he he spoke to some indigenous people in New Zealand, and they were in awe at the Western world of medicine, with the way that you know, with testing and diagnosing, how far we've come with those things and with medicine pharmaceuticals. But they were, they made the suggestion that connectivity wasn't we lacked it. We were lacking in that area. And it is so important to help with healing, and that is so true when we're talking about even when we went through, you know, COVID with, you know, the communities, like, whether it was online, you needed to reach out to people. That's when you realized how important it was. We're communal beings, and it's so connectivity is so important when a client is being picked up by a driver from from from cap, you know that connectivity that that drive to for radiation treatment can mean the world in that moment, that day that you're connecting with someone that cares enough to volunteer their time to come and pick you up. It's like you matter. That's what that's telling you. It's It's such a beautiful thing. And I remembered, a year ago, I met at an actual volunteer driver that he himself was battling with cancer,

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but still giving back Yeah, the same time Yes.

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And it goes to show you about the importance of that connectivity. When you think about, you know, what happens with the brain with that, with the connectivity is the those feel good hormones like the dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin, oxytocin is the one Connect for that, specifically for connection, connectivity, where you get that good feel. And so it made sense to me that that person was reaching out and serving others, even though they themselves were on that healing journey. Because it does help your healing to have those to feel good and to feel that you have purpose and to do things with others and to have that connection and to have community so significant, they found that even seniors that have like food insecurity, a lot of the times, I mean, for sure, there is cost factor into that, but a lot of the time, it's because they have no connectivity and they're isolated and don't really feel like eating, don't have an appetite. If they had a community of people that would meet up and have a senior kitchen together and prepare food and take home some that sort of thing, it would they would have it would open up their appetite, make them feel better and and have a better outlook on life, because they've got something to look forward to and people to connect to

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you're actually making a really an advertisement for all the services that the cancer Assistance Program provides, because it's drivers are great, and that is an opportunity for connectivity, and those drives back and forth for radiation or systemic therapy treatments. But it's making other services available, whether it's a loaning of equipment that helps them to be safe in their homes and to get around more easily, or food supplements or urinary incontinence. And during COVID, as you mentioned, when people were shut in, we delivered food packages to folks at home, and preceded that by phone calls. And I think the phone calls were almost as valuable to the people as as the food packages. I know, having done a number of them, that people looked forward to them, and we kind of established a relationship over time, and you could just see how they appreciated that opportunity to have a conversation, to feel that there were people out there that actually cared about them and were willing to call them up and arrange for food to come and other things. So it really underscores very clearly what you described, and it fills a need that unfortunately, I don't I'm not sure that the healthcare system will ever be able to fill adequately because of the challenges faced, the volume of patients, the shortages of healthcare workers, the busyness of all of everything, and the focus on technology, because there's so many tests to be done and then so many treatments, have become very complicated. So with all that busyness, somehow those issues of connectivity and and. Life experiences that may be influencing how they perceiving their illness now are just not given the attention that they need and deserve. And I guess that's partly your message is you have to be a bit proactive and look for some of that connectivity yourself or hopefully others around you see the need and help bring connections into your life. If you're someone who is kind of withdrawn, introverted and less confident about reaching out for for supports and just on that topic, people should not feel hesitant about reaching out for the supports of the cancer Assistance Program offers. It's a phone call and a friendly voice at the end, who will help you and guide you as to finding the things that you need at your particular point in time. So so there's the spiritual side, there's this mental health and connectivity, and there's some other dimensions we want to talk about. But I thought maybe I'll take a brief break here and actually hear from the cancer Assistance Program, and we'll be right back talking to Andrea Floyd, primary care nurse practitioner about her particular journey and the topic of applying your own oxygen mask. First. We'll be right back.

21:15

We'd like to take a moment to thank our generous supporters, the Hutton Family Fund and Banco creative studio, who make the cancer assist podcast possible. The cancer Assistance Program is as busy as ever, providing essential support to patients and their families. We remain committed to providing free services for patients in our community, including transportation and equipment, loans, personal care and comfort items, parking and practical education. These services are made possible by the generosity of our donors, through one time gifts, monthly donations, third party fundraising, corporate sponsorships and volunteer opportunities. Visit cancer assist.ca to see how you can make a difference in the lives of cancer patients and their families.

