

March 2020

Dear Committee Members,

In 2006, while training for a sprint triathlon, I was diagnosed with adult onset diabetes (Type II) at 49 yrs. old. My family of origin was quite surprised by this as there is no family history.

In 2011, 2015 and 2017 I have had a reoccurring diagnoses of breast cancer. In 2015, I had a bilateral mastectomy, after being told I would never have breast cancer again with this procedure. 2017 came with yet another diagnosis of "chronic breast cancer". Negotiating the difficult world of oncology, the fear of cancer is only enhanced by the recent death of 3 friends from cancer. Two were from the Fountain Valley and neither had a family history of cancer nor lifestyles that would lead to the horrors of this disease and consequent treatment.

When my son was in his early 20's, he began displaying forgetful behavior and a vacant look that I describe as the homeless men I've encountered. This is a young man who was bright, participated in Space Camp, wanting to be an astronaut at one time. He tried therapy, medication for depression but finally I found a Dr. who did brain scans. Tony was found to have a brain infection caused by 3 herpes virus strains. Basically, it was chicken pox and shingles on the brain. After 3 years of treatment, he is off the medicine, has full cognitive function but suffers depression and social anxiety. He lost several years dealing with this highly unusual diagnosis. He is indeed my hero, hardworking at his job, through all the weight of neurobehavioral struggles.

Currently, I have friends encouraging me to guard against the coronavirus, because I am compromised with diabetes & cancer. Would I be free of these diseases if I hadn't lived 26 years in the Fountain Valley, where we were intentionally polluted with AFFF? Would my son have progressed through normal growth and development if neglectful decisions hadn't been made to pollute our water?

These are local, national, international concerns. Watch the movie, "The Devil We Know", (on Netflix), read "Exposure" by Robert Bilott. Please know that my life, your life is not worth cutting short for the sake of money.

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