



*"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

When I started out in oncology nursing and learned about pain, the definition we were taught from McCaffery (1968) was the gold standard. *Pain is whatever the experiencing person says it is, and happens whenever the experiencing person says it does.* We do not get to decide what pain is, for another person.



Janie Brown
Executive Director

Perhaps we could define 'hope' in the same way? *Hope is whatever the experiencing person says it is.* People often tell me that their healthcare professionals define hope for them, even when they haven't asked for specific information about what they can hope for, in terms of prognosis, or quality of life.

If hope makes a person feel better, like pain medication does, why would we not support fostering hope as a medicine too, for as long as the person wants us to hope with them, and/or for as long as the future is unknown. A person is given a diagnosis, stage of disease, and pathology and if they want, he or she can be given statistics too. If they don't want a prognosis, then they have the right to decline receiving the information. Perhaps *they* get to decide how to define hope for themselves? Perhaps they choose to hope for survival in spite of the odds, or hope for a pain-free or a meaningful day, or hope to have a difficult conversation go well. Should each of us not get to choose what we hope for? In the rare instance that a person maintains hope for survival beyond the reality of their situation, perhaps we need to respect their process of coming to terms with things in their own time. Fear and sadness accompany every life, especially when death lingers on the close horizon, and we can help people with those difficult emotions if, or when, we need to.

I have heard too many stories about people being told not to hope for the best, but rather, prepare for the worst. In our young adult community particularly, the prognoses given, even if not asked for, are often inaccurate. One young adult told me recently that she just passed her two year expected survival date, and she decided to have an 'I'm not dead yet' party, to celebrate. Another young woman was told she had weeks to live, and is now in remission and back at work fulltime. Sometimes these statistics are given based on older adult experiences and don't reflect the younger.

What if being hopeful, even for a miracle, for some people makes for a happier life? The people I know who hope for a miracle are not in denial,

Quotes like "It ain't over 'til it's over," "Don't go to the funeral until the day of the funeral" and "Never say never" have never resonated more with me than they do now. But it's hard to keep repeating and believing these words when you've been told that your cancer is incurable. After all, why shouldn't we believe our experienced doctors, who see cancer every single day, behind every single clinic door they walk into, and who have spent decades studying the disease? A health professional myself, I, of course, believed them when they told me that I only had "weeks to months" to live and that my cancer was incurable. This was 15 months ago, and I'm still alive.



Samantha Hage-Moussa
& Jamie Gooderham

I was only two and a half months into my first year of medical residency in September 2013 when I was diagnosed with Stage 4 Non-Hodgkins lymphoma. I had tumours in my chest and pancreas, and they were growing quickly (my pancreatic tumour grew from 1 cm to 2 cm within 2 weeks). Before this, my life was setting out in a perfect direction in front of me. In May of 2013, I ran my second full marathon, Jamie proposed to me shortly after we graduated medical school together, we travelled through Europe for a month, and by July we had moved to Calgary together to start a two-year residency training to be family physicians.

To say that being diagnosed with cancer two months after all the celebrations was a shock, is an understatement. But the good news was that I only needed 6 rounds of chemotherapy over the course of 5 months, and that the cure rate for my type of cancer was over 90%. It didn't sound so bad, and it meant that I could be back at work in 5 months. Well, my pancreatic tumor quickly tripled in size *after* receiving three rounds of chemo. So, 5 months of treatment slowly turned into 18 months of several different types of treatments. I even went down to the National Institute of Health in Maryland to enrol in a clinical trial, which was really quite exciting. However, I was quickly disqualified and sent home a few days after I arrived because we learned the lymphoma had spread to my brain. From here on I was termed palliative and was even assigned a palliative home care nurse. Needless to say, I was not very nice to her. I wanted to continue exploring other treatments but received a lot of push back from my doctors, as they didn't believe that any treatments would work for me at this point. But, I persisted. We soon realized that there was no sense in waiting anymore, so Jamie and I decided to get married right away and we managed (with the help of our friends and family) to plan a beautiful wedding in one week. It was held between chemo sessions. Despite the fact that I had more chemo scheduled two days after the wedding, the day couldn't have been more perfect.