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Welcome back. We're here talking to Andrea Floyd about her personal experience of cancer and her advice around managing it, particularly if you're a care provider, and a lot of us are care providers, maybe not in the sense of being professional. Care providers to people with health problems, but care providers to family, care providers to elderly parents. So in a way, a lot of us, maybe the majority of us, are care providers of one type or another. And so we touched on, sort of how various things like spiritual supports and dealing with mental health issues that may have been issues of the past that weren't resolved, how those things are important. But there are other dimensions we also have to think about, and maybe one of the next ones we should talk about is just the emotional side of dealing with the diagnosis of cancer. And I think a lot of emotions occur with the when someone pronounces the word cancer as your diagnosis, and how to how to embrace that and and to to accept the sort of initial shock of the word you talked you, you talked about the emotional impact when you received it in your car, and the doctor's office called and it was your heart was going quickly, and so obviously there's this great emotional response to the the hearing of the diagnosis, but you can't Live your life after that, in that state of fright, with this meeting faster, that's right, so you have to figure out how to control it. And so what's your advice? What were your learnings? Yeah, emotions. You

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know, it's again, really a mindset change is warranted, for sure. Like in 2020 the stats in for Ontario was the number of persons with the cervix that would get cervical cancer was around 553 that was in 2020 and the amount of deaths that was expected at that in that year was around 185 the following year, 2021 I contracted, I had the disease, yeah, yeah. We often think, okay, yeah, that's not gonna happen to me or, you know, but it's like, like I said in my story, like, not me, like, because, yeah, but that's how, that's our first response. But why not you? When you see the stats like this, this year for all of Canada. It was, it was expected around 1500 people would get diagnosed with the disease, and one person expected to die per day. Best Canada wide. The stats I gave you for 2020, was for Ontario, yeah. So this prevalent cancer in women. So we have to have that mindset where life goes on. Life continues for as long as it continues. So we have to take care of ourselves. So it's like I said, the holistic approach. So diet and exercise is also important. So when you're focusing on positive things in your life and. Being grateful. Having an attitude of gratitude and an attitude of forgiveness is important as well, especially forgiving forgiveness for yourself. It starts with yourself before you forgive. Can forgive others, and this is important because we need to require that self compassion without forgiveness you, it's hard for us to be have self compassion, and so having that, that mind shift change, where you're being more careful about your your health, you're, you're grateful for each day, you're not taking your health for granted anymore. And you're, you're you're making sure you have enough protein, like you're quite a 0.8 grams of protein per kilogram a day, and that's really important, especially for healing like healing wounds healing and for muscle building, so you don't get fatigued and weak and your stamina and all those things. It's so it's diet and hydration as well, really key important things. But you're

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sort of talking about a number of physical things, and those physical things impact the emotional side of your life. So these, they're intertwined, really, part of your control, of the fear that you have initially with the diagnosis of cancer, is is focusing on the things that you can actually control, which are things that you eat and your physical activity and so on, and maybe focusing on all the good things that you have in life, anything in current times, friends, the home you live in, the good experiences you've had in your work situation or travel or whatever, focusing on those things. And then you touch on something that's interesting, as sort of self forgiveness for things that maybe didn't do so well in life, and being that you regret, but being kind on yourselves and that composite of things you think helps with the overall emotional health, for sure,

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for sure, when that's why the holistic approach is so important is because everything is interconnected, like we said, that the Body Keeps the Score. So, you know, even when you when you think about TNF, like tumor necrosis factor, like the cells actually speak to each other, right when we talked about connectivity and how the brain hormones, the feel good, hormones, like oxytocin, is triggered, so it just goes to show you, everything is interconnected, and that's why it's important to have that a holistic view, holistic approach, so nothing is left unturned, so that you have that complete healing, And so that you can show up your best self, and it's ongoing. It looks different for me all the time, like today, I might say that, you know, I might notice that while my hydration is dropping, like I'm not really keeping as well hydrated as I should it. But what's important is that it becomes a way of life for you, that you think of your health, that you're not putting yourself last, that you're putting the oxygen mask on. And it's the oxygen mask analogy I came up with that well, you know, it's from the when you're on the plane, yeah. But the one thing about that, that I that I wanted to be mindful of is that it's usually emergent. So it's only when something happens that you're putting the oxygen mask on first, when you're on the plane, or when you know, usually even for myself, it was only when I got the diagnosis that I was wait a minute, I got to stop right and take care of myself. So but, but what I the message that I want to drive home to all caregivers, it's to be ongoing, is to be a way of life, is to be a transformation for you, and I especially am concerned for the For the sandwich generation, because 71% of that generation is from the ages of 40 to 59 and ironically, that's the age where you're starting to think about screening for cancer. And so, you know, we often wonder, why aren't people showing up for their screening? We know that there's, you know, three different ways that people get diagnosed, whether it's incidental diagnosis or symptomology. That was from, I was from symptoms, or from the screening. It's just so important to be able to reach and those people to understand that they really need to care for themselves, because it can't be there to care for others if they're not their best selves,

