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Nicholas Joseph

Global Hero of Hope - 2013

I was diagnosed with colorectal cancer at the age of 66, at Parklands Hospital, Durban. During surgery an eighth of my colon was removed. After the operation, I was referred to an oncologist who told me that I had 3rd stage colorectal cancer and that I would need six months of chemotherapy treatment. Devastated as I was by this news, I decided not to give up - even when my weight dropped from 53kg to 43kg as a result of chemotherapy! During treatment I decided to use my time to motivate others in a similar position to myself. I actively encouraged other patients not to lose hope and to trust God, while we prayed together.

My wife and I shared my diagnosis with all we knew and very soon we had our family, friends and church members praying for my recovery. I thank God that He has spared my life and has given me a new lease on life. With the help of God and the support of my family and friends, I was able to adopt a positive attitude during treatment and this strengthened me to fight back against cancer.

Despite the difficult challenges that I had to deal with, these inspirational words motivated me to be of service to other cancer patients who needed encouragement, as I made the journey towards recovery alongside them:

- It is said that the more you give, the more you get.
- The more you share, the more you'll have to spare.
- The purpose of life is to help others and if you can't help them, would you at least not hurt them.
- Service to humanity is the best work of life.

As a result, I volunteered at St Anne's Church, TAFTA on the Ridge, Holy Family College, Highway Hospice, Retired Teachers Association on Ottawa, St Michael's Church and Nazareth House for Frail Citizens.

I am currently serving as the Chair on CANSA's Durban Volunteers' Committee and am the Vice Chair for the CANSA KZN Regional Committee.

I am very passionate about creating greater awareness about the work that CANSA is doing in the fight against cancer. As a result, I became involved in Relay For Life (RFL) to help raise much needed funds for CANSA and also to promote awareness re lowering cancer risk. I took part in the Mkhuhla RFL Event.

One World - One Hope!

CELEBRATE

REMEMBER

FIGHT BACK

Today I weigh 54kg and have been in remission for 4 years. Cancer has given me a greater appreciation of life - my brother died of cancer at the age of 3 and my sister is a breast cancer survivor of 17 years.

My hope is that my story will encourage other cancer patients to share their journey with others instead of being afraid; that they would not lose hope, but continue trusting in God and that they would realise that they can be of service to others as they journey towards recovery.

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