

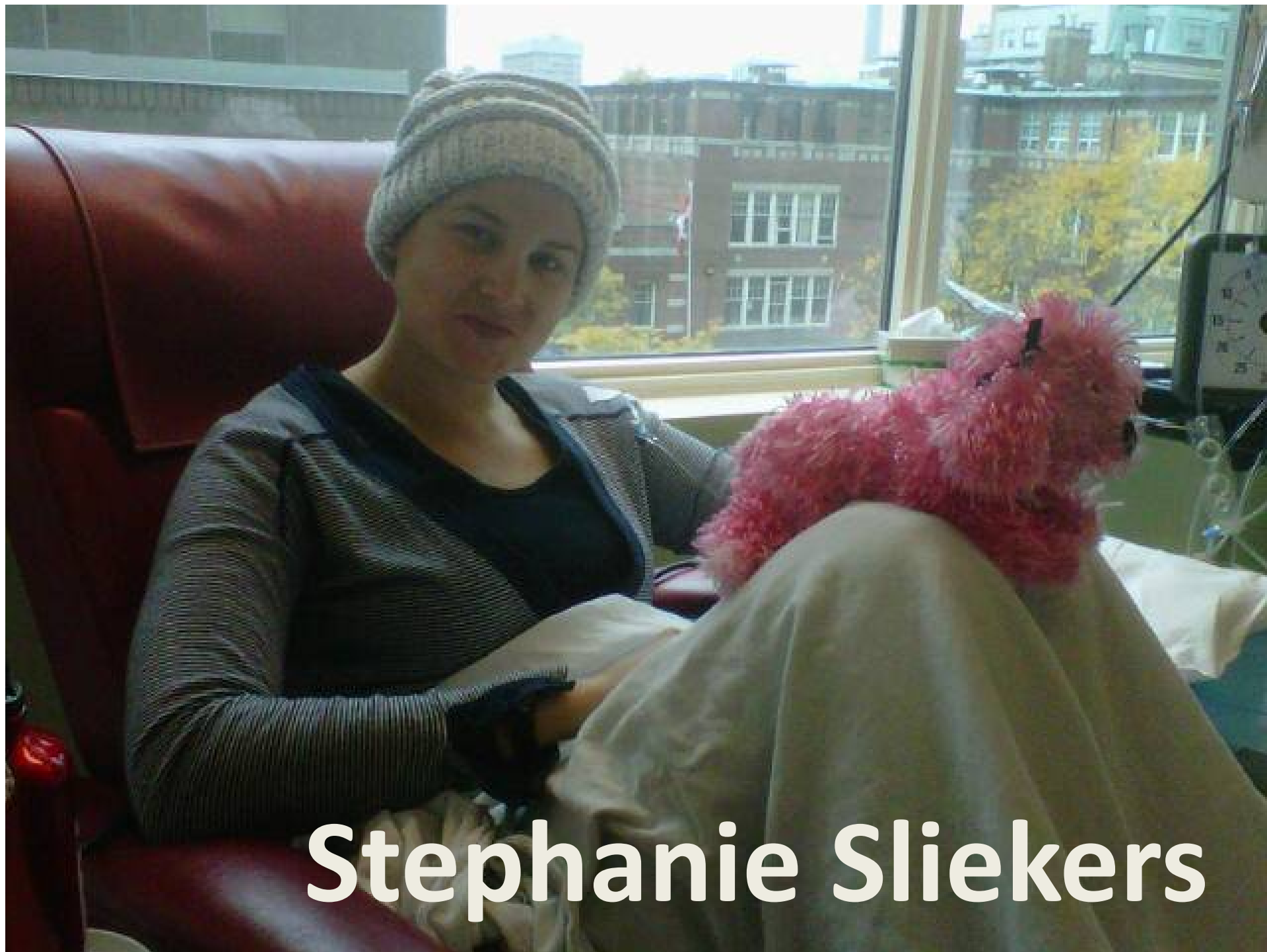
Imagine...

