

Here's How Cancer Survivors Cope With Fear of Recurrence

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CURE® surveyed its audience to see how they cope with fear of cancer recurrence. Here's what they had to say.

It is common for cancer survivors to be afraid of their disease coming back, which is commonly referred to as fear of recurrence.

To gain insight on how cancer survivors cope with fear of recurrence, in a #CureConnect question, CURE® asked its audience on social media: Have you experienced fear of recurrence after surviving cancer? What gets you through that anxiety?

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Here is what our community members had to say:

A Focus on Mindset, Research and Community

"Stage 3, currently (no evidence of disease). I live one day at a time and don't worry about something I can't control." – Sandy W.

"The love of my wife. Focusing on life. Focusing on family. My faith." – Ryan J.

"I will be five years cancer free next month, but am still anxious before every PET scan. I just thank God every day for another day and try to live it the best I can helping others when I can." – Sandi L.

"Conscious breathing and yoga." – Leona B.

"A little bit of denial goes a long way!" – Janet J.

"Living with metastatic breast cancer I live with fear of recurrence daily, in addition to never knowing when my current treatment will fail and I will run out of options. Research and hope for more treatments keep me moving forward. [#stage4needsmore](#)" – CURE® contributor, [Marissa Holzer](#)

"I fear cancer recurrence, especially whenever I have a new ache or pain. Writing and researching helps me cope. And connecting with others is bonding and helps me realize I'm not alone. I find Twitter a great source for support." – CURE® contributor, [Gogs Gagnon](#)

"Time makes the fear of recurrence easier, but I think educating yourself on your specific cancer helps too. You have to think of it like Pandora's Box." – Katie P.

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“Taking things one day at a time and relying on the amazing supports I’ve made in the cancer community. It’s hard to vocalize these fears and have them appropriately understood by those in my life who haven’t been there.” – Danielle G.

“Every clear scan I get reduces anxiety. Also, doing everything I can to reduce my chance of recurrence (eliminating alcohol, staying at a healthy weight, eating mostly plants and exercise) helps me feel powerful and like I have some say in my chances. If it did come back, at least I’d know I did everything I could.” – Nicky H.

“I literally ran away from hospice to beg for immunotherapy to save my life. Now I’m cancer free, and I get my strength and fight my nerves by being an advocate for people lost in the system. Plus I spent a year dying. I refuse to give cancer the satisfaction of thinking about it now.” – Gina H.

When Recurrence Happens

“Living life. I have survived stage 4 lung cancer. No I never smoked. I’ve had it come back in the lungs once and in other places. I’m still here and I’m living my life and I refuse to fear it. If it comes back, well, I will beat it again.” – Julie C.

“Experienced my local recurrence just 3 short years after my treatments ended for my original diagnosis. So this means that this fear became a reality. I’m now thankful that it was discovered and that it was also treatable. I’ll have survived 9 years this November 2022.” – Nicole D.

“I have multiple myeloma — there is no cure. Before my first bone marrow transplant, I asked my oncologist, ‘If I go through all this chemo and then a transplant, what are my chances of this returning?’ His answer? 100%. And he was right. Eight years after my first transplant, I had a recurrence and a second transplant. That’s just the nature of this disease. I refuse to live scared, and I lean on my family, my friends and my faith and I’m thankful for each day I’m given. Still praying for a cure but until then, I will stay positive and keep on doing the best I can!” – Julie F.

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