This month, Taylor Roth opens the newsletter with lions.

Whenever I go to New York City*, I pay a visit to my two favorite lions, who “stand” guard at the entrance to the NYC Public Library on 5th Avenue. During the 1930s, Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia named them Patience and Fortitude, for the qualities he felt New Yorkers would need to survive the economic depression. While I am not currently facing a national economic catastrophe, I often find myself drawing on the virtues of Patience and Fortitude in my cancer journey.

Patience: My tumor did not arrive overnight; as such, it will not disappear overnight. So much of my journey has been reconciling my desires with my limitations. I’ve had to learn and practice patience with myself; I may not be climbing Everest, but I’m working every day** to get where I want to be. I try not to get frustrated that I’m not 100% and remember that healing is not a sprint, but a long ultra-marathon that requires patience. Moreover, I’ve learned to have patience with my doctors. When I was first diagnosed in 2011, I was scared for sure but assumed there would be medical magic to cure this. I was wrong, and the past 12 years have been one treatment after another, with varying degrees of success. I’ve become more patient with my care team, which is just doing the best it can. **Patience is trust. I trust my providers to do what’s best, even if it’s not instantaneous healing. I trust myself to recognize my limitations while challenging them.**

Fortitude: Despite being the virtue most associated with cancer, I really don’t know what this means in the context of cancer. Does it mean never complaining? Does it mean “bouncing back to normal?” By those standards, I fail miserably at fortitude, as do many of you, I’m sure. Yet I truly believe that just being diagnosed makes us fortitudinous (Huh. That IS a word). Fortitude is not about how stiff your upper lip is, but about living a life that is often discouraging and challenging and knowing it won’t change soon (Patience, FTW). **For me, “fortitude” is just choosing to wake up in the morning, not knowing what the day may bring.**
*I’ve only been twice, but that doesn’t sound as cool
**But if I miss a day of exercise, it’s okay

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**Be Part of the YACS Directory**

This is a **completely voluntary** survey to gather contact info to share with group members. You do not have to answer all questions, and can quit any time. We’d love to know you better!

https://forms.gle/RChQQwh6UhwP8kfr7

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**Call for Newsletter Committee Members**

We need one to two more members to help put this growing and changing publication together. The committee is still in its infancy and finding its feet. We’re looking for members that can stick around long-term. Quite simply, the more people we have, the simpler it becomes to put the newsletter together. Ideally, you’d have one section a month and/or come up with some new ideas.

If interested, email us [here](mailto:).
Life is About "Sending It"
By: Katy Yost

Happy Fall, Ya’ll. Sometimes life can be kinda funny, the cosmic way, “soul of the universe” way things happen. As I write this, we are 364 days, almost exactly a year since this journey started. This past August, I had the amazing opportunity to participate in a life-changing backpacking trip with the Send It Foundation.

Before I start regaling you of tales of hiking up a mountains billy-goat style, swimming in lakes/float on air mattresses, and sleeping under the stars, I need to introduce a guy named Jamie Schou. In 2012, Jamie became “one of us:” he was diagnosed with an aggressive cancer, Synovial Sarcoma, and like many of us endured chemo, radiation, and surgeries. For two years, he focused on living each day to the fullest and enjoying the outdoors in activities he loved biking, paddle boarding, summiting Half Dome, etc. all with a positive attitude. While I didn’t/don’t know Jamie personally there are several things I have gathered...His kindness lives on through his sisters and those that organize, facilitate, and lead these trips. Sometimes you need those breaks to clear your mind from chaos and what
better place to do that than in the outdoors? Nature is healing too. Life is about “Sending It” (More on that in just a second).

I was introduced to Send It Foundation from two fellow DYACs members, Jay Carter and Maritza Figy, who both have participated in and guided trips. I honestly wasn’t sure what I signed myself up for, and I wasn’t really sure what Send It meant. I hadn’t heard the term “Send It” before this trip, but my now-friend, Lee, and Urban Dictionary define it as “just do it, say yes to something, have confidence, just go for it.” On the trip we were charged with that mission, to not think about how uncomfortable a task like hiking with 40 lbs on your back for four miles sweat and all, or meeting strangers that are now such sweet friends, getting up close and personal in a tent or digging a hole to go the bathroom in nature (try it- it is incredibly freeing ;)).

One of the mantras of the trip that we said over and over was, “Choose your own adventure.” There was one day we could choose to hike or stay back at camp, but either was fine. There was no judgment. For me personally, this is such a powerful concept because sometimes I get wrapped up in why I haven’t accomplished this milestone or haven’t done such and such. Sometimes truth and reality is that cancer put things on pause, things got muddy, maybe I lost my footing, couldn’t see the trail, or got plucked and put on an entirely different trail that I’m trying to navigate. I want to pose a thought… but what if cancer is the adventure and we all get to choose each day how we handle it, how we navigate, which “trails” we take, what tools we need, who we want to join us? The other mantra we talked about was, “Challenge by choice.” This is very similar to choosing your own adventure, but I want to touch on something else that comes to mind. Sometimes cancer is challenging, with all the appointments, treatments, physical and mental fatigue and so much more. And while we may not feel we do in fact have a choice in all this chaos that is going around us, I do think we have the choice in our attitude; we can choose to be positive like Jamie, use the resources like friends and family, support group, your medical team. Every day is and will look different. Some easier and some harder, some days rest is the only thing which choosing rest I’m learning is just as much as hiking the miles.
I could write and write on about this trip, it changed my life meeting some amazing cancer buddies and the connections. Witnessing the beauty of the country, the mountains, lakes, flowers, chipmunks, and the stillness and quiet.
I’ll leave you with this…