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right? Somehow, we have to make sure that people know how to care for themselves, right? And I guess that's one of the challenges, is to make people aware of the screening programs that exist, whether it's for cervix or for breast or colon and now for lung, right? So we have all those screening programs that exist in this province. And I would hazard that there are many people in sound of this voice that don't know that there is a screening program for even breast cancer, even though it's been around since 1990 in this province. That's a long time, but there's still people who wouldn't necessarily know that they should, and they're clearly marginalized groups for whom it's hard to get the message to and that's part of the challenge of of educating people about how to help themselves stay healthy, is is clearly a challenge, an issue going forward. It you touched on something though, that resonated with me, because you said that the way the diagnosis was transformative. And for some people it is, I think, I think sometimes it's not, but I've seen many examples of it. And as funny as I was leaving the house today, my wife gets this hello magazine because she likes to follow royalty, but and on the front page of it, not royalty, but there was a well known personality from Toronto, Jamie Becker, who's on the radio and all in fashion who's had cancer, and it said it had made her stronger, it made her bolder. And I just saw that, and it kind of resonated with me. And then coming in to talk to you today, and you're talking about being transformed by it and and actually used in your, let's say the word warrior. You want to be a warrior now to to do more constructive things as it relates to cancer and how to get the message out to people. And one of the things I think you want to talk about related to some of the physical changes that follow a treatment for cervical cancer, that are not talked about very much. So I'll let you talk about that I

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wanted to before going to that wonder, I'm happy you brought up about the, you know, there's marginalized populations, and there's also the issue of colonialism, where there's the trust factor, and with racism and that that's a concern as well, why we don't reach a lot of people for the screening, or, you Know, connect with those people as well. So one is to bring that, that clarity

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too. That's very important. And, yeah, we're going to be doing a podcast shortly that is about the Ontario cancer plan. And the first item on the first, first item on the cancer plan really has to do with with equity, and try to do a much better job at reaching the marginalized populations, to reach our First Nations, people and Metis and Inuit, who have been somewhat frightened by our health system and by colonialism, and many immigrants are similarly concerned about the health system. It's different from where they come from. This is totally foreign to them. So we have a lot to do to try and bridge those gaps, but that is part of the of the cancer plan for the next few years. It be a focus and hopefully become instilled into how we approach delivery of cancer care, and indeed, all health care before

33:01

going to physical the mental I want to tell you a funny story that happened to be in Eaton So, but it took mental, good mental health to overcome this story. But so when I was in the hospital post surgery, it was during COVID. So, you know, I, I woke up and, you know, they, I mean, the hospital, they did what they could do with that difficult time, without that disruption, really, and with the shortage of staff and everything that was going on so but it was really unorthodox. What happened to me? I woke up and like, from the sedation, and I looked around my room, and first of all, like, why am I an award? Because I know I have coverage for a private. I don't know why. Because I was hoping that I would have a private because it's a COVID, and I wanted to be protected, right? Thinking I can get protected that way, not thinking about the nurse. And I should know better, right? Because the nurses are coming in and taking care of me anyway. But I was in a ward, and I woke up, and I looked around, and I saw that there was three white men in the room with me, just me, the one black woman with three white men. And I'm like, What are they doing in my room? And they're looking at me like, What is she doing in our room? And I thought to myself, I know I'm not dreaming, because if I was, if this was a dream, it would be Brad Pitt, George Clooney and Kevin Costner, and they don't look anything like those three white men. Those are the three white men that were in my room. So I was like, Oh, wow. So I thought two things I have to do with two things. Number one, I have to pay more attention to this blue gown opening that keeps happening, right? That because the gown just refuses to embrace my luxurious curves, right and keeps opening. And other thing is, I need to get out of here as soon as possible, right? I just need to get out, get home. So it really, it was, it was that, that mindset where I've used it as fuel to overcome and to get, you know, so I was like, every morning, like, just because I was only there three days, but I was like, whipping around the hallway as many times as possible to try and get everything moving. And my. My IV pole even had hard time keeping up with me, like it was trying to topple over every time went over around a corner, right? So, but it was, it was an interesting story. Yeah, at that time to go through something like that, and I know a lot of people would think, Oh my goodness, and it would be, it would bring more stress to them, like, I think of somebody that, what, like a Muslim woman, let's say that would, that would be a very difficult thing that I hope that would not happen, but I had to think positive and overcome and just get through it, right? And that's the mindset that we have to have, you know, getting through and when I think of when I to get to the physical part as something that's not very it's not discussed very often, is when women or people with the cervix go through radiation, and whether it's mostly internal, but external as well, It can happen your vaginal canal can shorten and narrow, so you have to actually do dilation, like apply an instrument to dilate the canal a couple times a week. Your provide your surgeon will tell you how for how long and how often to do it. And this is, this is important for holistic approach to health, because women that are experiencing that, it will impact their intimacy, that that their relationship, and it can be painful for when you go for for cervical exams. So I wanted to raise that point, because I know it's not discussed very often, and I wanted those folks to know that they're not alone, experiencing that

