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The Annie Appleseed Project (AASP)



By Julia Chiappetta

When Ann Fonfa was diagnosed with breast cancer in January 1993, sensitive to and unwilling to take chemotherapy, she searched high and low for alternative therapies and started a study group in New York City. She compiled the research and summaries from the nearly 60 meetings they held and, in 1999, created her own website called, The Annie Appleseed Project (AASP).

AASP is now a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation, serving 90,000 people monthly via the Internet. Ann has attended hundreds of scientific, medical, research and advocacy meetings since 1995. She and other volunteers gather information, which along with presentations from experts at their annual conference, is

disseminated via the website. The mission is simple: provide information, education, advocacy and awareness for people with cancer, their families and caregivers, who are interested in complementary or alternative medicine (CAM) and natural therapies from a patient's perspective. Their audience is anyone seeking help.

AASP challenges existing treatment paradigms, questions research methods, to propose positive, science-based, new directions. They bring these complementary and alternative therapies to the mainstream, while serving as a place where all ideas are appreciated and scrutinized. Finding good information has surely improved in the past 20 years, however it still comes down to each individual, their team of medical experts and the faith to pursue a plan of care with purpose and peace.

In 2000, I found myself on a similar path as Ann. As I began searching for alternative protocols, during my many months of research, I was excited to come upon AASP. It was a treasure trove of information. A few years later, I met Ann by way of an introduction from my life-long friend, David Wales, who has created one of the best nutraceutical companies on

the planet called American BioSciences, Inc. We have been friends ever since and I help her produce her annual conference, which is right around the corner, commencing February 28th to March 2nd in West Palm Beach, at the Embassy Suites by Hilton. There is nothing like this conference. It is three days of interactive and engaging conversations and presentations. This is where you will find the leaders in CAM holding court. This think tank of generous sharing is comprised of doctors, scientists, advocates, those with active cancer or on maintenance, caregivers, practitioners and hand-picked exhibitors all aligned with the mission to educate and encourage. The venue is transformed with an all organic, vegan menu, alkaline water, ionized air, a fresh juice bar from local farmers, a movie night and cutting-edge talks. The highlights include an opening night reception under the stars, a patient panel of survivors who've had extraordinary true-life outcomes and a super-charged, panel of medical cannabis experts. For more information, please visit: AnnieAppleseedProject.org.

As always, Green is Good, so drink up...organic, fresh

juices each morning on an empty stomach and allow the superfoods and nutrients to provide cellular energy and healing. I love two ounces of wheat grass each morning, but I often follow that up with a green juice of kale, spinach, lemon, green apple and turmeric.

Do you sense spring in the air? While I enjoy seeing the many ice skaters on the Mianus River, where I learned how to skate as a young girl, my body is yearning for warmer days. Alas, several weeks of winter remain on the calendar, so let's commit to thriving in this season until spring fully arrives and continue to find ways to heat things up with our generosity and love for others.

Julia Chiappetta is the author of "Breast Cancer: The Notebook" (Gemini Media, 2006) and is also the owner of Julia Chiappetta Consulting. She lives in Cos Cob. More information and past columns can be found at JuliaChiappetta.com