

# ***Thoughts and Comments from Patients – 2023***

## ***Hopes for a long, healthy life***

- *My one-year post-transplant biopsy is negative on all tests. Let hope that continues for year two, three ... and 20+. Autologous transplant 2021 – now 41 years old.*
- *When I was diagnosed with stage 4 large T-cell lymphoma that had metastasized to two organs I was sure I was going to die. My mother passed away from lymphoma 6 weeks after she was diagnosed in 1983. At my 2 year “birthday”, I am still somewhat dazed that I am so far cancer free. I am frustrated that I am much more physically challenged than I was before I got sick. The physical therapy and restoration is very slow. But I keep at it because I feel I have been given the chance to live a full life and I am working to seize that opportunity. Autologous transplant 2021 – now 65 years old.*
- *I'm 30 years out from first transplant and still kicking. Not much to complain about. Travel to Mexico and Hawaii every year. Have a home near the beach and a 2<sup>nd</sup> one in CO ski country. shooting for 90 – Let's see what happens. Allogeneic transplant 1997 – now 80 years old.*

## ***Participation in clinical trials***

- *I've very grateful to have been #6 on my trial and ecstatic to be cancer free 10 years later. Allogeneic transplant 2012 – now 53 years old.*
- *I was asked when I had all these heart problems if I would still have chosen this procedure if I knew it would cause heart failure. My answer was ABSOLUTELY! My MS [multiple sclerosis] was so aggressive that there was no way I would have had a productive life if I had not done this Study. I will forever be grateful to have this opportunity to participate and live such a great life since having this done in 2009/2010. Sure there were side effects and I guess there always will be but I can think, walk unaided, talk and participate in life to the best of my abilities! I may have pain from my joints failing/surgeries which could be from all the chemo along with steroids and other drugs I have taken. But I am so blessed! I am alive! I thank everyone at the Hutch! Autologous transplant 2010 – now 65 years old.*
- *33 years post-transplant, I continue to be grateful for the opportunity to obtain a transplant and the quality of care that I received. My sadness at the low survival rate of my fellow patients on the 9th floor of Swedish Hospital in October-November 1989 (Only 3 of the 8 of us survived more than 2 years) is mitigated by the knowledge that our protocols were part of the research that has resulted in advances in treatment, leading to higher survival rates and "cures without compromise." Allogeneic transplant 1989 – now 55years old.*

- *I guess I was one of the lucky ones. I continue to thank Dr. Oliver Press and his team for their efforts. I was part of a dose escalation group receiving radio-actively tagged (iodine as I recall) monoclonal antibodies. I give thanks to all of the men, women and mice that helped me. Thanks to you all. Autologous transplant 1991 – now 69 years old.*
- *I have signed up for most of the clinical trials offered to me. My philosophy is that the trial may or may not help me, but maybe in 5 years, it might help someone else. My team at Fred Hutch has been fantastic, and I know I am receiving the best care possible. Allogeneic transplant 2022 – now 66 years old.*

## ***Caring staff makes a difference***

- *I am grateful for the professionalism. This includes the staff, receptionists, CNAs, etc. and SCCA staff one and all! Thank you all for the kindness shown to myself and my wife during my difficult journey. Thank you! P.S Please continue to hire kind and positive people. It is important! Autologous transplant 2017 – now 66 years old.*
- *Even though I was going through a life crisis all my medical teams were there to help and guide me along my way. This past year has definitely been hard but with my team's help it truly has helped me to see the light in the tunnel. Thanks! Allogeneic transplant 2021 – now 27 years old.*
- *I understand the obvious advantages of combining/coordinating the efforts of SCCA and the Fred Hutch to become the FHCC. My hope is that the growth and changes do not impact negatively the current quality of patient provider relationships, particularly in this era of personnel shortages in the health care field. Autologous transplant 2016 – now 79 years old.*
- *I think about my time spent at Fred Hutch often, and besides having to do cancer treatment it was mostly enjoyable. I felt a personal connection to every member of my team as well as the support staff. I have nothing but good things to say about everyone and can't think of one bad experience when it comes to interactions with staff. The yearly "Thoughts and Comments" is really cool. I like how it includes just as many negative comments regarding life after transplant as it does positive comments. I think it helps to feel that comradery and know that we are not alone in our journey. I only wish that there were more comments from young adults. Allogeneic transplant 2020 – now 30 years old.*
- *I am forever grateful to my treatment team for their care and dedication, for their interest not only in my health, but in my family. For their conversations about travel and pets in between reports of neutrophil numbers and GVHD medications. Of course, the purpose of an ER is to treat quickly and move the patient along, but this can be done more thoughtfully. The care received at The Hutch should serve as a model for healthcare in general: the person is the focus, not the screen or the test results. I suppose the major difference is that The Hutch made my family and me feel valued, and I will always be thankful for that. Allogeneic transplant 2008 – now 44 years old.*

