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An Ounce of Prevention (part one)

By [Mary Maynard RN, BSN](#)

My heart speaks to me whenever I am asked to buy a neon pink plastic travel cup, wear a something-colored ribbon, participate in a race/walk/swim or do some catchy activity that has gone viral with people challenging each other on YouTube. My heart says a straightforward, firm “No.” No long speeches or reasons, just “No.”

On the social level, I am left to find a graceful way to tell a passionate young woman working for Susan G. Komen, why I will not wear pink. Or explain to the kid down the street my position on not sponsoring him for the “Walk” to support his Mom’s newly diagnoses breast cancer.

How can I argue with my eldest daughter why I won’t sign the petition to light up the White House to bring awareness to childhood cancers when our child is still coping with damage from the radiation? Can I admit that the most disquieting experience? I am not endorsing my granddaughter’s Facebook request for her personal “fight for survivors of brain cancer.” Do I love my daughter and my granddaughter? Absolutely. Will I do anything within my power to lessen the burden her brain cancer has created? No doubt.

Do I believe that cultural “awareness” will do anything whatsoever to cure cancer?

Do I trust that the money made from cancer treatment is expected to dry up?

Do I believe that research money will create a cure?

I read, researched, quizzed experts and sorted through mountains of information for ten years now. Those mountains started in the foothills of traditional care and down the path to huge storehouses of information on prevention dating back to the Bible. “Why aren’t these methods and treatments being used?”, became my next big question.

From there I was directed to the money pathways that promote cancer. It is complex. In summary, the gross national product for health care scales from 1995, 3% to a predicted 26% in 2030. If you add the pharmaceutical companies and the insurance corporations that are partners in this spiral, it nears 40 % of the United States income. The statistics for the amount spent on research is not well documented since it is scattered and not controlled or measured for any government purpose. Could our economy survive if the cure for cancer were discovered and implemented?

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I still shrink to speak out on these things when asked in person. Not out of fear, but out of honor and compassion.

Honor to the emotional experience of the people diagnosed with cancer who are following the best guidance they can afford. Out of compassion for the members of my family left without partners and body parts due to cancer.

I don't speak of these things to the person still struggling to manage the consequences of treatment. I do not challenge or criticize any one's beliefs. I only want to share what I've learned while respecting the tender feelings, passions and beliefs of others who are touched by this. I want to share what I have learned in hopes that those not yet diagnosed and those who have survived, may awaken to other options for care and prevention.

See next week's article for suggestions and options for prevention and five things every man should do if diagnosed with prostate cancer.

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