# Social Media as a Tool for Healing and Recovery

Stephanie Sliekers

“ We are lonesome animals. We spend all our life trying to be less lonesome. One of our ancient methods is to tell a story begging the listener to say — and to feel — ‘Yes, that’s the way it is, or at least that’s the way I feel it. You’re not as alone as you thought.’ ”

John Steinbeck, 1930

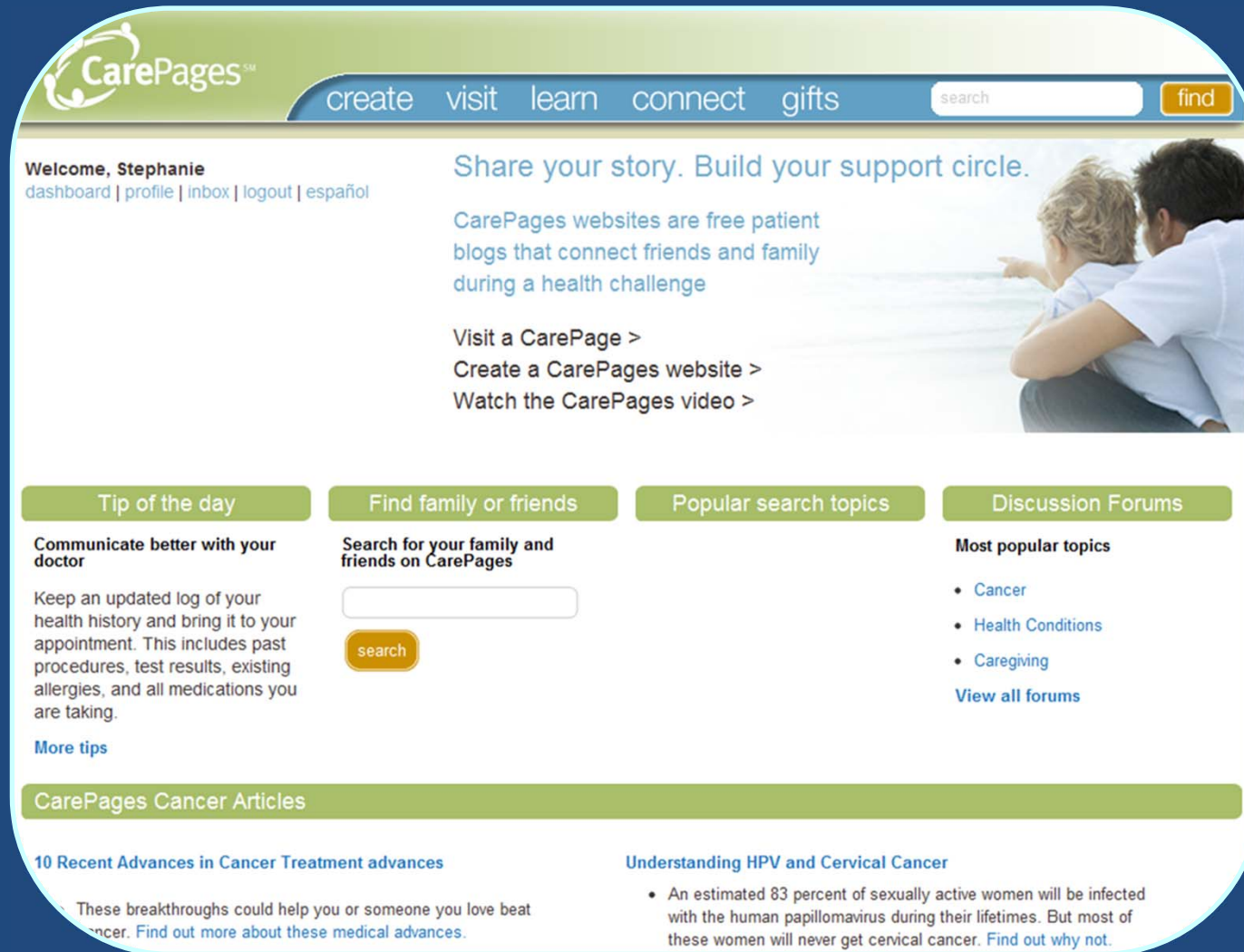


**Stephanie Sliemers**

# Part I: Blogging as a Patient



# Why a blog?



The screenshot displays the CarePages website interface. At the top, the CarePages logo is on the left, and navigation links 'create', 'visit', 'learn', 'connect', and 'gifts' are in the center. A search bar with a 'find' button is on the right. Below the navigation bar, a welcome message for 'Stephanie' is followed by links to 'dashboard', 'profile', 'inbox', 'logout', and 'español'. The main content area features a large banner with the text 'Share your story. Build your support circle.' and a photo of a family. Below the banner, there are four main sections: 'Tip of the day', 'Find family or friends', 'Popular search topics', and 'Discussion Forums'. The 'Tip of the day' section encourages users to keep an updated log of their health history. The 'Find family or friends' section includes a