- *Thank you, immensely, to every doctor, nurse, or team member that was a part of our son's transplant. Thank you for your expertise and care during the most difficult time in our lives. Allogeneic transplant 2019 – now 5 years old.*
- *My thanks to all of the Drs. and Nurses that gave me such great care and understanding during my transplant. I had an unusually long stay with several complications during my time in Seattle but I survived, which was a miracle. I am 18 years out but still think of my experience quite often. Allogeneic transplant 2005 – now 67 years old.*
- *Since my transplant, I watched three kids grow-up, graduate from college, get married and each have a son (three COVID grandsons in 4 months... Netflix is not as entertaining as advertised). So, we're grandparents. During 5+ months at the Hutch, my case seemed to take about every bad turn it could, yet your skilled staff kept me going. No words will ever convey our gratitude and awe at your accomplishments. I'm around to complain about the whole thing, because your team went above and beyond to give me every possible opportunity to thrive... and I did! Allogeneic transplant 2004 – now 70 years old.*

### ***Wish for more help with recovery***

- *I am grateful for the doctors and nurses that have treated me through my transplants. They did a great job of being informative and supportive to me during this time. I wish at the end of transplant that there would be a more intensive program required to address the physical and mental challenges that come with treatment. I wish Fred Hutch had a larger physical therapy department that could spend more time getting you on your feet again. I had a tough time getting appointments scheduled due to such a small staff. I think it also should be required that you see a counselor for a few months [to a] year to help coach you on recovery. I have been working with a physical therapist through my primary care's network, however, they are not experienced with cancer patients as much as Fred Hutch, that is why I think this should be handled by Fred Hutch after discharge. Your body and mind go through a lot during this time and it would be helpful to have more hands on help to ease you back into your new normal and life in general. Thank you for all you do! Allogeneic transplant 2019 – now 45 years old.*
- *I wish the Hutch had a clinic for patients to see a primary care provider. It is very very difficult to find a doctor that is familiar with BMT it would be helpful for patients if you offered this service. Many doctors do not have the expertise or time to see BMT patients. Allogeneic transplant 1996 – now 34 years old.*
- *Several top transplant centers around the country have excellent Pulmonary Rehab programs for their Lung GVHD patients and those who I've connected with across the country have shared how helpful pulmonary rehab has been with improving their lung function and quality of life. I strongly encourage LTFU begin to work with the Pulmonary team to implement a Pulmonary Rehab program. Allogeneic transplant 2013 – now 63 years old.*

