The Family Room

By: Dr. Roy Don Whitehead

Cancer Cannot Stop You from Living

"Cancer may kill me, but it will not ruin my life." Dalton presented this quote with an air of triumph. "I found this in a book I was reading on cancer," he explained, "and I am going to make it my motto." (All characters are fictitious.)

"I think it sounds morbid," Miriam his wife interjected. "Who wants to think about dying from cancer? I would rather he think positive. I want him to live a long and happy life."

"But this is positive thinking," Dalton continued. "It is a fact that cancer may kill me. Sometimes that is what cancer does. It may kill me or you or anyone. It will kill some people who do not even know yet that they have it."

"See, you are being negative," Miriam interrupted.

"No, I'm being realistic," Dalton continued, "but let me finish. Cancer may kill me but it will not ruin my life. I can go on living even after I find out I have cancer. I do not have to give up my life to cancer. Cancer does not have to control my life. I will control my life, and I will not allow the cancer to do so. Certainly having cancer affects me, but it will not rule my life. I plan to get as much as I can out of every day."

"I do see that you are trying to do that," Miriam agreed. "You seem more alive than you once were. You take more of an interest in life and in the kids. You are doing things now that you have never done before. I would almost say that finding out you have cancer has made you more alive than ever before."

"It has made me more alive," Dalton agreed. "I am trying to get all the living I can out of each day. I have never before approached life that way."

"Now if you can just get through the treatment," Miriam went on. "Sometimes the cure is worse than the disease."

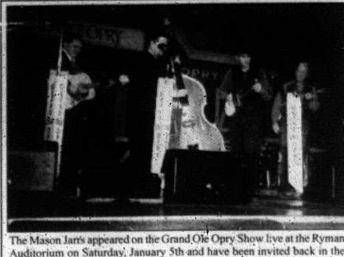
"I wouldn't say the cure is worse than the disease," Dalton argued, "but the treatments have been hard on me, especially the radiation. I am so sore it hurts to move. I have talked to the doctor, and I may take a few days off from the radiation. It is hard to go on living when I am so sore. I know I have to do the radiation and chemotherapy, but sometimes it is hard to keep going."

"When he gets discouraged, that gets me down too," Miriam added. "I try to keep my spirits up, because I don't want to make him feel bad, but sometimes it is hard. He has always been my best friend, so naturally he is the person I want to talk to when I feel bad. Now I don't feel like I can share everything with him because he is already dealing with so much."

"I do worry about how this is affecting Miriam," Dalton agreed. "I know it is hard on her and the kids, and I hate that, but there is nothing I can do about it. We just all have to hang together and get through this."

"And we will," Miriam said emphatically. "I know we will. And maybe Dalton is right. Perhaps we can learn to live life to the fullest because of what we are going through. I'm not sure I believe that totally, but I am trying to."

"I know I can have a life even with the cancer," Dalton said. "And my plans are to be cancer free for the rest of my life."



The Mason Jarrs appeared on the Grand Ole Opry Show live at the Ryman Auditorium on Saturday, January 5th and have been invited back in the summer. Joseph Wagers of Livingston is a member of this group. From left are: Wagers, on the guitar; Bass Boy on Bass; Kyle Farmer on the Banjo and Mike Snider on the Mandolin.

Start today for a healthier tomorrow

By: Lindsay Dowell Gabbard, RD, LD

March is National Nutrition Month, which means we should all take the time to reflect upon our eating habits and how they affect our health. Life is nourished by food, and the substances in food on which life sustains are the nutrients. Food not only serves as a means to provide nourishment to promote optimum nutrition status, but also lends to establishing memories through family/friend socialization and genrally provides comfort. With our fast-paced lifestyle and the opportunities for our society to choose from a greater variety of foods often leads to an overabundant intake of energy (calories). Our efforts to lose weight are widely pursued with varying degrees of enthusiasm and diligence, yet are seldom successful. Heart Disease, Cancer, Stroke, Pneumonia/Influenza and Diabetes are within the TEN Leading Causes of Death (US 1996), in which diet plays a part. My advice would be to start NOW in your development of an overall healthy lifestyle, which includes healthy eating and physical fitness to prevent, or at least postpone, various degenerative diseases.