search bar and a 'search' button. The 'Popular search topics' section lists 'Cancer', 'Health Conditions', and 'Caregiving'. The 'Discussion Forums' section lists 'Most popular topics' and a link to 'View all forums'. At the bottom, there are two sections for 'CarePages Cancer Articles': '10 Recent Advances in Cancer Treatment advances' and 'Understanding HPV and Cervical Cancer'.

**CarePages**  
create visit learn connect gifts search find

Welcome, **Stephanie**  
dashboard | profile | inbox | logout | español

Share your story. Build your support circle.

CarePages websites are free patient blogs that connect friends and family during a health challenge

Visit a CarePage >  
Create a CarePages website >  
Watch the CarePages video >

**Tip of the day**  
Communicate better with your doctor  
Keep an updated log of your health history and bring it to your appointment. This includes past procedures, test results, existing allergies, and all medications you are taking.  
[More tips](#)

**Find family or friends**  
Search for your family and friends on CarePages  
search

**Popular search topics**

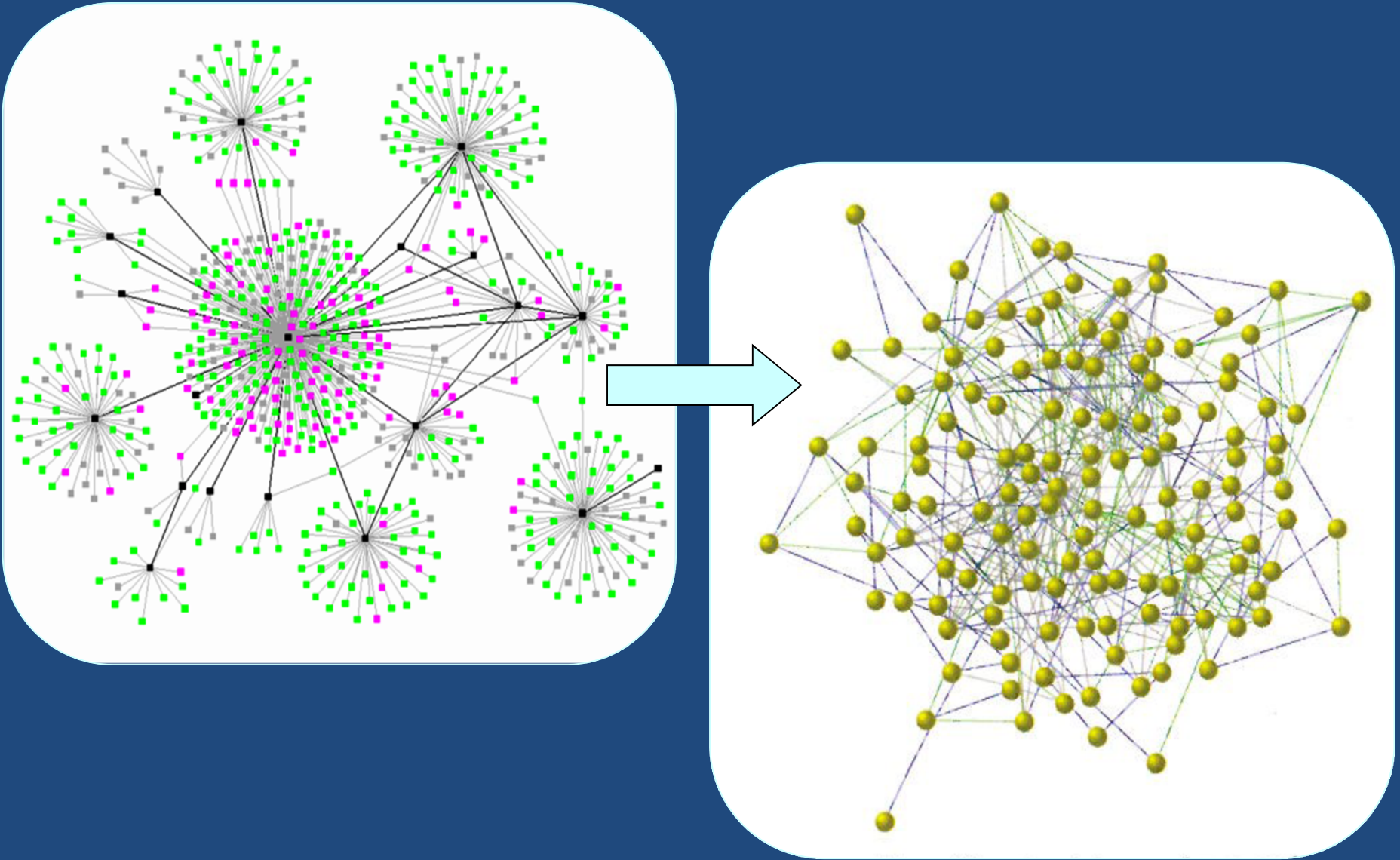
**Discussion Forums**  
Most popular topics  
• [Cancer](#)  
• [Health Conditions](#)  
• [Caregiving](#)  
[View all forums](#)