Caroleena Khayatte

Welcome to Caroleena

Caroleena Khayatte was brought to us on the wings of serendipity and is a perfect addition to our Callanish city team. She joins Liz, Joanne, Danielle and Janie in keeping all the cogs of the organization running smoothly and works Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. She brings her experience working in non-profits, and her enormous Hispanic heart to our community, and we feel very lucky to have her join the team.

Ride to Honour Philip Ho Fai Lee

On Monday May 18th, 2015 a group of cyclists gathered at Callanish in Vancouver to ride in honour of Philip Ho Fai Lee who passed away on March 22, 2015. Philip was a member of our Young Adult Group and Callanish community and an incredible inspiration to the group of 28 riders who trained and braved the Whistler Fondo in 2013, to fundraise for Callanish. Many of this group were brand new to road cycling and the ride would not have become a reality without him. He himself rode that day, only hours after receiving devastating news from his doctors. It was one of the best rides he had ever had. As the ride in Philip's honour wove along, fellow cyclists joined in and gathered on the grass to honour and remember him with many wonderful stories. His wife Emma sent us this beautiful poem which was read at Philip's graveside. We hold Emma and Finn close to our hearts always.



Fellow cyclists, family and friends of Philip at Ambleside

Light as a Feather

by ET Waldron

Light as a feather
Dancing on air
Nothing to hinder me
wisdom keeps me aware
The wind is my passion
With it I soar
Like Eagles on thermals
Flightless no more

From many encumbrances
I've been freed
Of the many things
Which I didn't need
Enlightenment teaches
Less truly is best
I'll continue my journey
with much more zest

I fly over rainbows
With dauntless wings
Happy as a Lark
With new songs to sing
The sky ever beckons
With new joys to share
I'm light as a feather
Dancing on air

Samantha Hage-Moussa cont. from page 1

I ended up receiving 9 rounds of different chemotherapies (most of which failed), a month of whole brain radiation, and I spent one month in the hospital getting a stem cell transplant. Finally, I spent a month receiving radiation to my chest and pancreas. After months of treatment and anxious waiting in between, I had my first "stable" scan in December 2014, and fortunately, things have not changed since then. I'm by no means out of the woods yet, and I'm reminded at every check up that I'm not cured and have a really high risk of relapsing.

Despite all of this, I'm getting on with my life. I've recently resumed my residency training in Family Medicine in Calgary, and I ran a half marathon last month with a huge herd of supporters. I'm now seeing my own patients who put their trust in me and look to me for answers. Sometimes it feels strange, and I often wonder what I'm doing going back to this kind of work. Shouldn't I be on a sunny beach somewhere, relaxing and rewarding myself after all I've been through? One hospital worker looked at me after I told her I'd been on a leave of absence due to cancer, scrunched her face, and said, "Should you be working right now?" Well yes, I absolutely should be working right now! The reason is because I know that I have so much to give to my patients. Being out of training for 18 months has certainly resulted in some knowledge gaps that I'm having to work through, but I feel that I am now able to connect with patients in a way that I was never able to before my illness. For this reason, I know this is what I'm supposed to be doing.

I've worked hard during my recovery, not only physically, but also mentally and emotionally. That's where Callanish comes in. I avoided meeting other people who were dealing with cancer for a whole year because I believed that no one could understand the difficulties I was having. But I soon learned that meeting other cancer patients and survivors was one of the keys to my healing. A year after my diagnosis, I was finally ready to go on my first of two retreats with Callanish. It was the first time that I felt I wasn't alone, the first time I really opened up about what I had been through. It was probably the most difficult thing I've ever done. But I never felt so rewarded, and so understood as I did during those retreats. I often joke that the retreats "fixed" me, but I truly do feel that way. I do still have daily struggles; I'm reminded of cancer every single day. I don't know if that will ever go away. I imagine that it won't, but I've learned to be okay with it.