## ***Feelings brought up by the annual survey***

- *It is hard to believe it's been 16 years since my transplant. These questionnaires are a time loop for me, brings back so many memories, both good and bad. Yet I dread them. I feel so much guilt for doing so well when I read the patient comment section and I can feel how poorly some are doing. It absolutely breaks my heart. Yet I feel equally as lucky and hopeful for those doing so well. I'll never be who I was before AML. Yet I've been given the opportunity to know how lucky I am. Without the advancements in treatment and the care of all the staff I wouldn't be here to celebrate 16 years. So I am full of gratitude for every questionnaire as it is a reminder for me of how fragile this life is. Thank you. Allogeneic transplant 2006 – now 49 years old.*
- *I give you this information each year but do not hear how or what you do with it or if it makes any difference. How do I find out if the information I give you does any good? Autologous transplant 2015 – now 66 years old.*
- *Sorry for the late reply. Survey brings back difficult memories from 28 years ago. Allogeneic transplant 1993 – now 79 years old.*
- *I am now older than anyone thought I could be, and am dealing with normal aging problems (teeth, skin, menopause, joints, etc.) It kind of gets me down because I already dealt with so much, I feel like I should be done by now. I am now older than anyone thought I could be, so I try to treat my somewhat minor health ailments with a patience since aging is a gift not everyone gets. Every year when I get my survey in the mail, I reread my old transplant treatment blog to appreciate just how sick I was and how well I'm doing now, despite all the things that come up as I get older. Also as I get older, I recognize just how young I was when I dealt with my cancer and transplants. Now many of my friends are having cancer encounters, but we're all in our 50s now, so it's not as shocking. It kind of pisses me off when someone thinks they're so young and such a cancer anomaly in their 50s, after having their kids and building a career. Imagine doing it at 32. Allogeneic transplant 2004 – now 54 years old.*
- *I feel so indebted to the doctors at SCCA for saving and extending my life! Every day I try to smell the roses, noticing things that I didn't do as well before going through autologous transplant. I wish greater than 45% of transplant survivors would complete this survey – it's important to science and science matters! Autologous transplant 2008 – now 74 years old.*

## ***Fatigue***

- *I am tired virtually all of the time. I get winded (heavy breathing) with any strenuous task. I must take naps daily. I wake up tired and often fall back to sleep soon. I have trouble waking and getting up to do anything. I have pain running from my hip, down my leg, to my calf and foot. I find it difficult to get motivated to do anything. I have trouble staying awake. I cannot do 50-60% of the things I used to do. What I can do, I do slow, and can only do about 50% of what I used to do. I am not unhappy with my life at 50%. I am happy to be alive. I am too tired to stay focused*

*and I have trouble getting to sleep and staying asleep. I have trouble with memory. I do not enjoy my friends and family as much because I am too tired to put forth effort. Autologous transplant 2021 – now 70 years old.*

- *My biggest problem is fatigue. It has been present since my transplant. It affects everything I do. I exercise and eat fairly well but I can't get over it. I can be pretty busy for 2-4 days and then I don't do anything for another 2-3 days. Allogeneic transplant 1999 – now 72 years old.*

## ***Second cancers***

- *Thank you for twenty-six years! Looks like I'm facing a secondary cancer. Whatever happens, I am grateful for what the Hutch did for me you enabled me to live! Allogeneic transplant 1996 – now 62 years old.*
- *Thank you for amazing care 9 years ago! Me=2, Cancer=0. Survived my 2<sup>nd</sup> cancer (lung) this year. Allogeneic transplant 2013 – now 61 years old.*
- *As I'm about to celebrate my 41<sup>st</sup> years since my transplant, I'm also coming to understand that there is a heavy price to be paid for total body irradiation at the age of 15. During my adult life, I've been keenly aware that the health issues that seemed to come out of nowhere were a direct result of my treatment. This past Spring I was diagnosed with prostate cancer (bad enough but totally treatable) – after having an MRI to determine the extent of the disease, doctors located a softball-sized malignant tumor in my liver. No symptoms, and clean bloodwork, nothing to indicate any issues. I'm happy to say, after surgery to resect half of my liver. I'm now fully recovered, live cancer free, and starting treatment for the prostate cancer. Despite this “busy” health year, I still remain forever grateful for the extra decades that the Hutch has given me – thank you! Allogeneic transplant 1982 – now 56 years old.*
- *My husband and I continue to camp, hike, fish and travel. There is life after cancer, in my case 2 cancers. Allogeneic transplant 1999 – now 65 years old.*
- *Thank you Fred Hutch Cancer Center. I am grateful for the amazing care I received at the Hutch. I am now 24 years post autologous transplant. Worked full time until I retired 3 years ago. I had secondary cancers including, lung, pancreas, but treated and doing well / fair. Autologous transplant 1999 – now 73 years old.*
- *As crazy as this sounds – one of my highlights about receiving this survey every year is seeing my name and the number of years since my transplant which is 27 this year! What a gift you have given me and the thousands of other patients! My heart is truly filled with gratitude for all the excellent care and treatment I received from the Hutch! The entire staff treats all the patients with such respect, compassion and mostly the brilliant knowledge that treats and cures all these horrible cancers! I have since had 3 separate cancers post transplant I have read out to the Hutch and they had quickly supplied me with the crucial information that I needed to be successfully treated at home in Chicago. The Long Term Follow Up department is fantastic! This*

