



Ovarian Cancer  
Support Group

# HOPE

By Marcia Gurche

“Hope is the thing with feathers  
That perches in the soul  
And sings the tune without the words  
And never stops at all.”

— Emily Dickinson



Hope is that feeling that the things we want will be achieved or certain events will turn out for the best. One thing I have learned over the last eighteen years since I was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, is that having hope is one of the most important things a person with a dire diagnosis can possess. It is, however, not usually the initial feeling experienced.

“Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud.” — Maya Angelou

I was very fortunate to receive my rainbow from two very special people. First, my very wise sister, **Jeanine**, reminded me early on that I wasn't a statistic. Being reminded that I wasn't a statistic gave me the hope I needed to realize that I could beat any odds and it gave me the strength to fight whatever obstacles I had to face. Fortunately for me, my obstacles were nothing compared to those faced by many of our *One to One* members. I was blessed to have an amazing woman, **Anna**, as my oncology nurse. When we would get down about our CA125 count, she always reminded us that we were the same person at that minute that we had been five minutes before we walked in her office. Anna had a wonderful saying: “Don't sell your jewelry!” And she *always* gave us hope.

“It's hard to beat a person who never gives up.” — Babe Ruth

I have been so honored to meet countless women over the last eighteen years with amazing indomitable spirits who refuse to give up and continue to fight an ongoing battle for years, many of them doing so virtually on their own. **Stephanie** was the perfect example of determination, as she lived on her own for over eleven years after being diagnosed with stage four ovarian cancer. On more than one occasion she drove herself to the emergency room in the middle of the night when suffering with a bowel obstruction or other affliction. She dealt with ongoing side effects of her various chemotherapy regimens, in addition to normal daily living issues, but her determination to not give up hope stemmed from a feeling that she still had too much to live for. After all, it was “just good manners” to leave her house in proper condition, so she couldn't die until she had it totally organized – a quest which she continually worked to achieve.

“All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us.”

— J.R.R. Tolkien

Everyone who has had the honor to meet **Amanda** and **Janet** will agree that these two ladies are strength and hope personified. Both ladies have lived with recurring ovarian cancer for many years and yet they have chosen to use it as a tool to help educate others, even as they are in the throes of debilitating treatment.

(Cont. 'd on next page)

*One to One* is devoted to the on-going support of those newly diagnosed, those in remission and those in recurrence.

100% of contributions directly benefit our group by providing activities and paying for expenses.

*One to One* partners with MIOCA but we are financially independent.

Donations are gratefully accepted and can be made by check payable to **One to One Ovarian Cancer Support Group** c/o Marilyn Brozovic 4793 Alton Dr. Troy, MI 48085

## Group Meeting:

Thursday, May 9

4:00 pm – 5:30 pm

Beaumont, Royal Oak

Neuroscience Center,

Allison Conference Room,

2<sup>nd</sup> floor

*Group Conversation*

Join us for dinner following the meeting at

**The Avenue** – located on Woodward,

just north of 13 Mile on the west side.

The restaurant offers a nice menu with separate checks.

Over three years ago, Amanda actually went on her own “#Not Dead Yet Tour” when she was told there were no more treatment options available. A trial study opened up for her, however, showing once again why hope is so powerful. The trial study hasn’t been a walk in the park, but Amanda is still on it and she lives a very active life, which consists of giving back to others in many ways. She and Janet have educated hundreds of future health care professionals, as well as the general public, through the **Survivors Teaching Students** program and the **SPEAK** program. The strength these two women demonstrate is an example for all who are fortunate enough to know them.

“The human spirit is stronger than anything that can happen to it.” — C.C. Scott

**Cheryl** was another person whose spirit was a true example of hope. Her energy and zest for life brought joy to our *One to One* group as she spearheaded our **Relay for Life** involvement for years, while undergoing numerous chemo regimens. Her love of life and hope for the future live on, as we continue to use many of the materials which she purchased for gift baskets, for our annual bowling FUNraisers. I can’t look at a gift basket and beautifully tied bow without thinking of Cheryl, and hearing her hearty laugh, and seeing her smiling face.

“Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.”

