



Sensuality, Sexuality, Survival

WWW.PUREROMANCE.COM/SSS

AUGUST 2007



Current SSS Events

Our SSS Consultants have been continuing to fight against cancer and its debilitating effects on female sexuality. With 44 Certified Consultants nationwide, our SSS Consultants are scheduling a presentation near you! To book an “Intimacy After Cancer” presentation for your support organization in your area, please contact us at sss@pureromance.com.

Pure Romance’s *SSS Program* has been involved with various organizations all over the country, including the Gilda’s Club of Western Pennsylvania, FORCE, the Wellness Community, various hospitals across the country, various Komen walks across the country, various Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walks, and Relay for Life walks spanning from Ohio all the way to Nevada.

On June 24th, Erin Hoschouer, the Director of Health Education for Pure Romance, presented a lecture *Sensuality, Sexuality, Survival: Intimacy After Cancer* at the 2007 American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists Conference in Charlotte, NC. Educators, counselors and therapists from all over the country were given information on ways to help their patients and clients rediscover their intimate health following cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Featured Article: A Partner’s Guide Ten Ways to be There When Your Significant Other has Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is a life threatening and relationship-threatening trauma. When we meet the man or woman of our dreams, our soul mate and best friend, we expect to be together for a lifetime despite what life might hand us. When becoming a couple you learn to balance your needs, weigh the joy and awesome responsibility of becoming a parent, manage careers and handle money. If a relationship is sound, it can weather any storm, survive virtually any trauma. If the relationship is not on solid ground, a trauma, almost any trauma or stress, can lead to its demise. That may account for the fact that nearly seven in ten marriages touched by breast cancer do not survive.

We are hoping to provide some insight to the relationships touched by breast cancer and offer some helpful tips for coping with the immense challenges your relationship is most likely facing. The challenges of life build character – the challenge of breast cancer gives you an enormous opportunity to build character, character for yourself and for your relationship. The following are suggestions on how to be there for your partner, how to help her become and remain a survivor.

Our Expert Bio

Jennifer (Jan) Simpson is a registered nurse, who currently works at the Franklin Square Medical Center as the Clinical Coordinator for Breast Services. Jan is currently pursuing a Master of Liberal Arts degree in Ethics from Johns Hopkins University. She graduated with Honors in 1997 with a degree in Psychology, also from Johns Hopkins University. Jan has worked as an operating room nurse since 1986 and was the Clinical Coordinator for the Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery of the Breast Center at Mercy Medical Center from 2001 to 2003. Jan has also published many articles on breast surgery as well as speaking for such organizations as the Susan G. Komen Foundation. Jan is also a Certified Breast Health Specialist.

We are thrilled to have Jan as our featured “expert.” Her over 30 years of experience as a nurse and her work as a breast health specialist makes her a wonderful addition to Sensuality, Sexuality, Survival.



1. Tell her you love her.

In a marriage or any intimate relationship, silence is not golden. The strong silent type need not apply for the position of partner, lover, best friend, confidante and supporter of a woman with breast cancer. Actions may speak louder than words, but speaking words brings comfort, reassurance and knowledge of your inner feelings. The three most important words at this moment when together you are facing her mortality are: "I love you."

2. Say "yes."

When someone, anyone, asks if they can do anything to help, just say "yes." Friends, family, neighbors, colleagues and others want to be there for you and even for them. Understand that the people asking to help need your "yes" as much as you do. It gives them the sense of being able to do something positive about this insidious disease that seems beyond their control. Just remember – it's okay to ask for help. Say "yes" when it is offered. You both will be better for it.

3. Humor heals.

We know that the act of laughing is itself healing. It makes us feel better and helps us get better. It is very easy to take ourselves and our careers much too seriously. You can't experience that over-the-top, out of control laughter while feeling sorry for yourself. Can you imagine anything that feels better? Seeing the humor in any situation brings relief and release. Jokes should be a staple during and after treatment, because humor is healing to the body, mind and spirit.

4. I love you, not your breasts.

Despite our nation's growing obesity, we are a breast and body image fixated society. From Betty Grable pinups in World War II, Marilyn Monroe and Jane Mansfield in the 1950's and 1960's to Demi Moore, Paris Hilton and Pamela Anderson today. Your partner needs to know that you love who she is, not what type of body she has or the size of her breasts. The act of love-making before and after breast cancer treatments is not hampered by having one breast instead of two. Rather, going through this together should enrich your intimacy. Your partner needs to know by what you say and what you do that this set of circumstances is not the end of your sex life, but rather a new, sometimes frightening, and exciting sex life with heightened sensitivity and caring.

5. Go to her appointments.

Go to the multitude of appointments of appointments with your partner as much as you can, holding her hand literally and figuratively. It is not what you do when you accompany your partner to her treatment, but rather the act itself that speaks volumes. Taking part in her treatments can give you a sense of empowerment. You are more than a helpless spectator – you have joined the battle.



There is also a practical side – hearing a diagnosis of cancer can overwhelm the senses. Doctors try to help you understand, but their medical jargon can be confusing and hard to understand. With two of you there, there are two sets of ears to hear what is said. There are two mouths to ask questions. Being with your partner at her appointments will reassure her, help her overcome the struggles and make you feel good about yourself. She'll love you for it.