There's this thinking that you're supposed to make the most of every moment, and live each day like it's your last, but if you ask me, living each day like it's my last sounds pretty depressing. I believe more in living each day like I'm going to live forever. If I lived each day like it was my last, it means I've given up hope. I most certainly have not. Research has shown that making plans for future vacations actually results in the same amount of happiness as actually going on the trip. So, whether or not they are actually going to happen, Jamie and I are always talking about future trips we want to go on, planning for how many kids we are going to have, and dreaming about the kind of house that we want to live in. It also means not feeling like I'm wasting my time by doing simple things like watching TV for hours.

I'm not sad anymore that I got cancer, and it bothers me when people tell me that they are sorry that I got cancer. I didn't go through all I went through for people to feel sorry for me. I want people to feel inspired and strengthened by my story, not sad. I want people to see what determination and advocating for yourself can do. I want people to see all the positives that have come out of my experience.

Janie Brown cont. from page 1

far from it! They know they have a serious cancer that could radically shorten their life, but they have decided that when the time comes to face death head on, they will do so, but *not* until then. In the meantime, they choose to live with the belief in possibility. I am glad I've worked long enough in the field of cancer to have been surprised many times. Let's not take away hope even if statistics tell us to be hopeless. There are outliers in every bell curve, and if you are not one of those lucky people, we *will* walk all the way with you, and help you face the end of life, but maybe not until we need to. In the meantime, we will happily hope alongside you.

Baby Blessings to Danielle and Kevin

We will miss Danielle at Callanish for the next six months or so, as she and Kevin enter an exciting new phase of their lives. They expect their baby to arrive around July 10th and we wish them much joy and delight in the coming months. This little baby is one lucky child to have these two as parents!

Welcome to Allison

We are excited to have Allison Prinsen join us for her M.A. Counselling Psychology practicum for the school year, starting at the end of August. She will be available on Tuesday afternoons for counselling on a sliding scale, and can be reached at the Callanish phone # or e-mail. She has a special interest and expertise in working with people around the issues of loss of fertility and surrogacy. Allison came on retreat after a bone marrow transplant for leukemia over ten years ago and has volunteered for Callanish since then, as a graphic designer and member of our Board of Directors.

Tip a Wee Dram 2015



Liz and Janie had the great honour of volunteering at the annual whisky-tasting event for cancer charities, this past March. Team Hope is a group of cyclists who created this event six years ago, born from their own personal experiences with cancer in their families, and the desire to help others who are living with the disease. **Tip a Wee Dram** was a sold-out event again this year with three hundred intrepid whisky-tasters, many in kilts, coming out to the event!

It is an impeccably organized event with a host of volunteers putting in hours, weeks and months of work ahead of the evening. We hope to be able to provide more Callanish volunteers next year, so please be in touch with us if you are interested. It is a VERY fun evening!

Team Hope presented our Board of Directors with a whopping great cheque for \$24,475.00 just a few weeks after the event. Thank you so much to Al, Jan, Shauna, Brendan, Wayne and Callanish volunteer Darlene, and all the many other volunteers, for your incredible hard work and generosity to Callanish. Your beloved family members are forever imprinted in this gift of generosity.

Callanish Cycling Community

Two years after thirty members of Team Callanish rode the Whistler Gran Fondo, we decided we wanted to share the excitement of learning to cycle with a group of beginners. Thanks to the leadership of Andrea Taylor, cycling guru of West Point Cycles fame, and the support of volunteer Jeannette Frost, we began a Sunday afternoon cycling group for Callanish participants, their families, and Friends of Callanish. Getting up the UBC hill has been a highlight for some, celebrated by a Happy Dance at the top! One group of Callanish riders is planning to ride 50 km in the Prospera Valley Fondo on July 19th and another group will ride the 88km. Please come out to Langley and support the team that day. We would love to see you!