**CarePages Cancer Articles**


**10 Recent Advances in Cancer Treatment advances**  
These breakthroughs could help you or someone you love beat cancer. [Find out more about these medical advances.](#)

**Understanding HPV and Cervical Cancer**  
• An estimated 83 percent of sexually active women will be infected with the human papillomavirus during their lifetimes. But most of these women will never get cervical cancer. [Find out why not.](#)

# Information Direct from the Source







Is  
anybody  
out there?

# The Icebreaker

updates



## Stephanie's Updates

[Edit this update](#) | [Delete this update](#)

[Back to updates](#)

[Newer updates](#) | [Older updates](#)

One W

Posted Aug 26, 2010 3:57pm  
by Lois Morris

Posted Au

Hi Stephani

I start tre  
but direc

Looking forward to keep in the loop for your progress.  
If there is any help you need please call or  
send message on this (what ever you call it) I will be looking at it every day

This is a

Lots of Love from Nana & Grandad

[view update](#)

Posted Aug 26, 2010 3:40pm  
by Anna Morris

*Private message*

Hi Honey, this is very interesting whom have you shown this too? all my family, your friends or we  
taking a test ride first? Figures you would be so up to date.

[view update](#)



# How does it work?

## Supporters of VitalSleeks

Welcome, Stephanie

[dashboard](#) | [profile](#) | [inbox](#) | [logout](#) | [español](#)

[Invite your friends](#) to visit VitalSleeks

### Supporters

[Change Settings](#)

<b>Name</b> (sort)	<b>Last visit</b> ↑	<b>Total visits</b> (sort)	<b>Total messages</b> (sort)
Rebecca Holloway	Nov 11, 2011 10:12am	49	15
sousa ed	Oct 21, 2011 11:57pm	26	0
Max Boone	Sep 20, 2011 1:23pm	34	18
Jen Porenta	Aug 1, 2011 8:25pm	31	6
Hester Hoekman	Jul 13, 2011 2:04pm	42	5
Erin McCarthy	Jun 29, 2011 7:48am	21	5
Alice Kaldeway	Jun 28, 2011 8:11am	53	24
Trish Boone	Jun 17, 2011 7:52pm	17	1



# You're never alone

Steph you are truly amazing and so motivating. I will be working out twice as hard after work tonight and thinking of you. Your words also make me be so thankful for my healthy self, love your attitude

I always look forward to hearing your updates and I can't wait to hear your feeling more like your old self.