6. She is not an invalid.

Your partner is not fragile – she won't break. Treatment can be grueling and tiring, but you both need to live your life as fully as possible. Continue to enjoy what you enjoy individually and as a couple, particularly what you enjoy doing as a couple. Let your partner do anything she is up to trying. You need to take cues from your partner. She knows what she can do, or how tired she may be feeling, whether it is a good day or a bad day. When she is ready, encourage and support her without pushing her.

7. Sex after breast cancer.

This is another place where the man needs to let his partner lead. She will let you know what works, feels good and what doesn't, what she is ready for and what may take more time to be comfortable with. The important thing to learn is that life goes on and sex goes on. In the first weeks, months and even years, your sex life may take on an added dimension can be both painful and exquisite.

It may be important to try various lubricants, vaginal moisturizers and heighteners to make intercourse easier and

more comfortable. When your partner experiences menopause, whether naturally as she ages or early menopause brought on by chemotherapy, there are issues to be addressed. This includes hot flashes, vaginal dryness, pain during intercourse, lack of lubrication, and lower libido, to name a few. Remember, she is not fragile. Hug her often.

8. She is your trophy wife.

Sexual or emotional – have a fling with your partner. Date her again – take her away for a weekend at a bed and breakfast, to her favorite shows, or just spend a quiet night at home enjoying one another. Remember to fall in love, stay in love, and enjoy being in love.

9. Make lemonade from lemons.

When life gives you lemons, make lemonade. Be sure to see the silver lining! Discover that profound sense of being “one” with each other. A solid relationship will not only get through the trauma of breast cancer, the relationship will be strengthened and be better for it – go figure!

10. She is not damaged goods.

Your partner is not damaged goods with or without breast reconstruction. She remains the woman you fell in love with, the woman you committed to for a lifetime together. You, too, may miss her breast, as it has brought you both pleasure in the past, but know that new pleasures will be coming to surface as you both begin to rediscover intimacy as a couple. Love her, hold her, smile with her, cry with her, and laugh with her. You will find your relationship can be more intense than the ones around you. You will both survive and thrive if you fight it together.

My Story:

Suffering from Cancer - Minus the Cancer

My story is very different from those women that have actually had cancer. But, I have dealt with all the sorrow, worry and surgery that many cancer survivors have had. I have always felt as if I were the black sheep in all this cancer talk. I had a hysterectomy when I was only 30 years old. My doctor said it was an emergency because I had cancer. I had three little girls at that time and I was scared out of my mind with fear that I would die and not be able to care for my kids. I had the surgery and it was ten years and a double mastectomy later that I was told that I never actually had cancer, but I did have cysts, bleeding and lots of pain. It was the doctor that did the double mastectomy that told me I have never had cancer, but only after I had been through many of the same debilitating treatments cancer survivors go through.

For thirteen years I had suffered with mastitis so bad that both breasts were like concrete. The pain was so bad that I wasn't able to sleep at night. My kids couldn't even hug me because of the pain it would cause. I had been told that the only way to get rid of the pain and the possibility of cancer hiding under all the lumps was to undergo a double mastectomy. I fought it for the thirteen years but each year it got even worse. I finally went through the

eight hours of surgery. They put implants in and a year later I was sick again from the implants. They were taken out and I did not have reconstruction because I didn't have the money for it.

Cancer runs in my family - both of my grandmothers died from it, my daughter had it and many other of my family members suffer from cancer. I had belonged to a breast cancer support group in Wisconsin because the instructor said I had gone through a lot of what the other members had, but I always felt like the black sheep and the women were upset that I didn't have cancer. I didn't really know where I fit in, even though I had suffered a great deal due to the possibility of cancer.

I have continued to help with many cancer fundraisers in the past years and am hoping I can continue to with my involvement with Pure Romance. I wear my pins and am proud of my fl at chest – it's my reminder to women to get early cancer screenings. It has been twenty years now and I feel I am healthier now than I ever was. I have become a certified Natural Hygienist where I teach others the benefit of eating right and I help them make healthier choices.

Thanks for letting me share my story.

~Georgina Halpin, Pure Romance Consultant

Featured Product: Silver Bullet

Product Features:

- Bullet vibrators are the first choice among women reaching clitoral orgasms
- The clitoris is a woman's primary source of sexual pleasure that contains a high concentration of nerve endings
- When sexually aroused, the clitoris will swell blood, becoming erect and possibly doubling in size
- Many women are unable to reach orgasm through intercourse alone, so some form of clitoral stimulation is required to achieve climax
- You control your own level of intensity as you move the bullet over the clitoris during self-stimulation lovemaking
- Great for massaging temples to relieve sinuses

Application: For external use only, should never be inserted into the vagina or anus.

Price: \$14.00



Benefits: Stimulators, such as the Silver Bullet, are designed to enhance erotic responsiveness. The Silver Bullet is good to use alone or with a partner to enhance the level of arousal during the "Excitement" and "Plateau Phases". The use of a vibrator, with direct stimulation to the clitoris, will aid in the achievement of an orgasm. It is important when using a vibrator, such as the Silver Bullet, that you use it in conjunction with a water or silicone based lubricant for added satisfaction, comfort and safety. The Silver Bullet can also be used to reduce tension and stress to other parts of the body, including the temples, neck, shoulders and lower back.

Hearing a personal account of someone going through a similar experience can be very helpful and reassuring. If you would like to share your personal experience with breast cancer please submit your story to sss@pureromance.com.