There is lots of space in the Sunday beginner group. Any kind of bicycle works, and any level of fitness. Call Callanish for more info.



Balding for Dollars

Julie Worden came to Callanish for support after a tragic loss. Six years later, Julie decided she wanted to give back to Callanish. She shaved off her beautiful long hair and in doing so raised over \$2000 for Callanish. Julie you are an inspiration! Thank you so much from all of us!



Julie Worden



Alex Van

Making a Movie: I'm Still Here

by Alex Van

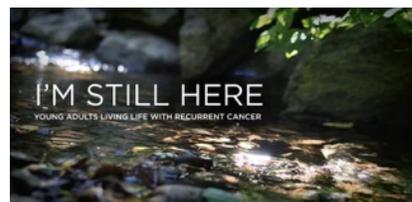
It's commonly said that "the third time's the charm!" Well, in this case, I think it should go more like, "All three times were a charm!" especially when we're talking about Callanish's recent movie premieres of *'I'm Still Here'*, their first documentary film. All three screenings were sold out, went spectacularly well and left audiences feeling inspired, emotionally moved and wanting more. Sound a bit familiar? It felt just

like every time I left Callanish after an invigorating yoga class, relaxation session or retreat. And it goes to show how this film is a real testament first to the groundbreaking work that the Callanish team do on a daily basis, but also to the amazing people that are connected with this sacred place. When Janie and Danielle first approached me about their idea (at the time, I was in Spain, in what felt like an entirely different universe), I was beyond excited! I mean, come on, this was the first time in over 20 years that they would actually be documenting their work?! In my mind, it was a historic moment. And boy, was I blessed to be a part of it!

Immediately after I flew home from Spain, we all went up to Brew Creek with a group of young adult women living with recurrent cancer and with two filmmakers, Jenn and Robin. None of us had a clear idea how this was going to go, but we put our trust in each other and the universe for what would happen. After three days of hard work (Callanish with their facilitating, Jenn and Robin with their technical shooting, and the participants with our therapeutic sessions), we left Brew Creek with 18 hours of valuable footage. I must say, it was such a neat position to be in, both behind-the-scenes with Callanish and seeing how everything was set up with the film crew and how everything looked behind the camera lens, but also throwing myself into the full intensity of participating in a retreat. And so went the next four months of work. Watch, cut, edit, meeting, repeat. Cut, edit some more, meeting, repeat. And trust me, watching yourself on video doesn't get any easier, even after the gazillionth time you see a clip!

Throughout this process of making a film that was not only representative of the incredible work of Callanish, but also to the elusive spirit of a young adult battling cancer, I came away with so much knowledge and insight (interestingly enough, experience was one of my big intentions, as you'll see in the film...!). And I'm not just talking about the technical skills around filmmaking and story development which I learned from Jenn and Robin (although those were invaluable in their own respect). I'm referring to the feeling of utter responsibility I felt during the whole process, and even now, for sharing these women's voices and stories in a way that is authentic to them. I feel the importance of advocating for young adults everywhere who are going through a similar experience. And I also feel the honour and gratitude of being able to take on this immense task.

So when you're watching the film, or if you've already seen it, know that it was definitely a labour of love.



The film is available for screening for healthcare teams and groups, and will also be posted on our website in a few months. DVDs will also be available soon for sale.

Grains of Wisdom: The Callanish Cookbook was inspired by Kathy Fell and is full of great ideas for healthy and delicious meals. It also features photographs and quotes from many of our retreats. Proceeds from the sale of the cookbook will help support Callanish retreats and programs. Please contact our office if you would like to purchase a copy.

Beet Hummus

If you like beets, this is a wonderful colourful bright dish to serve with veggies or crackers at any picnic style meal.

3 large or 4 small beets, cooked, peeled and cut into big chunks
1/4 cup tahini
1 lime, zest and juice
1/2 tsp. cumin
1/4 cup roughly chopped cilantro
Salt and pepper to taste

Place all ingredients in a food processor and blend until it is evenly blended and has a smooth texture. Taste and adjust seasonings.



