What I Do to Stay ’Sane’

February 6, 2018 By Lisa Vento Nielsen

I spent some time after diagnosis and treatment getting bogged down with what I wanted to do to stay as “healthy” as possible. I put “healthy” in quotes because I do not quite know if I will ever be considered such again—I mean, I am NED (no evidence of disease), but since I had cancer in 2016 and was treated in 2017, I guess I just do not know if I can ever be considered “healthy.”

In my mind, though, I am healthy. It is the only way to live.

Here are some of the things I do to keep myself focused and sane.

1. Mindfulness: I started mindfulness years ago using an iPhone app and used to use it specifically to help calm my mind, as I often had racing thoughts and anxiety. I now use it more strategically, just in the morning to start my day off in the best way possible.
2. Hypnosis: This is something else I had used in the past for a sleeping boost and other ways. Now, I use it specifically in two ways. A: I use an existing app by the Dr. Rath Health Foundation that is called Victory Over Cancer, which is more generalized about how our white blood cells are stronger than any cancer cells. B: I went a little nuts and made my own hypnosis (more on this later).
3. Practicing gratitude: I do this daily in my soul, mind and heart. I also keep a gratitude journal BUT I forget to update it more often than not.
4. Exercising each day: I just started Boss Body to have a more structured routine but I also do at least 10k steps a day to move and groove each day.
5. Eat healthy: I am using GreenBlender and Hungry Root to help balance the needs of my diet and my family’s. As much as I try to get them to eat healthier, with a 10- and 7-year-old plus my husband, who is almost another child sometimes lol, it is hard to make multiple meals for my requirements of plant-based, low- to no-sugar and no processed food, and what they need to quench their never-ending hunger (seriously, they eat like all the time). By making my own smoothie recipe and using the GreenBlender pre-packaged smoothie ingredients, I am able to have super foods and other types of fruits and veggies instead of the same old same old of my ingredients. Also, because I am the only one who uses smoothies, I do not have to overbuy the ingredients and watch them go bad because how many smoothies can I have a day, you know. With Hungry Root, the food is pre-packaged and a variety chosen by me to help me add in more “plant based” foods to my diet. I can sometimes skip meals because there are no “healthy” options and I am kind of hardcore in what I eat and how.
6. NO STRESS: This is harder than anything as my whole life is based upon stress and stress-adjacent activities. I have learned to live more in the moment and not worry about things unless I have to—it is a daily struggle but I am getting better at it.
7. Making time for ME and what I need to be happy: Recognizing that I matter and that I need to take care of myself.
8. BLOGGING: this is last, but it should be first. By using social media and my blog to excise my

> thoughts and fears and putting it out into the ether really do help me manage the emotions and issues around living life after cancer.

Re: hypnosis—I like the Rath Foundation one, but I recently saw the trailer for the Heal documentary about how the body can "heal" itself, and I tried to follow what the guy in the trailer said to envision his spine put back together, and then it healed without surgery, by creating my own hypnosis script to review every part of my body and envision it cancer-free. It was challenging to do and it required me to research how to make a script, learn how to mix two different audio files of the hypnosis and the music in the background and also to create the audio of my speech. I guess it can never hurt to try to do more and more to keep my body healthy and well post-cancer. If you are interested in my script, email me at thetimebetweenis@gmail.com.

This is what I do in the time between. …

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