There Has Got to be a Better Way or My 'Plan' to Manage ScanZiety

December 22, 2017 By Lisa Vento Nielsen

So yesterday was The Big Squeeze, and those of you who follow me on insta or twitter (what are you waiting for if you don't—@thetimebetweenis and @timebetweenis, respectively) know I was given the "Negative Mammogram" (or cancer-free news) for my left breast! YEAH!

I did not realize HOW freaked out I was about this damn test until the day before (as I posted about in the blog post about it on 12/20 to try to manage the emotions). However, in retrospect, I do realize I had been freaked out about this appointment for at least 2 weeks, if not more. The stress came out in other ways as I was in total denial about it. I mean, this is the new me, I practice gratitude, nothing bothers me, I am tough as shit and all that malarkey. OMG this cannot be. I cannot hide how I feel from myself, so in thinking about how I shared about the other feelings of PTSD I experienced with the other testing I decided to do this quarter (because I am stupid—seriously, read this).

Some of the things I noticed before the big appointment...

Before the big day on 12/21, I had been obsessively "hiding" in my phone and Kindle to the point that my eyes were hurting. I find that after traumatic events or other weird things that have happened to me in the past, I become focused on always "distracting" myself and it is never a good thing. I love to read but to be reading until my eyes hurt is not a normal thing. In fact, it was hard for me to read books honestly and that is my favorite thing ever so I was just constantly starting and restarting books and not really reading.

Also, my sleep pattern was disrupted and although in all honesty I do find it harder to fall asleep post cancer treatment (this whole life after treatment thing deserves it's own post—note to self), I can normally sleep at some point. The past two weeks, I had trouble falling to sleep and also felt at a bunch of points that my eyes were just closed but I was awake. I also was apparently snappy and irritable with my husband and my dad. I mean, I often yell at my husband—I love him but we are exact opposites—but apparently, I was really in mega-bitch mode.

There were other subtle things like I found myself uninterested in eating and in preparing food. My appetite was gone and I guess I was just listless and not myself.

What I plan to do about it or why I plan to do anything at all...

Now, I know writing this and following it are going to be two entirely different things and I also know that no matter what, I will experience scanziety and/or fear during testing, and or other weird stuff that my body may decide to do that makes me worry like coughing too long and/or hip pain and/or anything that makes me go “Hmmmmmmmm….is that cancer?” SO as my big fuck you to cancer and the fact that I am at heart a nerd / project management professional (I have a certificate and everything, seriously, from the Project Management Institute and I am putting this bad boy to work right now), here is my “plan” on dealing with the SCANZIETY that happens before a medical appointment.

My Plan to follow whenever I have a big appointment related to CANCER:

1. TALK about my feelings—not just write them in the blog and expect everyone in my life to KNOW what I feel because they must read my blog.

I got this feeling standing in line at Five Below the other day that no one on line behind me would “know” I was a cancer patient—I no longer am bald and wearing a wig that might not “pass” as real hair, I no longer walk around with the pallor and fear of diagnosis permeating off my skin BUT the truth remains that I am still different and just like people do not know it by looking at me, my friends and family will not know how I am feeling if I do not communicate. *I found myself also pulling back from communicating with friends and stalk texting them because I did not want to mention my big appointment. When I was sharing stuff online too I was already pushed past my comfort zone because I was like DAMN what happens if I get bad news?

2.Practice self care A LOT before these appointments.

I had stopped doing the things that help me deal with big thing—sor that help the new me because the old me would have been MUCH MUCH worse than I was prior to this big test—I mean that instead of being oblivious to my inner turmoil as I was, I would have been all over it day and night obsessing over it meanwhile for this experience I was clueless how bad I was until the night before the big test. Self care includes exercise, meditation, girls nights, Yoga, buying new bathing suits (seriously, send help I am obsessed and have brought FOUR bathing suits and guys, it is winter and I am not going on a trip…)—you get the idea.

3. Remember that if I can survive getting diagnosed, losing my breast like bye felicia without any issue, undergoing 8 rounds of chemo, going bald, losing all of my hair, getting “laid off” the day after my last chemotherapy, 34 rounds of radiation AND then deciding to SHARE all of that publicly without flinching and maybe helping others in the process means that I am TRULY TOUGH and that I can handle whatever comes next. I cannot let fear guide me and make these events ruin the time I have in my life, no matter what.

4. Rest more

I was hit with a bug, we all were actually snotmonsters, and I kept pushing myself to do more. I could not sit out on things knowing that last year at this time, everything was so hard for my family. Well, I made it harder by not listening to my body and taking a damn seat and skipping MORE stuff. When I look at my camera roll I am shocked at how much I did this month despite not

feeling well AT ALL.

5. Trust God or something bigger than YOU.

I know a lot of people do not have religious faith but for me, this is most important, though I am putting it last. I know bad things happen to people all of the time but if I can just believe a little bit more that there is a plan for everything and though I do believe life is like a Choose Your Own Adventure book because we do make our own choices that if I trust in something bigger than me, in my faith, in my religious experiences and my decision to pray, hope and don't worry then maybe, just maybe I will not get so goshdarn "sick" over appointments and such.

What are your go to plans / ideas on how to manage scanziety and all that comes with being a cancer patient?

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.cancerhealth.com/blog/got-better-way-plan-manage-scanziety