Hope today is better for you! love you lots, hang in there, this cancer has nothing on you!

You are THE bravest person I have ever known, and the strongest!!! I'm glad today is a better day and I hope tomorrow is even better! See you Monday :)

Stephanie,

I am so proud of you and how strong you have been through this trek of a journey. You are such a wonderful person and have such a courageous heart, and have an inner strength that one could only wish for. Your family is so bonded and well knit together that there was not a doubt in my mind that you would complete it with such integrity. You are INCREDIBLE and I truly admire the commitment that you put forth in your battle. Congratulations Stephanie. Love you girl love

le



# End of Treatment, End of Carepages

Stephanie's Updates

Edit this update | Delete this update

[Back to updates](#)[Newer update](#) | [Older update](#)

## Mission: Complete

  
print friendly

Posted Jun 8, 2011 8:11pm

Guess what? I have some MORE good news to share with you! Because, no, it didn't end with the previous post.

I had my first post-radiation treatment CT scan recently, and I'm pleased to confirm that the tumour has remained at the size chemotherapy knocked it down to. Not only that, it's showing signs of 'calcification' --- which means the tumour cells are dying!!

The only caveat to my cancer healing is the damage from radiation treatment is ongoing. The scan did show some lasting effects on my lungs and heart that will need to be further investigated with more tests. I'm not having any symptoms, however, so there's no reason to be concerned.

I've been biking to work now, and noticing my body slowly regaining its former strength. I even made it through TEACH week -- where I worked on 16 hour day!! My chemo self would never imagined so much time away from my bed!!

So, at this moment, I can consider my cancer treatment mission completed. Not only is my tumour showing signs of staying in remission, but my body is showing signs of recovery from treatment.

# Part II:

## Blogging as a Survivor



A large, yellow, multi-pointed starburst shape with a thick black outline, centered on a solid blue background. The word "REMISSION" is written in black, uppercase letters across the center of the starburst.

REMISSION

# What's next?

**a fresh chapter**

Home My Big Dream My Story Published Articles Volunteering in Africa Writing Resources & Great Reads

← Blind-Sided by the Pain of Saying Goodbye... "You Do What You Can, While You Can" →

## The Power of Unexpected Connections

Posted on [June 3, 2011](#) by [Terri Winqham](#)

[Tweet](#) 1 [Like](#) [Jane O'Connor](#) and 16 others like this.


*While I'm on the road traveling through Africa, I am expected to write posts with you. The first is by **Stephanie Sliemers**, on the [www.facingcancer.ca](http://www.facingcancer.ca) website.*

In July 2010, I went from being a 25-year-old-living-it-up-in-the-city to a role I hadn't even briefly imagined for myself: cancer patient. Sitting in the doctor's office on that fateful day, I became aware of my nerves only after I was told the results of the routine chest x-ray ordered to investigate my difficulty breathing were 'serious'. A large tumour occupied my entire right chest cavity.

Why don't you start  
your own blog?



# Starting a Blog is Easy...



**Blogger™**

1 CREATE ACCOUNT ▶ 2 NAME BLOG ▶ 3 CHOOSE TEMPLATE

## 1 Create a Google Account

This process will create a Google account that you can use to sign in to Blogger. You can also have a Google account perhaps from Gmail, Google Docs, or Google Photos.

Email address (must already exist)


Retype email address

Enter a password

[Password strength:](#)

Type password again

Display name



**Blogger™**

1 CREATE ACCOUNT ▶ 2 NAME BLOG ▶ 3 CHOOSE TEMPLATE

## 2 Name your blog


Blog title

Your blog's title will appear on the top of your profile.

Blog address (URL)

[Check Availability](#)

The URL you select will be used for your blog's address.




**Blogger™**


1 CREATE ACCOUNT ▶ 2 NAME BLOG ▶ 3 CHOOSE TEMPLATE

## 2 Choose a starter template


You can change your template later, and even customise it with the Template Designer.




Dynamic Views




Simple




Picture Window




Awesome Inc.




