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Don't Sit This One Out

Do something. Such practical, down to earth advice from Carl Sagan, the brilliant American astronomer and educator. Sagan's own life was cut tragically short at 62 by bone marrow disease, a precursor to cancer.

Who have *you* loved and lost to this heart-breaking disease? In whose memory will you do something to stop this cancer epidemic?

Reduced to a single word, the message of this book is "Enough." We no longer accept that cancer has become a recognized disease of childhood. Or that so many women of all ages wear scarves and turbans awaiting an uncertain fate from breast cancer. Or that more and more

Anything else you're interested in is not going to happen if you can't breathe the air and drink the water. Don't sit this one out. Do something.

— Carl Sagan, astronomer (1934-1996)

young men are diagnosed with testicular cancer. Or that so many workers die "making a living."

May the end of this book mark a beginning for you. There have been many themes, because so many factors contribute to cancer. In turn there are so many ways you can make a difference. "Statistics are people with the tears washed off," the saying goes. We urge you to transform your tears into action.

The challenge to stop the cancer epidemic is huge, but you aren't alone. There are many others who feel the same way, who also want to "do something." All of us *can* make a difference in helping to restore the Earth as a flourishing, fit,

sustainable home for everyone — all children, all species, all of us.

Speak up. Use your voice and your vision of a healthy world to create the changes we need. As Audre Lorde wrote in *The Cancer Journals*, "Silence has never brought us anything of worth."

Nourish the strength you have in friends and family, especially those who believe in you and support what you're doing. There will be days when progress seems painfully slow, if there's any at all — that's when to call your loved ones, to share and get things in perspective. It's so much easier when you have special people who are there for you, who understand what you are doing.



SECOLOM PETTINGELL

Shasta Lake breast cancer survivor Kay Kobe climbs to the top of California's 14,000 ft. Mt. Shasta in the Breast Cancer Fund's cancer prevention event Climb Against the Odds, July 2006. www.breastcancerfund.org

Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family. Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one.

— Jane Howard, journalist and author

Another small piece of advice: Take courage, and remember to laugh. While working to root out the prime causes of this most anguishing of all diseases, share as much love, joy and laughter as possible. Remember the Fifth Law of Sustainability — *If it's not fun, it's not sustainable.*

Keep your spirits up. We humans have created many dire conditions on our planet, but being sad and despondent won't help. The best remedy for depression is positive, life-affirming action.

Our world is changing. There are millions of people whose hearts, like yours, are full of determination. We believe a better world is possible. We can all do something to be the change we want to see.

As the feisty, compassionate, courageous feminist Bella Abzug often said, “We must stop waiting to be rescued by someone else. We are the ones we've been waiting for.”

Nobody will give us a world without cancer, war or hunger. We have to claim it. We have to pick up our courage, join with others, and make it happen.

One person can make all the difference in the world. For the first time in recorded human history, we have the fate of the whole planet in our hands.

— Chrissie Hynde, singer and animal rights activist

For me it is more interesting to live as a part of the resistance against the forces of death that are destroying life than it is to simply accede to them and say that we can't change them. As a minimum I want to be able to tell my grandchildren that I was part of the resistance; and at the maximum, that the resistance became a peaceful movement that created a sustainable world.

— Michael Lerner, founder of Commonweal, and Collaborative for Health and the Environment

If you think you are too small to have an impact, try sleeping in a room with a mosquito.

— African proverb

Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.

— Mark Twain

Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.

— Arundhati Roy, author