Honouring a Donor - Daphne Roubini

It was a very happy day when we met Daphne Roubini. She came to Callanish to describe the how the 'uke can heal your life,' and to introduce us to her wonderful organization, Ruby's Ukes (www.rubysukes.ca). I will never forget when she pulled the little red four-stringed instrument out of its case, played and sang us a song, and how my heart melted! The ukulele opens the heart and brings such joy in its simplicity, and by learning just three chords you can play 200 songs! Daphne has donated many ukuleles, tuners, music books and funds raised by her students, to Callanish over the past two years. The ukulele has become a permanent fixture on retreat, and both participants and team members are now playing. Thank you Daphne for such generosity and for lightening the hearts of many at Callanish. Check out their fabulous new CD 'Ruby and Smith.'



Daphne Roubini & Andy Smith

We Remember with Love

Rose Chung
Georgia Guy
Philip Ho Fai Lee
Kim Jackson
Lori Pettigrew
Charlene Radies
Bob Schindelka
Lis Smith
Della Vogl

We send our love and thoughts to the family and friends of these remarkable people.

Special Thanks to:

All of our anonymous and monthly donors who give with such generous and ongoing commitment

The family and friends of **Rose Chung, Lori Pettigrew, Charlene Radies & Lis Smith** for their generous memorial donations.

The family and friends of **Margaret Tse** for their generous memorial donations in honour of her parents 40th wedding anniversary.

Louie Henley for her never-ending generosity of spirit, food & flowers, concert tickets and care.

The Lotte & John Hecht Memorial Foundation for their generous scholarship support and matching funding.

Michael Luco of Earthrise for providing stunning flowers for retreats and city events.

Bruno & Sally Born and Graham Pap at Finest at Sea for the gorgeous fish for our retreats.

Stephanie Sauv  for all her generous support in continuing to back us up with our new website needs.

Alex Van for her many generous volunteer hours editing our film, "I'm Still Here".

Alex, Christina, Natalie, Rima, Samantha and Zuri for volunteering to speak at the three public screenings of the film "I'm Still Here" and for being such incredible advocates for young adults with cancer.

Karen Bowen and Deena Chochinov for volunteering to help us brainstorm the distribution of our film.

Gerry Reimer for "blacking" out our many skylights on our roof for the Callanish screenings of our film.

Eva Matsuzaki for writing such beautiful thank you cards to our donors.

Jan Kaspavec for initiating the RBC team to volunteer to renovate our garden and back patio.

Racquel Marshall and her amazing **RBC team** for spending a precious Friday evening working in our garden and patio, and for their generous donation.

Laurel Murphy and Margaret Bacon for the gift of healing sounds and touch for our relaxation group.

Bill Sutherland for taking such good care of our garden.

Bill Sutherland, Don Matsuzaki, Buddy Sakamoto, Gerry Reimer, Kevin Foster and Doug Evans for driving to and from Brew Creek to help us with retreat set-up and take down.

Karen & Barry Coates of Fraser Meadow Organic Dairy for donating their fabulous yoghurt for retreat.

Irene Mills for donating Marlene's books for our library and art supplies for our studio.

The Brew Creek Centre for their ongoing generosity and support.

Our fabulous baking team of **Sherri Silverman, Janet Silver, Susan Stine and Karen Hoffman** for donating their time and the ingredients to bake the much-loved and infamous Callanish cookies.

Claire Talbot for volunteering to wash dishes on retreat.

Neil Prinsen and Jacky Fraser for driving participants to and from retreat.

Gillian Hunt & Pandora's Vox for donating tickets to their performances.

Leanne Davis and the VSO for donating tickets to their Fall concerts.

Suzanne Hong at Granville Island Florists for bringing beauty to our retreats through her flowers.

Chor Leoni for the proceeds from their 'Healing Voices' CD.