— Lao Tzu

**Mitch Albom**, newspaper columnist, author and motivational speaker, founded an organization in Haiti which helps the children of Haiti who are so desperately in need of basic health care. While on one of his monthly missions he met **Chika**, a delightful three-year-old little girl who stole his heart, and who two years later developed a tumor which could not be treated in Haiti. Mitch brought her back to the United States and he and his wife, Janine, basically became Chika’s parents. They were told that she had four months to live, but they never gave up hope. Chika brought the couple as much joy as they gave her comfort during the two years they had together. They lived every day to the fullest, cherishing each minute.

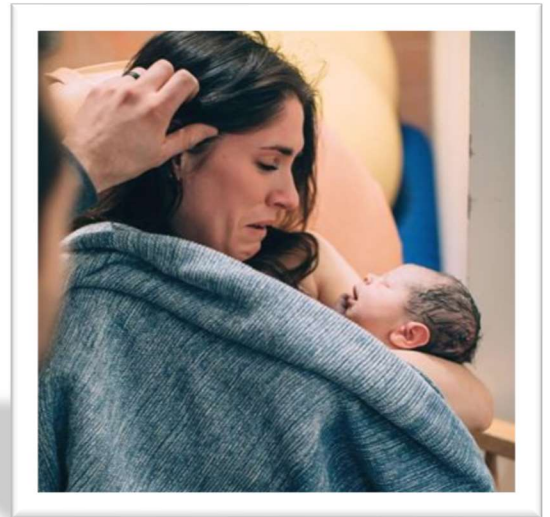
“Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift of God, which is why we call it the present.”

— Bill Keane

At age nine, **Megan** was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Raised by a single dad, Megan grew up to be a beautiful, successful young adult who married the love of her life. In her twenties she began to feel the pain of not being able to have her own child. Through social media she expressed her grief and her hope of becoming a mother. Miraculously, a friend from high school contacted Megan and lovingly offered to be the surrogate mother for Megan and her husband. A few weeks ago, Megan and her husband became parents to a beautiful son. Megan never gave up hope that her prayers would be answered, and they were – she received the most wonderful gift of all...baby Peter.

“Once you choose hope anything’s possible”

— Christopher Reeve



“The human body experiences a powerful gravitational pull in the direction of hope. That is why the patient's hopes are the physician's secret weapon. They are the hidden ingredients in any prescription.”

— Norman Cousins

# LIFELINES TO CANCER SURVIVAL

By Marcia Gurche

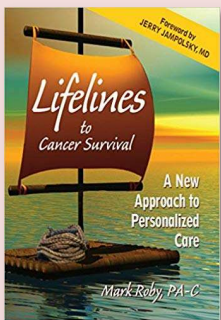
It is one thing to hear about how to deal with cancer and its challenges from doctors or psychologists who are experts in the field of oncology, but quite another to hear about it from a cancer survivor himself. Our April guest speaker was **Mark Roby**. After being diagnosed with a rare type of sarcoma he has dedicated the last twelve years of his life to being his own health advocate, as well as helping others navigate a complex cancer world. While lying in a hospital bed receiving chemotherapy, his oncologist whispered in his ear that he should just give up and accept the fact that none of the chemotherapy drugs were going to work for him and that he would be dead in three or four months. Mark was shocked and in disbelief that his doctor was giving up on him. That spurred him on to fight for himself and subsequently for others.

Mark made the choice to live, and once he did, he was on a mission to find the help he needed to survive. He began with researching his own rare tumor and he continued from there to develop “Roby’s Top Ten Keys for Cancer Survival” which he generously shared with us. Mark’s focus on positivity and hope, and his quest for personalized treatment has worked well for him. He combines his respect for modern medicine with personalized molecular profiles, anticancer nutrition, integrative medicine and chemosensitivity assays.



## Roby’s Top Ten Keys for Cancer Survival

1. **Set your Intention to Survive** – Decide you will do anything to survive.
2. **Get Multiple Opinions** – Get at least one or two more opinions.
3. **Do not “Rush Into” treatment** – Access all the Risks vs Benefits of your potential options.
4. **Locate and build your “Inner Circle”** – Find one or two people who will help you find your “Customized Care.”
5. **Adapt and Respond** – Researching your tumor along with building your triad of survival are crucial lifelines.
6. **Build your “Triad of Survival”** – Work with your inner circle and oncologist to build a series of back-up plans.
7. **Research and start your own “Anti-Cancer Diet”** – Regardless of what you are being told, this is critical towards your survival.
8. **Seek out “Personalized Care”** – A recent article in a major publication suggested close to 90% of all U.S. cancer patients are not receiving a personalized approach while getting treatment.
9. **Ask for God’s guidance** – Receive the benefit of the Power of Prayer.
10. **Become an Expert in your own Diagnosis** – Many patients, when they first find out about a poor prognosis, simply do as they are told after seeking one or two options.