“No matter what he does, every person on earth plays a central role in the history of the world. And he normally doesn’t know it” -The Alchemist

SEND IT.
September was Childhood Cancer Awareness month, and what better way to celebrate that, as well as Dallas YACS turning four-years old than by attending an FC Dallas Soccer Game! Whether you've been with us for four days, or you've been with us since the beginning, then you know what a special place and what a remarkable
group of people we have. We have to extend a special thank you to FC Dallas for the hospitality that they showed. We had great seats, and I had the opportunity to be on the field for walk through and warm ups. I'm positive I had a deer in headlights look most of the time I was down there, but I was truly just trying to take in the sights and sounds of Toyota Stadium. I cover high school soccer for my job, but the vibe that I saw that evening was incredible.

When I first got down there to Section 115 (after I got lost of course), Madison of FC Dallas informed me of the "danger zone" right behind the goal post, where balls that sail wide or over the net land. That right there had me pumped. I started walking that way to take all the pictures I could, and sure enough a ball went sailing just by my head not two minutes after she told me that.

I thoroughly enjoyed watching the players go through drills, and just saw how much fun they were having, while maintaining that intensity with the end of the regular season near.

The FC Dallas drumline arrived a short time later, and had a plethora of pregame jams to get the crowd energized and ready to roll. They took their seats just above where the players come out, and provided a true home field advantage.

Coming back to the seats, and being the foodie that I am, I was blown away by all the food choices. I of course wanted to eat one of everything, but I had to be practical.

The game that evening was intense, Columbus jumped on the board first, but FC Dallas scored near the end of the first half, and the crowd erupted in applause and cheers. The game may have ended in a tie, but we were the real winners getting to be in each others company, catch up and just enjoy the evening not thinking about anything else. Shoutout to Jay Carter for the awesome t-shirts that we had, representing UT Southwestern and Dallas YACS!

The drone show after the game was a Marvel Superheros theme; and was absolutely incredible.
I am truly blessed to be part of this group, and am looking forward to many more years!
Dallas YACS Calendar
Tuesday, October 10th, 7pm – Virtual Support Group on Zoom
Saturday, October 14th, 3-5pm – Mala Beads and Bracelets Class at Community Brewery. Mala (meaning “to recite”) strands are traditionally used to support a meditation or prayer practice. You will leave with your own bead creation and an introduction to an affirmation practice.
Tuesday, October 24th, 6pm – YACS Yoga at the Cancer Center
Tuesday, October 24th, 7-8:30pm – In-Person Support Group
Sunday, November 12th, 10am-12pm – Healthy Holiday Favorites Cooking Class

October Birthdays:
Taylor Roth (10/8)
Amanda Alvarado (10/12)
Maritza Figy (10/30)

October Milestones:
Amy Stumbris (10/5)– Diagnosis Anniversary
Amanda Alvarado (10/6)– Diagnosis Anniversary
Jessica Carroll (10/13)– Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day
Jessica Carroll (10/16)– Eighth Wedding Anniversary
Patty Ruiz (10/22)– BMT
Valerie Cano (10/31)– In Remission

Knowing the Group! Featuring Jessica Carroll
Jessica Carroll was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer in March 2020.
Before getting diagnosed with cancer, she worked as a registered nurse mostly in hospice care, where her heart is.

Getting diagnosed with stage four breast cancer, it left her unable to walk, and she had to stop working and haven't been able to go back since.

Cancer has continued to change many parts of her life. Spiritual, relationships, finances and life goals are just a few things that have changed. Some changes have been very challenging, but she says that some have been a blessing.

Along with herself, four of her immediate family members have been diagnosed with cancer within five years.

Through everything, she is grateful for a supportive, loving marriage. Jessica also loves to do art in many different forms.

"I know I haven't been to group in a long time, and I live a longer distance from many of your in-person activities," she said. "But I thank you for always including me, just in case I can come in the future!"

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**Taylor's Comedic Turf**

Why did the ghost go to the bar?

Answer at the end of the newsletter...

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**Alex's Meditation Moment**
We have times in our life when we’re caught in a storm of difficult emotions, when our feelings are so strong that being mindful might not be possible. This can happen with feelings of fear or despair, and certainly with trauma or panic. What most helps in these situations is what might be considered the precursor to mindfulness: intentionally activating inner resources, such as stability, safety, and connectedness. I liken this to a recent visit at my parents’ house when I fell asleep on their couch. It had been a challenging work week, and I arrived on their doorstep weary and hungry. While I don’t normally nap well, their house is a place of safety, comfort, and connection where I can curl up and rest. I trust my needs will be met there, and after a snack and half hour of snoozing, I woke feeling more grounded and with the sense of peace I needed to re-enter my world.