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that's the warrior in you coming out. Hey, talk about the things that other people have been either uncomfortable talking about or or forgetful, because sometimes these things just don't occur to the physicians to even to describe to their patients what can happen after treatments. But in the case of radiation, there always is a tendency for the organ that's been radiated to to become more, we say fibrotic. So more fibrous tissue, so it's stiffer, yeah, and often shrinks. So you radiate the bladder, it gets smaller, then you have to urinate more frequently if you radiate the rectum. Similarly, can be a problem. So it's quite true, the same thing happens with the vagina, and to keep it in a state that's healthy and can be part of sexual relationships that needs to be treated. And yeah, with

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care, your holistic care plan, yeah. And

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you can see how, if that was not dealt with, how it impacts that physical aspect will impact relationships. Relationships will then impact how one feels about oneself, mentally and and emotionally. So it's everything, as you were saying, is interconnected. Yeah, all these components are interconnected and and paying attention to only one as unfortunately, the healthcare system commonly does. It focuses a lot on the physical, not enough on the psychological or the spiritual. And it's simply a matter of busyness on the one hand, but maybe on a certain level of lack of training to know how to deal with it on the other, and maybe a lack of comfort in talking about emotional, mental health or spiritual things with patients. So those are the deficiencies, and maybe in some way, by having these conversations like we have in the cancer Assistance Program, it brings them to light and makes it more comfortable for people to raise those topics with their doctors or with their friends, so that they have a shared experience and are aware of these, these issues, and how they all interconnect.

38:46

Yeah, I was blessed to work for a CHC, because in a community health center, you have, you know, you collaborate with a lot of different care providers that can get, like a social worker, a dietitian, you know, the physiotherapist, you know, so you can get that holistic approach. And the nurse practitioners do practice that way. Think of the holistic approach. And then doctors there did as well in the CHC. So having that holistic approach is really important, because then you can achieve that holistic care that you require, that you need, and also keeping the care provider, the caregiver, in mind as well. The care caregiver needs to be a part of that care plan. They're the ones giving the support. They're the ones that often calling even cap for whatever the needs are for the client, right?

39:36

I think there's more and more discussion of it and interest in trying to achieve a holistic approach. And one of the other themes in the cancer plan is sort of the integration of services. I think, yeah, when services are siloed, and then there's an acute care hospital that does its thing and Cancer Center does its thing, and then hospice and home care. Know, ccacs do their thing in the sort of all independent of each other, without a lot of communication. It can never lead to a holistic approach. But the more integrated the system can become, the more communication, effective communication between the various components of the healthcare system, the greater the I think, our ability will be to provide holistic care. But I think to some extent, too, the individual patients and families need to be conscious of the various dimensions of holistic care and be proactive for themselves and reaching out. And it's another thing we've talked about on this program that the need to actually ask about access to a social worker. Ask access for your support for your children if you're diagnosed with cancer, various other kinds of supports that exist but aren't, kind of put on full display to you when you get a diagnosis and you're in in the midst of the cancer treatment. So being aware through whatever means in this podcast is is one of many, and using that information to be proactive for your own care, I think, is what's really important. So just to wrap up, I think you have some take home messages that you'd like to leave listeners with and and around this whole idea of of using putting on the oxygen mask, first as a caregiver and as the warrior champion that you are. What would you and your grandmother like to tell our listeners as the final words before

41:40

going there, I just wanted to remind others about the prevention like you know now we have the Guardia cell guard itself, right, right? Yes, vaccine that helps with sparkle cancer. More recent one is the God itself nine, that nine different variants of the HPV. So more HPV testing is there, even though the guidelines have changed at the age of 25 now to start the screening, that there is more of the testing being encouraged for my take home message, I want to say self care. It should be a way of life. We we have to be courageous to choose that, to choose to put on the oxygen mask. First, get screened, take care of yourself holistically, with a holistic approach, it looks different for everyone. I survived because of early diagnosis, and I am not just a survivor. I emerge from the battlefield of cancer, not just as a survivor, but as a warrior, because I am committed to telling my story and to help others to choose self care, to step up and choose self love, to rise up and choose self compassion and to make it a part of your your life, just a way of life.

42:58

Great message to leave all our listeners with those who have experienced cancer or those who may be in the process of receiving treatment, but also the important take care of yourself and your health throughout your life, even if you haven't received a diagnosis of cancer, the message is there is kind of a holistic One for care of yourself throughout your life, not just when you confront an illness like cancer. Great conversation with you. Andrew, really enjoyed it. Thank you. The listeners will really benefit from it. Thank you so much for coming in and sharing.

43:33

Thank you. Bill was a pleasure. Thank you.

43:38

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