Watermark



Ethereal



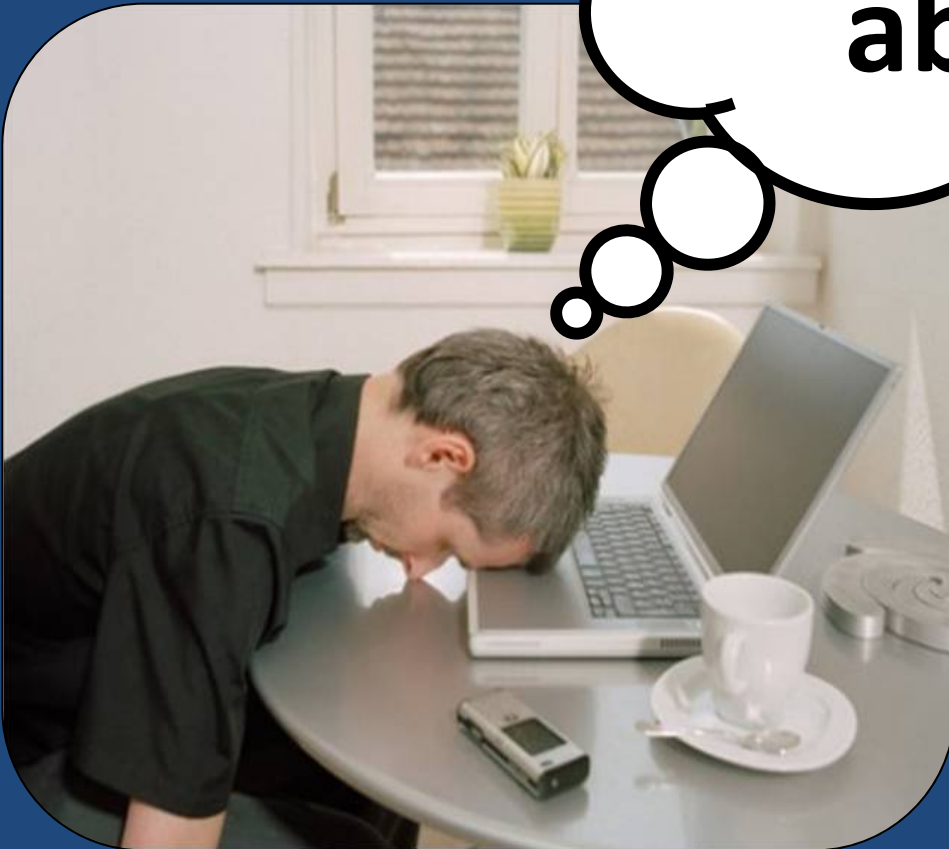
Travel



Simple

[CONTINUE](#)

**What do I  
blog  
about?!**



# Lessons Learned from a Cancer Diagnosis

1. Savour every run, bike or walk.
2. Save your money.
3. Spend what you've saved.
4. Face the ghosts of your past and MOVE ON!
5. Live everyday like a cancer patient, with the confidence that no one will question your motives or judgment.
6. Practice saying 'no', even if it's just for the sake of it.
7. Wash your hands. Often.
8. Have a bath. Often.
9. Never underestimate how much you are loved, and worth being loved.
10. Remember: It's not a race, it's a journey.

# A New Beginning

## 100 Cancer Resolutions

A record of my commitment to doing everything I took for granted before my diagnosis.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2010

# 5 Simple Blogging Rules

1. Do not use names
2. Do not give location specifics
3. Keep it short
4. No pictures
5. Know your “brand”



# I'm still not alone



# Blogging with Cancer is a “Thing”

## A Fresh Chapter



FIGHTING BREAST CANCER

## BUMPY BOOBS

MY BUMPY BOOBS INDEX LOVELY LINKS CATHERINEBRUNELLE NARRATIVE NIP

## Silverlupus: life thru cancer and other hiccups

The Lymphoma Lowdown A chronicle of my days with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma

Classic Flipcard Magazine Mosaic Sidebar Snapshot Timeslide

A Lesson in Lymphoma...

Chemo vs babies

Of mice and can...