*has definitely not been an easy journey by any stretch, but I have a lot of fight in me and God willing I won't be needing it anymore. 4 cancers is more than enough! Allogeneic transplant 1996 – now 60 years old.*

## ***More than 25 years since transplant***

- *I want to thank the Hutch for all they do. I've made it past my 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the BMT, and over those years, I've been able to earn a bachelor's degree, see my children grow up and become responsible adults with families. I never take for granted each day and the little things. Lifting up those in the same journey and letting them know they are not alone. Allogeneic transplant 1997 – now 59 years old.*
- *30 years ago I went for a routine eye exam and found out I had CML. Thanks FHCRC and a brave, selfless donor from England who gave her bone marrow to a complete stranger. I am healthy, happy and involved in serving in my church and community. (I also crave tea & biscuits every afternoon). Thank you from a very grateful Fred Hutch patient! 30 years and going strong! Allogeneic transplant 1993 – now 69 years old.*
- *I'm starting to feel my age lately...a little slower...a little creakier...lucky me!! 32 years ago it wasn't clear that I would live til the end of the month! Allogeneic transplant 1990 – now 58 years old.*
- *Thank you for the gift of 35 glorious years. You gave me the life I desired to live. Autologous transplant 1987 – now 63 years old.*
- *I am so thankful for my 41 years of life since my transplant. I feel great and treasure each day. Thank you for saving my life and giving me this time with my family. Allogeneic transplant 1982 – now 69 years old.*
- *Thanks to Dr. E. Donald Thomas and his team for saving a 9 year old girl 48 years ago. I am now a 57 year old Nana of 4. My oldest grandson is now the age I was then. I am so grateful to have been given this wonderful life. Allogeneic transplant 1975 – now 57 years old.*

## ***Frustrations with care***

- *I've been cancer free since my transplant which I am so thankful for. However, dealing with my body on a day to day is a struggle. I came up there to be checked out and they treated me like I was a bother. They assured me I don't have an auto immune issue but why do I feel the way I do. No one can figure it out. It's extremely frustrating. I feel like I was given up on. Autologous transplant 2004 – now 42 years old.*

- *The doctors [at Fred Hutch] are very somber and “matter of fact”. Some don’t even look at my physical person to see my diagnosis for themselves. They just don’t seem to want to know their patients. We seem like a number in their day.* Allogeneic transplant 2014 – now 66 years old.
- *It would be nice if my care team didn’t change all of the time. I have a lot of issues going on and have to keep explaining them to a new team.* Allogeneic transplant 2022 – now 53 years old.

## ***Problems after transplant***

- *I have no salivary glands and suffer from severe dry mouth. This has caused many of my teeth to fall out. I am now considering dentures since implants are too expensive. My tear ducts were impacted by the chemo and suffer from severe dry eye and am being treated by a specialist who is treating me for this chronic condition. I no longer drive and reading is tiring for me and I no longer read but enjoy audible books instead.* Allogeneic transplant 2006 – now 74 years old.
- *Recently passed 11 years after my BMT and my life is still a wreck. SSA, medical insurance, find a job that covers all my medical billing.* Allogeneic transplant 2011 – now 31 years old.
- *I lost my job related to my pain and inability to work due to my pain and no sick days left. I have now applied for disability at the ripe age of 35. This isn't anywhere close to what I hoped my life would be. I feel like my life was just meant for pain and suffering and not much purpose. I had about 10 good years where I wasn't fighting cancer or in chronic pain. I am lucky enough to be engaged to a wonderful man who is my world and I don't know where I would be without him. He picks me up when I can't walk and holds me when all I can do is cry because my life is not what I want it to be. I love this man deeply and he is the reason I keep living. I still hold out some hope that someday my pain will improve.* Allogeneic transplant 2004 – now 34 years old.
- *It's hard to separate issues by cause, after the last few years of forced isolation and difficulty. The simplest things seem so much more complicated or hard to achieve. I have more and more trouble remembering things, keeping things straight in my head. Forgetting appointments, forgetting obligations, forgetting events, happens constantly now. Some of it, I think, is due to the chemo and other treatments, some might be age, some might be depression exacerbated by events. I feel like my mental decline has gained pace the last couple years.* Allogeneic transplant 2012 – now 63 years old.
- *It has never been like that for me, "regular" life no longer exists and I figured that out a long time ago but for people on the outside they just expect you to go back to "normal", back to work, to all the things that brought you joy before. I can't even enjoy a day in the sun without being terrified of skin cancer, even with a sun shirt and sun block on because 9 years ago a nurse that was so dire in her warnings about my next bout of cancer due to the treatments. Today if I get stuck outside w/out shade I will cry about it, not as bad as previous years but it still terrifies me. Sunny warm vacations used to be the highlight of our Seattle winters now I weigh shade options most heavily and will skip trips w/friends to those places because I'm so uncomfortable. I have missed*

