

## Introduction About the Workbook

Since you are reading this, it's likely that you or someone you care about has been diagnosed with cancer. Although this can be frightening and your thoughts may be turning toward mortality, I'd like to help you feel calmer and less vulnerable *and* improve your chances to fight the cancer. With so many advances in detection and treatment, the prognosis for recovery keeps getting better and better.

As you may know, patients who are actively involved in the treatment of their disease not only feel more in control, but also have better outcomes. Dr. George Solomon and Dr. Lydia Temoshok, researchers in the field of psychoneuroimmunology (the study of the interaction of the mind, immune and neurological systems, or "mind/body interactions"), have identified the following characteristics among long-term survivors of cancer.

- They are realistic and accept their diagnosis, but they don't take it as a death sentence.
- They have a fighting spirit and they learn how not to be helpless or hopeless.
- They work to change their lifestyles.
- They learn how to handle stress effectively.
- They are aware of their psychological and physical needs, and they take care of them.
- They talk openly about their illness.
- They take personal responsibility for their health, and they consider their treating physicians as team members.
- In whatever ways they can, they help other people with cancer.

I have created the CD *Fighting Cancer* and this workbook in order to guide you in developing these characteristics. *This is a "how-to" book.* I will show you *how to* do the things you need to do in order to develop the characteristics of long-term survivors of cancer. You'll learn how to take care of yourself in body, mind, and spirit. I know that you already are working toward developing these characteristics

because you are reading this book and listening to the CD. You can have all of them. *I'll show you how.*

In Taking Charge 1, you'll learn to be your own first priority and put yourself first. You'll learn about the CD, your immune system, and more. In the first chapter *I show you how to* do visual imagery. Visual imagery is an important tool in cancer recovery because it creates a connection between your body, mind, and spirit. It helps you manage stress better, calms your body, activates your immune system, reduces pain, and makes you feel better. You clear your mind. It enhances your healing, calms your mind, and connects you to your personal spiritual beliefs. You'll feel more in control of yourself. You will learn how to motivate yourself and imagine yourself well. You will practice success and achieve success.

In Taking Charge 2, you'll learn about the feelings that you're experiencing now. *I show you how to* identify your feelings. I give you a chart of emotional and physical feelings that will help you sort it all out. This is important because your feelings give you a wealth of important information. If you don't know what your feelings are then they won't be useful. It is vital for you to be able to express how you feel so that you can talk about what is happening to you, so that you can use the appropriate strategy to feel better, so that you can be a better reporter to your healthcare providers about what you are feeling in body, mind, and spirit. Then, they can do a better job for you.

In Taking Charge 3, you'll learn about Integrative Cancer Care and how to use it. Integrative Cancer Care includes medical, complementary, and alternative care. *I show you how to* be the Captain of your team and ask the right questions to get the information you need to make the best decisions for yourself.

In Taking Charge 4, you'll learn about creating an even more powerful mind. *I show you how to* change your negative thinking patterns into positive ones. You learn hope, focused determination, a good attitude, and how to use your strong will. Cancer survivors believe that their ability to maintain a positive, hopeful attitude increases their chances for recovery, and research suggests that they are right.

In Taking Charge 5, you'll learn about connections. *I show you how to* connect with people, communicate with the important people in your life, and use social support. Research has shown that cancer patients who use social support live longer. Cancer survivors can tell you how connecting to others enriched the quality of their lives.

In Taking Charge 6, you'll learn about spirituality. *I show you how to* explore your own personal beliefs and make them a part of your life now. Spirituality is a special kind of connection and support that people find in different ways. Some people find their spirituality through their religion, others through a different belief system, and others by being the best person they can be. Cancer patients commonly rely on spirituality and religion to help them cope with the cancer and the effects it has on their lives. There is evidence that spirituality can have a positive impact on health. It provides comfort, hope, and healing.

In Taking Charge 7, you'll learn about managing your time. *I show you how to* organize yourself so that you can do everything necessary to achieve wellness. At times, all that you have to do will feel overwhelming. Breaking down your goals and tasks into a doable daily diary will help you feel calmer and more in control. You'll take comfort in knowing that you are taking good care of yourself.

The information in this workbook is what I talk about with my patients who are fighting cancer. I strongly urge everyone to start immediately with the *Fighting Cancer* CD. Right away, they feel comforted and calmer.

Everyone talks about these issues at their own pace, and in the order that they need. That's why I have designed this workbook to be used in any order. You can go to the sections that you need first and read those, or you can read through in the order presented.

The workbook exercises can also be done in any order. You'll find that as you go through the phases of your treatment your answers may change. Even the names of your healthcare providers may change. Your goals may change. What you want and desire may change. You will experience emotional, physical, and spiritual changes on this journey and experience a growth that is hard to imagine now.

I think of this workbook as a moving circle, like a wheel. In the center is your self, or what I think of as the soul. Connected in all directions are your body, mind, and spirit. The better the balance among the three, the easier the wheel rolls and you get to where you want to be.

Every one of us is a circle with our selves at the center. We are our minds, our bodies, and our spirits. They are inter-connected, not separate. We just separate them in order to think about them. In order to take care of ourselves, our souls, we have to learn how to take the best care of these three parts of ourselves. This is

especially important for you, now that you are fighting against cancer and fighting for life. This is your primary task.

Each point on the circle – the mind, the body, the spirit - represents some aspect of wisdom or something to contemplate. Each point is a way of learning what we need to know to heal our souls. Your way may first be through your body as you get medical treatment and work on diet, exercise, and get massages. Other people might use their minds first, learning positive thinking skills. Others might turn to spirituality first, and pray. Most cancer survivors use all three.

As we learn about one part, we create changes in the others. That's why you can start wherever you chose: paying special attention to your body, mind, or spirit. Or, you may choose to begin by attending to two parts, or perhaps all three at once. The key is to find a healthy balance so that eventually, you are taking care of all three aspects of yourself. There is no special order, just your own intuitive order to find.

Using this workbook will help you find your own balance among mind, body, and spirit. You'll discover that as you take care of one aspect, all three change. How your body feels effects your mind. The state of your mind affects how your body feels. Practicing your spirituality eases your body and your mind. The state of your mind enables you to seek more spiritual...well, you see how it goes. It's all connected.

Listen to the CD, *Fighting Cancer*, first. With ease and comfort, it nourishes all three aspects at once. Then, choose what you want to learn more about, and begin. *I'll show you how.*