2

### A Lesson in Lymphoma, part 4: Radiation Therapy

Well, the post-chemo rest time is now over, and it's time for me to start with the next phase of my journey - I was just getting comfortable! My radiation planning appointment is coming up, so I'm reading up on what to expect as treatment goes along. At this stage, after all these symptoms, I have a bit of a better idea how to prepare myself. Here's some of what I've

◀ Visit FacingCancer.ca ▶ Return to the blog

## The Bald & The Beautiful

### Cancer's a Real Jerk

18 Nov

Things are going pretty well right now with the time. My hair is growing back, and I expect that's jumping the gun a little. Cher

## Surviving Cancer Surviving Anything

following the life of a cancer survivor... Mike Cohen



the b-cell blog

## Cancer: A Spiritual Journey

All this time we have been looking for the cure to cancer in the wrong place. This blog is the true story of a spiritual journey based upon the truth about cancer: It is your greatest ally and companion for soul

## Blue Butterfly

I decided to create this blog to share my experiences, thoughts, and lessons through my cancer journey. As I have discovered veganism, good books, and inspiring arts along the way, this is a delicious, thought provoking, and creative healing journey.

# ...so is blogging with Asthma, Lung Cancer, COPD

## Sarah's asthma blog

Just another WordPress.com site

My asthma action plan Current Medication Plan Blogroll My Asthma Talk Pet Peeves

Share Report Abuse Next Blog»

## LUNG CANCER LIFE:

This is a journal about my recently diagnosed "Lung Cancer". The negative sides, but emph aspects. I believe I have been given a second chance, for now, and I hope to use it wisely, in months to come.

**Advanced Cancer Treatment** Integrative Treatment Options as of November 2011. Call: 1-888-447-7357 [www.lscs.com](http://www.lscs.com)  
**Asbestos Best Attorneys** Premier Asbestos Litigators for Mesothelioma-Asbestosis-Lung Cancer [www.beramanlegal.com](http://www.beramanlegal.com)  
**Breaking Lung Cancer News** The latest lung cancer news and meeting coverage from HemOncToday. [www.HemOncToday.com](http://www.HemOncToday.com)

AdChoices

www.unexpectedheartattack.com

## ⚡ Chronicle of My Husband's Heart Attack

blogspot.com

Share Report Abuse Next Blog»

## COPD - IT'S NOT A DEATH SENTENCE!!

PLEASE READ ME FIRST!

Hi. Welcome to my not-so-professional-looking blog about COPD and LVRS (Lung Volume Reduction Surgery). When you read this

About Me

Penny

## emily's lung cancer journey



creating awareness of lung cancer women. if you think lung cancer affects only men and smokers, think again. here is my story of hope.

Home

ASTHMA MOM

Entries RSS Comments RSS

**“Everyone should have a  
blog.**

If you don't have one you should  
consider getting one immediately  
because it's easy to set up and  
extremely powerful.”

Brian Lee, “How to Blog”

- [http://geniustypes.com/how\\_to\\_blog\\_the\\_manual/#](http://geniustypes.com/how_to_blog_the_manual/#)



# What did I learn?

Isolation is a common issue for  
young adults with cancer (Zebrack, 2011)

High risk = High reward

# My story goes on...

[www.100resolutions.blogspot.com](http://www.100resolutions.blogspot.com)

## 100 Cancer Resolutions

A record of my commitment to doing everything I took for granted before my diagnosis.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2011

### #20: Do What Scares You Most

I hate change. Absent-mindedness is in my DNA, so living by a set routine helps me stay organized and keeps me sane.

You can imagine, then, how hard it was to be diagnosed with cancer, and have my whole understanding of my existence turned completely on its head.

In one meeting with my boss, where I explained how my working hours would change to accommodate treatment, tears overcame me when I imagined my cohesive, high-functioning work team learning to do without me. I found so much fulfillment in playing my vital role, that the thought of being replaced (and in my mind being rendered useless) terrified me.

As it turned out, being replaceable is a good thing. When treatment knocked my energy level down to nothing, I had the option of going on sick leave simply *because* my team is so high-functioning. And when I returned after my sick leave, a new and improved role awaited me.



“There is no greater agony  
than bearing an untold  
story inside you.”

Maya Angelou