



“Hope” Universal – A Guest Blog by Marion Behr

By Maryann Makekau on August 26, 2014



A beautiful rendition of “HOPE” arrived during my recent home office renovation (pictured left). My best friend, Vicki, a five-year breast cancer survivor gifted me with this wonderful piece of art. About the same time, I received an email from the creator of “a cancer awareness project.” I had invited **Marion Behr** to guest blog for us here at Hope Matters. Her story and accomplished background as a visual artist resonated with me. Marion is on a mission to do something to help others in quite an extraordinary fashion; she has compiled and illustrated a collection of essays, reflections, and artwork. When ***Surviving Cancer: Our Voices & Choices*** arrived, I was simultaneously delighted and overwhelmed by her decision to send this project for my review. The look and feel of Marion’s book is, in and of itself, another work of art within my home. As I sift through her compilation, I am awed by the sense of hope interspersed through art and story. Today’s guest blog by Marion Behr is yet another remarkable illustration of the hope she brings to survivors, organizations, care teams and others involved in the journey through cancer.

Most of us hope for peace and that our children may have healthy lives. We all certainly envision that a cure for cancer is near.

“Hope” Universal

“Hope” – you can’t touch it – yet you feel it.

You can’t see it – still you know it’s there.

*You can’t grab it –but you hold it,
and sometimes realize that it’s everywhere.*

When it rains, it looks for sunshine even though it has no eyes.

Hope is sometimes in disguise.

*Hope is wrapped inside us,
perhaps as part of every soul,
lifting spirits as its goal.*

Hope can be expressed by individuals in myriad ways:

Diane Byrnes-Paul, an oncology nurse, founded **Cancer Hope Network** in 1981. She found “hope” to be essential to most cancer patients since many had expressed the need to know and speak with survivors who had gone through similar experiences. By matching a survivor with a patient through direct telephone conversations, it became evident that “hope” could be passed through the telephone lines.

In an article describing her Avon Cancer walks, Tracy Redling describes how she and a close friend, along with their husbands, walk year after year. They are compelled to do this in order to contribute to making a future in which their daughters won't have to.

The Central New Jersey Chapter of Sisters Network was also founded with the hope that African-American women will no longer “have the highest death rate and shortest survival rate of any racial and ethnic group in the U.S.” Dorothy Reed was motivated to form this very active chapter because of her hope to make a real difference. She has already had a very positive influence on many lives through her mission “to spread the gospel of early detection in the African American community.”



Men don't get breast cancer as frequently as women; although, when they do, they often don't get to a doctor early enough. As a result, their cancer becomes more difficult to treat. Rich Loreti's cancer was discovered by his wife, since he always washed with a bar of soap and never thought to do a self exam. He now advises men to take the time out to do a self exam at least once a month. He hopes they will to make sure no lumps or bumps exist in their chest.



Yet another very human hope is expressed by Dr. Eitan Yefenof, as he addresses many research scientists in the foreword of our book: He wrote, “To my fellows and students I say: There are people beyond the laboratory bench who need you and the work you are doing. They desperately ask for a remedy to a devastating illness. Don't let them down.”

Dr. Angela Lanfranchi stated the following in her article: “The narrations and artwork in this book are intended to inspire hope, both in women (and men) with breast cancer and their loved ones.”

Finally, a very honest “hope” expressed by our children and grandchildren is that we all grow wise enough to evolve into digitally savvy individuals who can communicate through social media and the internet... using correct protocol.

Many more expressions of hope are contained in **Surviving Cancer: Our Voices & Choices**. Click [here](#) to browse a copy.



Illustrations: All illustrated sculptures were made from used radiation cradles by Marion R. Behr. Titles from the top down: “Lights coming through blue,” “Cancel Cancer,” “Exercising.”

Marion R. Behr Profile



Marion R. Behr is an experienced publisher, writer and artist and is the compiler of *Surviving **Cancer: Our Voices & Choices***, as well as the owner of **WWH Press LLC**. Marion created the first national survey of women working from home in the 1970’s and after receiving thousands of responses from women; she originated the concept of the *Homebased Business*, as opposed to the *cottage industry*, and formed Women Working Home Inc. with Wendy Lazar, a co-graduate from Syracuse University. Marion and Wendy co-authored two editions of ***Women Working Home: The Homebased Business Guide and Directory*** and sold fifty thousand copies.