*out on a lot but still I gained time w/my loved ones and friends, but the never-ending uncertainty is overwhelming w/these side effects presenting years later and a fear that this is only the beginning of a future w/the residual impacts of cancer and its treatment. Allogeneic transplant 2014 – now 48 years old.*

- *Tinnitus - which has been ABSOLUTELY the hardest of them all (besides the potentially losing my hearing to the neuroma) and makes me question living further (working with a therapist). Seriously. I can't imagine living 50 more years with this. It is unrelenting. Allogeneic transplant 2001 – now 37 years old.*
- *Although I never truly conquered my diseases in the way I had hoped (back to feeling 100%), and I still suffer from many ongoing health challenges due to treatments and medications, I am ALWAYS grateful for everything my teams have done to allow me to enjoy life as much as I have been able to. I continue to struggle finding medical stability as it seems new issues arise almost weekly...but I've been equipped with the tools necessary to be okay with whatever life throws at me. The whole experience has given me a better perspective on life and made it easier to enjoy the little things, even when dealing with constant pain and fatigue and uncertainty. Not everyone is as lucky to have access to some of the best doctors in the world...and many people never find peace or happiness in their health battles...so I am very grateful for everything, including the suffering, as it has taught me many things and led me to some great people. Allogeneic transplant 2015 – now 39 years old.*

## ***Fear of relapse and survivor's guilt***

- *I do wish someone would address the fear of relapse & “survivors guilt”. I've had a difficult time dealing with others relapsing or being recently diagnosed or losing their lives due to cancer. Autologous transplant 2018 – now 63 years old.*
- *While I feel better being further out from leukemia, I do tend to feel as if there is a looming specter over my shoulder. How long can I really expect to live after putting my body through all this? Will there be another relapse or more secondary cancers? What about heart problems from the aggressive anthracycline chemo we had to resort to? All in all though, these are very small things compared to how thankful I am to still be here. I did not expect to survive the last bout of leukemia and even now it brings a sense of relief and a smile to realize I made it through – for now at least. Always, for now, as those of us who have been through it know that life can change in a moment. But I'm thankful for each moment. Some of the first years after transplant were very rough but these last years have been filled with so much joy and been the best of my life so far. I can't thank you all enough for your part in that. Allogeneic transplant 2013 – now 29 years old.*
- *I am at six years since transplant. A long enough time span that the little concern about relapse that lives in the back of the mind doesn't bother me often. A long enough time that I no longer concern myself with how I compare to my precancer self. There is life after cancer and it can be happy. Thank you for all the extra time. Allogeneic transplant 2016 – now 39 years old.*