Allow me to introduce you to Healthy People 2010. Healthy People is designed to identify the most significant preventable threats to health and to establish national goals to reduce these threats. Start with the Dietary Guidelines to achieve these goals.

Goals of Healthy People 2010:

- Increase quality and years of healthy life for Americans.
- Eliminate health disparities among Americans.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans... *for good health*

- Aim for Fitness...
- Aim for a healthy weight.
- Be physically active each day.

Build a Healthy Base...

- Let the food pyramid guide your food choices.
- Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.
- Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.
- Keep food safe to eat.

Choose Sensibly...

- Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholestrol and moderate in total fat.
- Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.
- Choose and prepare foods with less salt.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

At Lifeline Medical in Somerset I work hard along with your medical team of physicians and nurses to provide the expertise for the nutritional care and management of our patients. Our patient population ranges from, for example, the healthy patient with diabetes who needs to integrate diet, exercise and medication management to nutritional support through the delivery of enteral and parenteral formulas by our Lifeline Pharmacy.

As one of the Registered Dietitians on staff at Lifeline Medical, we want you to know that along with our home health services, oxygen respiratory equipment, hospital beds, wheelchairs and among the various other medical equipment comes the opportunity to meet with a Registered Dietitian. For additional information you may call 1-800-264-1833.

It's Your Money

By Jonathan Miller, Kentucky State Treasurer

Last week, I had the honor of serving as one of 200 delegates appointed by President Bush and congressional leaders to the 2002 National Summit on Retirement Savings. Under the direction of U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao, the summit joined delegates from diverse professions, representing state and local governments, employers, labor unions and Members of Congress.

Motivated by speakers ranging from the President to Senator Ted Kennedy to Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan, the challenge of the event was to engage in intensive breakout sessions in order to develop strategies to help all Americans retire with security and dignity.

The Summit's goals were shaped by one simple, but shocking statistic: our national savings rate has reached an historic low of less than one percent. What that means is that for every dollar of disposable spending, Americans are saving less than a penny. Although we were taught at an early age that " a penny saved is a penny earned," mere pennies will not promise a secure or dignified retirement.

In today's consumer-driven, credit card culture, Americans tend to focus on buying the newest, the best and the most expensive - often to the detriment of their long term savings. This problem is compounded by a Social Security system in danger and many employee retirement accounts left unstable by mismanagement and unfair practices, as seen in the Enron collapse and its aftermath. As the baby boom generation approaches retirement with little saved, the government - and the taxpayers - maybe left holding the bag.

To prevent a financial catastrophe from occurring, it is important to understand two principles. One, we need to start saving now, even encouraging our youngest children to develop good savings habits. (I regularly take my daughters to the bank to deposit money from birthdays, allowances and tooth fairies into their accounts.) Two, as the Enron debacle has demonstrated, investers cannot keep putting all of their eggs in one basket - we must diversify our holdings to ensure a secure future.

It is the responsibility of those of us who participated in the Summit to get these messages out. How? My Commission on Personal Savings and Investment will follow up on the Summit's recommendations in three specific areas:

- Currently, we are closely watching the progress of Rep. Susan Westrom's legislation, which builds on our Commission's recommendations to regulate the activities of credit card companies on college campuses. Should the legislation pass - and we expect it will - the Savings Commission will work with college officials to develop codes of conduct for on-campus solicitations and to prepare financial literacy seminars for students.
- This fall, we will launch our "Women and Money" initiative, holding free seminars across the state to equip Kentucky women with the tools they need to develop personal financial security. Our focus on women and savings is essential: women earn less and receive a fewer retirement benefits than men, they are more likely to be single parents and they will take off more often to raise their children.
- Our most important long-term goal must be to reach the youngest Kentuckians, to help them develop the skills that will be crucial to the development of their financial independence. The Savings Commission will examine how best to ensure that existing financial resources will reach every classroom in the state. We will also strive to incorporate innovative ideas discussed at the National Summit, such as promising a savings account to every child born in the state and promoting savins clubs for youth of all ages.

Again, as always, we would appreciate your ideas and input. You can reach us at (502)564-4722, or on the web at www.kytreasury.com.

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