



GOOD NEWS FOR ALL THOSE AFFECTED BY CANCER – the Network that proves cancer doesn't need to be a lonely experience

Anyone who has been touched by cancer will know the terrifying thoughts that whirl through your head. Anger, panic, dread, fear, sorrow are all common feelings and regardless of whether it's you, a friend or relative that has been diagnosed, what you really need is support from people who are going through the same thing.

With an estimated 3,000 women per month affected by breast cancer, good news is hard to come by but help is now at hand in the form of Cancer Buddies Network, a website which links people living through similar cancer experiences, regardless of where they are in the world, for the purpose of giving and receiving support, sharing, comparing, chatting and making long-lasting friendships.

The website is the brainchild of Jan Rutter who herself was diagnosed with breast cancer seven years ago. "That first day in the hospital there was another lady obviously being given the same news, so I decided to find out who she was and see if she'd like to get together," remembers Jan. "From then on we became firm friends, spending almost every day on the phone to each other, comparing notes, laughing and crying together and even experiencing exactly the same treatments on the same days."

Jan had a wonderfully supportive network of friends and relatives but she found it invaluable to have someone who understood all in the ins and outs of the treatments, the side effects, the angst and how it felt physically and emotionally. So, after she'd completed her treatment, she decided to give something back by creating Cancer Buddies Network.

"Saving my Sanity"

Sue Chapple, 51, from Cornwall, was diagnosed with breast cancer in January this year and feels the network is saving her sanity. "I was warned about hitting a 'brick wall' in my recovery. I thought it wouldn't happen to me but three weeks after coming home I spent a whole day crying - I felt so alone and desperate," says Sue. "I had exhausted my family and close friends, and felt I didn't have anyone else to talk to until I found Cancer Buddies Network on the internet. Now I couldn't do without my daily fix. What I like about the forums is it doesn't matter which cancer you have, there is always someone to offer support and understanding. I hope I will soon be able to offer advice and support rather than just take it!"

MacMillan Support

The charity has the support of the major cancer charities such as Macmillan and has received some funding from them which helped with set up costs. Cancer Buddies Network was also one of the first charities to benefit from Waitrose's Community Matters initiative.

Jan's drive is to reach as many people as she possibly can. "The more people we can reach, the more we can help, so my dream is to unite anyone who has experienced cancer with

each other, regardless of where they are in the world. I've experienced first hand how enriching the personal factor is and to bring hope and a smile back into someone's life is worth every effort."

The Network that Proves Cancer Doesn't Need be a Lonely Experience

"From personal experience I have learnt that patients cope better when they are able to talk about what they are going through and share their experiences with someone who understands."

Professor Ian Smith MD FRCP FRCPE, Professor of Cancer Medicine at the Royal Marsden Hospital, Patron of Cancer Buddies Network.

Ends

NOTES TO EDITORS:

- Cancer Buddies Network (CBN) is a registered charity no 1120207.
- CBN has the support of Macmillan Cancer Support, Millennium Grants UnLtd, Google, and has links with other major cancer charities and hospitals up and down the country.
- The patron of the charity is the eminent cancer specialist Professor Ian Smith MD, FRCP, FRCPE, Professor of Cancer Medicine at The Royal Marsden Hospitals, Sutton and London.

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