Mark Roby’s lecture was extremely motivational, and it was fascinating to listen to a cancer survivor who had worked with cancer patients prior to becoming a patient himself. He has certainly seen both sides of the disease. Mark has managed to replace fear with hope and continues to help patients do just that, through his practice as a physician’s assistant working with **Behavioral Care Solutions** in Novi. His book, *Lifelines to Cancer Survival: A New Approach to Personalized Care* is truly inspiring and informative.



# Celebrating Teal Warriors

Thursday September 12

(Note: This is a date change from June 13)

We are ALL teal warriors regardless of where we are in our journey of treatment. Join us on September 12 as we celebrate YOU and the *One to One* Ovarian Cancer Support Group.



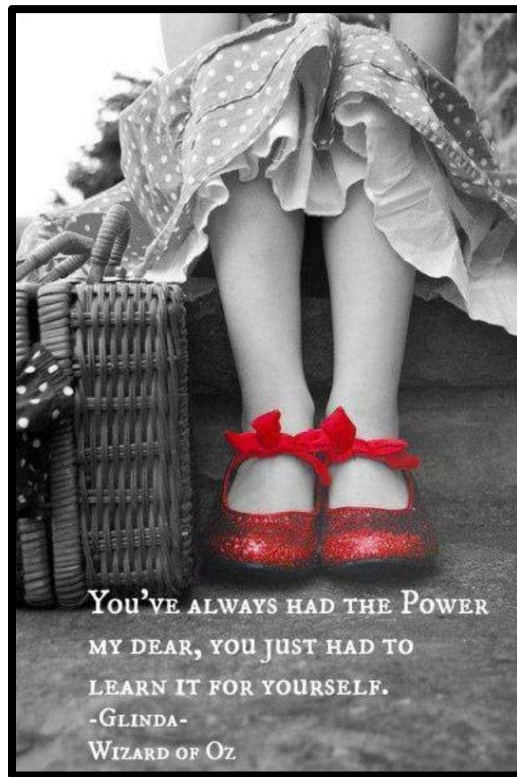
Be sure to visit the support page at [mioca.org](http://mioca.org) to learn of upcoming meetings and *One to One* events!

## Meeting dates

- **May 9**  
Group Conversation
- **June 13**  
Group Conversation
- **July 11**  
**Topic:** *Thinking Beyond Tomorrow - FMLA, Elder Law and other legalities*  
(details to follow)

Support group meetings are held at the Beaumont, Royal Oak **Neuroscience Center**, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room.

Parking is available in either the Neuroscience Center parking lot or in the Cancer Center parking lot. (The buildings are not connected.)



# HAPPY Anniversary

Annie K.	57 years !
Gail H.	31
Genny B.	24
Christine W.	9
Judy M.	7
Gail B.	6
Maria C.	4
Brenthy J.	6
Carol Q.	3
Barbara B.	2
Gwen S.	1



Laurie C.	June 1
Hedwig G.	June 2
Lore B.	June 11
Ellen F.	June 12
Terrie K.	June 12
Gail B.	June 20
Mary B.	June 21
Cheryl M.	June 22
Kathy M.	June 23
Margaret H.	June 29
Gwen S.	June 30

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Newsletter information is presented in summary form, is general in nature and provided for informational purposes only. It is not intended in any way to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

### *Objectives of support group:*

- ✦ *Provide a forum for ovarian cancer patients to address concerns;*
- ✦ *Support each other through initial treatment phase, during potential recurrence, and with issues related to long term survival;*
- ✦ *Establish core group of survivors willing to visit newly diagnosed patients;*
- ✦ *Increase awareness of ovarian cancer, including its symptoms and risk factors, in the hope of achieving earlier detection and treatment.*