There are a number of ways that you can find refuge and access your resources. You can remember people who help give you a sense of safety or connection, you can think of places where you feel safe, you can remember situations where you felt confident and strong, you might send a message to yourself that reminds you that you’re loved and safe, and you can use your breath, or even your touch, to calm and balance yourself. It’s best to practice strengthening these resources when you’re not activated. Then, when you do get caught in strong emotions, you’ll already have some skill in contacting these supportive inner states. This month’s practice will give you a taste of how you can, on your own, cultivate these wholesome inner resources.

Please sit comfortably and take a few moments to relax any areas of tension in your body. And now, bring to mind a situation that activates strong emotions and become aware of the part of you that feels most fearful, upset, reactive, or vulnerable. Let yourself sense what this part of you most needs to feel supported, perhaps safety or love, sense of strength, a sense of ease. Is there a place – and some might call it a sacred place – that you sense would help you connect with your inner resources? You might visualize a place that’s beautiful, comforting, and safe. It could be a place you know or one that you’re imaging, a place in the mountains or by the ocean, in the woods, perhaps a beautiful temple or sanctuary, or a place in your home that’s
familiar and that you love.

Let yourself visualize and sense this place, and then imagine and feel yourself transported there, and imagine resting comfortably there. Let yourself take in the surroundings, the colors, the warmth or coolness, the scents, the feeling of the earth or floor beneath you. Let this feeling of sacred space surround and hold you so you feel a sense of belonging.

As you experience being in this space, sense now who might be a comforting or loving presence to connect with. Bring to mind, perhaps, someone you know personally who is loving and kind and wise, maybe a parent or a friend, a child or a teacher, perhaps your dog or cat. It could be someone you known or perhaps a spiritual figure, someone alive that’s inspiring. Sense who brings the most sense of ease and connection, safety, and strength. Call on that person or being, and sense that their response and presence, right here with you. Let yourself feel in your body the increased sense of safety and connection when that person is right here with you.

What’s it like? What are the sensations? Can you sense some warmth, some ease, some opening? As you feel this person’s presence, allow yourself to lengthen, letting in comfort and ease, and exhale slowly, letting go of tension. Explore placing your hands on your heart, gently touching your heart, or perhaps your belly, communicating tenderness, breathing in comfort and ease, exhaling tension, breathing in exactly what’s needed to calm and soothe, letting go of what’s not needed or helpful.

Are there any words that might deepen your sense of being peaceful, loved, and safe? It might be a wise message to yourself or a self-blessing of care. If something comes to mind, explore mentally whispering these words with a soft, sincere inner voice to your own heart. Now, just rest, aware of a growing sense of relaxation, connection, groundedness, and wellbeing. Take a few moments to sense that whatever inner resources you’re finding in these moments were already there, and that the more you visit them, the more available they will be.
Prompt of the Month

Explore a moment during your cancer journey when you found unexpected sources of joy and laughter. It could be a humorous interaction, a lighthearted memory, or a surprising discovery that brought a smile to your face. Delve into the details of that moment, reliving the experience through your words.

If you'd like your response featured in next month's newsletter, simply include it in an email to the group at dallasyacsalot@gmail.com.

Cooking With Chris
Good Morning Dallas YACS fam,

Chris here with our monthly recipe newsletter.

This month I am featuring Tomato Basil soup! This cozy, comfort soup is a classic and with the fall and winter weather coming up you can make it in your Thanksgiving and Christmas recipes.

Here's the list of what you will need:

Ingredients:

4 lbs of tomatoes

2 tbsp of minced garlic (can be found in the produce section of the store in glass jars)

2 tbsp small diced onion

1 tbsp of chicken bouillon

1 tbsp of tomato bouillon

32 oz of water
Fresh basil
Kosher salt
Pepper

1. First step: dice your tomatoes and 1 tbsp onion into a small dice and mix into a mixing bowl, add 1 oz of oil, salt and pepper to the onion tomato mix.

2. Second step: grab a pan to sautee 1 tbsp of garlic and 1 tbsp of onion.

3. Third step: once your garlic onion mix has turned into a nice golden brown color and you smell those amazing aromatics roasting it's time for your tomato mix. Grab your mixing bowl and mix them together with the garlic and onions, if you don't have room in your pan use a stock pot. Set to med heat and let your veggies slow simmer for approximately 15-20 minutes until they form a mushy texture.

4. Fourth step: you're going to cut your basil leaves into a fancy French technique that's known as a chiffonade. To do this technique, trim your basil so only the leaves are left, you're going to hold the top of the leaf with your index finger and with your thumb you're going to roll the leaf. And thinly slice the leaf.

5. Fifth step: grab your stockpot that's simmering and add the rest of the ingredients and let the simmer for another 15 minutes.
Joke Answer: For the boo-ze!

Happy Halloween!

Feedback?

If you have anything you'd like us to know that isn't covered in the newsletter, tell us here.

That's it! You've reached the end of our newsletter. Until next time...

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