- *I still consider myself very blessed and grateful for Fred Hutchinson, and all of the people who cared for me. I know things are very much different now and that many of my comrades of the time have passed on. I am not sure that I have PTSD but there are times the past still haunts me. I still often experience anxiety at various medical appointments and procedures, though it has gotten better over the years. Allogeneic transplant 1985 – now 57 years old.*
- *Things have been going surprisingly better than I expected, but as my one year work up draws near, I find myself increasingly anxious. Bone marrow biopsies bring out the fear of God in me, and I'm not sure if that will ever go away. Allogeneic transplant 2022 – now 42 years old.*
- *I am pleased I am 12 years out from my transplant, though I still worry about the cancer coming back that is why I go in for a brain MRI. I read about those who are +30-40 years out from the transplant and I want to see those same years for myself. Autologous transplant 2011 – now 72 years old.*
- *I have “lab and results anxiety” and easily get down if there are changes in my “numbers” that have been creeping up! Dread labs :( I am lucky to have strong faith, family and friends and a purpose. I would like to be doing this questionnaire 15 years from now! Autologous transplant 2017 – now 67 years old.*
- *I feel lucky to have survived this long, even though others have survived much longer. I will say, however, that there is a darkness to my outlook on life that didn't exist before. I used to always have faith in the future, but now I worry more. Autologous transplant 2020 – now 62 years old.*
- *My reconciliation of all of this has been to reconsider my relationship to the disease and the treatment. Accepting that this is and will always be a part of my life has made it easier to move on. Despite that, it's always a question for anything that comes up – is this GVHD? Cancer? Just some other illness? Just aging? It's not ever certain, and that is something else I need to accept. Allogeneic transplant 2013 – now 60 years old.*
- *Overall, I am grateful that I am as healthy and active as I am. Sometime in 2000, a couple, who were long-time friends since 1974, were visiting us. I had been diagnosed with CLL in 1996 and was about to start treatment. We somehow got onto the topic of how long we all would live. We wondered who would be the last of us to die. The other three were all very healthy, but I had CLL. Not one of us would have guessed that they all would die before me. I am the lone survivor. Allogeneic transplant 2006 – now 75 years old.*

## **Chronic GVHD**

- *Dealing with chronic GVHD over 6 years wears on your soul. I am so grateful not to have cancer. At this point in my life I enjoy our 55 year marriage, adult sons, grandchildren and a great life. At some point I hope to recover sufficiently enough to simply walk and participate in my normal life. Given the choice to do this all over again or die...we would choose life. Allogeneic transplant 2017 – now 75 years old.*

- *I have chronic GVH. I was on methotrexate then mycophenolate and now Jakafi which is supposed to be helping, but very slowly. The tightness in my abdomen makes putting socks on difficult and I cannot tie shoes. My hips continue to weaken and climbing stairs and walking up any slight incline is difficult. Edema in my legs also contributes to this problem. Also, muscles have weakened after pericarditis almost two years ago and I can't regain my strength. Allogeneic transplant 2017 – now 75 years old.*

## ***Transplant for rare diagnoses***

- *The reason I am able to share my journey and witness my dreams come true is a true testament to the hard-work and commitment of my medical teams and LTFU teams too. The work you do is incredible and I hope my treatment experience opened up the doors to many other young men & women who suffered from Sickle Cell Disease. :) Allogeneic transplant 2012 – now 31 years old.*
- *I have a rare disease and would love to help in any way I can to advance medicine in order to help others. Allogeneic transplant 2021 – now 34 years old.*

## ***Gratitude***

- *I had my Autologous transplant when I was 21 and have officially made it 22 years out, which means I've been on this earth for more than half my life thanks to the Fred Hutch! Yes, I deal with many long-term effects: neuropathy, frequent fatigue, having to take great care of my immune system through healthy foods & vitamins. skin issues, female issues, digestion issues, etc. But to have a body is a blessing and I still make a daily effort to live in gratitude. Instead of being sad about radiation taking away my hair, I take my power back and rock fabulous wigs. I know I survived cancer twice because my purpose on this planet is to nurture people's spirits through my makeup artistry. Thank you to everyone at the Hutch who continues to save lives. You are deeply appreciated. Autologous transplant 2001 – now 43 years old.*
- *I feel grateful and lucky to be alive. My transplant was in 1987 and I will be turning 52 in May. I have a wonderful family, job, and relationships and none of this would have been possible without receiving a bone marrow transplant. Thanks so much for everything you are doing. If there is anything I can do in return, please reach out to me. Allogeneic transplant 1987 – now 51 years old.*

