

My Future Plans in Testicular Cancer Awareness

Advocate Justin Birckbichler contemplates the future of A Ballsy Sense of Tumor.

April 24, 2023 By [Justin Birckbichler](#)

Where is A Ballsy Sense of Tumor Going in the Future?

So it has been a hot minute... more like roughly 216,492 minutes. I haven't published anything on A Ballsy Sense of Tumor (ABSOT) since October 2022, when I reflected on the [life changes I've made in the six years](#) since diagnosis. Coincidentally, that was also the last time I made a social media post (aside from automated Facebook/Twitter posts). In that post, I basically said I wanted to work on being Justin the Person, more so than Justin the Advocate. I must have really taken that to heart.

March marked the six-year anniversary of being cleared in remission, and it felt like another appropriate time to reflect. However, instead of looking back, I wanted to look forward, so I set out to write "The Future of ABSOT." It turns out that I wrote that post already... [back in February 2017](#). At the time, I was gearing up to find out about the results of my scans and set the following goals:

- Continue spreading awareness
- Share more about post-treatment life
- Become a speaker on testicular cancer and men's health
- Give a TEDx talk
- Write a book

Seeing as I set those goals over six years ago, it feels appropriate to see if I met them.

In a nutshell, I met four of those goals. 80% isn't bad, especially from someone who has half the standard amount of testicles. Over the past six years, I've had countless hours of conversation,

participated in and led various events, and made an absolutely ridiculous amount of ball jokes, all in the name of testicular cancer awareness. I've written dozens of posts of what it means to live beyond testicular cancer, both from a physical and mental health perspective. Somehow, I convinced various people to invite me to speak at a number of events across the country. In November 2019, I got to give a TEDx Talk entitled ["Carpe Scrotiem: Why Men Must Start Discussing Their Health."](#) (You can also watch it below.) I'd say the first four goals have been thoroughly checked.

As for the book goal, I will be totally honest in saying that I haven't even begun on this. The reasons are plentiful: writing a book seems like it would take a lot of time, I have no idea how to publish a book, and others have already written great books about their testicular cancer experience (and I'm not sure what I could cover that they already haven't).

Furthermore, my whole story has been written here over the past six years, and I don't know what would be different in a book (other than the binding). Truthfully, I don't think there is a huge market for people who would want to read a book about my life. I still have no idea what the purpose of the book would be. I don't mean for this paragraph to sound self-deprecating, but it's what I have grappled with since originally putting that goal down.

So what are my plans going forward?

Since the February 2017 post, I decided to get all fancy and write the following mission statement for ABSOT:

A Ballsy Sense of Tumor has three primary goals:

- To promote conversation about men's health in society through humor, awareness, and education
- To portray an open and honest look at what it means to be a cancer survivor
- To provide a patient-friendly resource for the newly diagnosed, other testicular cancer patients/survivors, and their families

No matter what I do with ABSOT, it needs to come back to one or more of

those goals.

After pondering on what direction to go with this platform, I've developed a rough plan.

1. I will give relevant updates on my life: I don't have any desire to share what I had for lunch or anything, but I will continue sharing things that relate to the testicular cancer journey. Thankfully, since I'm no longer followed by my oncologist and my mental health seems to have healed from cancer, there hasn't been much to share over the last year or so. Hopefully further updates will contain only good news.
2. I will continue highlighting companies that are doing great work in men's health: There are a lot of companies doing incredible things to raise awareness of men's health, and I want to do what I can to shine a light on them.
3. I will continue to offer up this blog for other people affected by testicular cancer through the Band of Ballers series: I stood on the shoulders of others to get where I am today. I want to be able to pay it forward and allow others' stories to be shared through this site.
4. I will be a personal resource for those who are facing testicular cancer: This one surprises me, as I used to say that I was more focused on educating those who didn't already know about testicular cancer. However, I find myself enjoying being able to offer my (non medical) advice on what I've been through, in the hopes of easing their journeys.

Going forward, ABSOT will be less about my own life and my journey.

While ABSOT really started to share my story, I'm at the point in the journey that my story is relatively unremarkable (in the medical sense). Like I said in my October post (and at the risk of basically repeating the closing of that post), I am committed to being the best version of me I can be, specifically as a husband and father.

I haven't fully fleshed out my plans for blogs or social media, and I am ok with not having a concrete plan. Transparently, I won't be writing as many posts or posting as many pictures on Instagram, but this mission has always been more than just about me. I won't ever be too far from the advocacy scene, as my job revolves around advocating for patients every single day.

So I guess this isn't necessarily a 'goodbye' or even a 'see you later,' but maybe more of a 'we'll catch up every so often.' Who knows, maybe this will give me time to figure out if I do really have a book inside me.

In closing, thank you to everyone who has followed and supported my journey over the past 6+ years, whether it's been here on the website, on social media, in real life, or the unfortunate luck of being stuck next to me on a long plane ride. I do hope you'll stick around to see where things go next, but if not, I understand and will happily refund you the total amount of your subscription*.

Until next time, Carpe Scrotiem.

*Subscribing was free, so that is an easy promise to make.

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