- In reading the stories of others, I feel quite fortunate and have no complaints. I also feel fairly sad for the many challenges faced by others. I think one unknown among those not facing cancer and bone marrow transplants is that treating the cancer has its price. As my oncologist told me early on: “transplants aren’t free”. He was referring to not just the monetary aspect, but also the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual aspects. I sure like that you have added a survey for care-givers. The journey my spouse (primary care giver) had was just as tough as mine as a patient. It was a different journey, but no less arduous. OK, that is it. I cannot close without saying how much I admire the SCCA, Fred Hutch and the U of W approach to treating patients and care-givers. The atmosphere, people (medical and ancillary staff, patients and caregivers), medical capabilities and facilities are outstanding. Allogeneic transplant 2010 – now 67 years old.*
- Now into the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter in the game of life, at age 76, my transplant experience at SCCA continues to serve me well. It’s been 18 “Bonus years”. I have watched my grandsons all grow up and go off to college, moving on to the next chapter in their lives. I have watched my 3 daughters blossom into vibrant, smart, compassionate women. This year my husband and I celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. There was a time when I honestly believed that none of these would happen for me. Thank you to all at SCCA/Fred Hutch for making me healthy enough to savor it all. Allogeneic transplant 2005 – now 76 years old.*
- I am very grateful to Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, Fred Hutch, and UW for their efforts on behalf of people who are dealing with cancer. My worst day is better than no day at all, and for the most part, all of my days over the past twelve years have been the greatest of gifts. I appreciate beyond words the dedication each of you exhibits. Autologous transplant 2011 – now 77 years old.*
- 7 years – WOW! Lucky me. Ever grateful to all who had a hand (or brain!) in my care. Never sure if the physical nuisances are from my stem cell transplant or the normal aging process. I try so hard to live fully and make every single day count – an enduring gift that cancer gives. Autologous transplant 2016 – now 66 years old.*
- The psychology questions really gave me a reason to pause. These questions have really haunted me since my recovery. To me, it was difficult to survive my transplant and know others who were not so fortunate. Why was I so lucky!? Interesting to reflect back on this period of my life. And not having my own children left such a void in my life. I had an exciting career as a project engineer on large construction projects and retired a few years ago. Your questions gave me incentive to go out and volunteer for activities in my area. Thanks for the opportunity to think about my life’s purpose!! We all need to be reminded of our gifts in life. Thank you, Fred Hutch!! Allogeneic transplant 1989 – now 60 years old.*
- Three years ago I did not have a future. The stem cell transplant has saved my life. UW, Fred Hutch, and Seattle Cancer Care Alliance saved my life with knowledge, compassion and continued support. My donor, a 31 year old female, was amazing to share herself with me. I thank all of the above, daily, when I awake to another exciting day on earth. Thank you. Allogeneic transplant 2021 – now 69 years old.*

- *I fill each day with joyful people and activities so next time I face death I can't say I've missed much! Allogeneic transplant 2019 – now 73 years old.*
- *Cancer, while terrible, was one of the best things that happened in my life. It was so easy to just bumble through life without taking stock of anything. Being diagnosed stopped me in my tracks. A full evaluation of how I had been going through life followed. It was immediately apparent, all of the things which I had made artificially important. Things that did not matter which took priority over things which do matter. How much I had taken for granted. It is easy to tell yourself life is not going your way when you are overlooking the good parts of it and focusing on the other stuff. Then life resumed after cancer. It isn't the same. How could it be? A person with different experiences came out the other side. Health is sometimes a challenge, but it is also a reminder of the lessons learned. Life ends someday, don't waste your precious time focused on the wrong things. Allogeneic transplant 2016 – now 40 years old.*

#### 2024 Selected Resources

**1. Fred Hutch Cancer Center, Blood and Marrow Transplant Frequently Asked Questions**

<https://www.fredhutch.org/en/research/patient-treatment-support/long-term-follow-up/bone-marrow-stem-cell-transplant-ltfu/frequently-asked-questions.html>

**2. Fred Hutch Cancer Center, Information for Patients**

<https://www.fredhutch.org/en/research/patient-treatment-support/long-term-follow-up/bone-marrow-stem-cell-transplant-ltfu/information-for-patients.html>