

VitaSearch

# Integrative Cancer Conference 2008

April 12th 2008  
The University of Sydney

## Living Beyond Expectations

**Petrea King ND**

**VitaSearch Pty Ltd**

Toll Free: 1300 884 702  
Web: [www.vitasearch.com.au](http://www.vitasearch.com.au)

# Living Beyond Expectations

## About the speaker:

**Petrea King, N.D., D.B.M., D.R.M., Dip. C. Hyp., I.Y.T.A.**



Petrea King is the Founding Director of the Quest for Life Foundation and the Quest for Life Centre. She is the best selling author of seven books including *Quest for Life*, *Spirited Women*, *Your Life Matters* and her children's books including *You, Me & the Rainbow* and *Rainbow Kids* and a dozen meditation CD's.

Since 1984 Petrea's presentations, writings and residential programs have inspired and encouraged people facing life's greatest challenges to make meaning of their circumstances. Her work with doctors, nurses, psychologists and allied health professionals has enabled them to re-establish a deep commitment to their personal and professional development. Petrea's innovative approaches have proved helpful to thousands of people and she is nationally recognized as a leader in the field of health and well-being.

Petrea is a regular guest on ABC national and local radio and she has been featured in many television programs. Petrea has received many awards for her work including the Advance Australia Award, the Centenary Medal, Citizen of the Year and has been amongst the nominees for Australian of the Year each year since 2004.

## Contact Details:

**Petrea King**

**Founding Director**

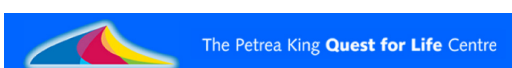
**Quest for Life Centre**

**Bundanoon NSW 2578**

**Ph: 02 4883 6599**

**Web: [www.questforlife.com.au](http://www.questforlife.com.au)**

**Email: [petrea@questforlife.com.au](mailto:petrea@questforlife.com.au)**



## Living Beyond Expectations

**The greatest antidote to cancer is to be fully engaged in living the life you came here to live. When we actively engage in a fulfilling life and take care of ourselves physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually then we create the ideal physiology in which our health can be maintained or regained.**

Over the past twenty-five years I have worked with tens of thousands of people living with the impact that cancer has on their lives and who are looking to actively contribute to their own healing. Healing is different from curing. Curing focuses on the physical body. Healing focuses on the whole of the human being - physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. I know people who have been cured but are still in need of healing and people who have died healed of everything that ever stopped them from truly living. These are the paradoxes of healing.

When I first started working with people with cancer as a naturopath and meditation teacher, I shared with my clients my knowledge of nutrition, supplements, meditation and other healing therapies. Over the years as I saw many people regain their health I realised that there is no one pathway to health and healing. There is no one diet, no best meditation practice and no perfect supplement program for all people.

It became obvious to me that the people who were far outliving their prognosis or who attained unexpected remissions were not all *doing* the same things. They each found their own particular path to healing and in each case it was a pathway that was right for them. What these people all have in common is a way of *being* rather than *doing*. In this lies the key to profound healing.

Focusing only on the physical aspects of healing addresses only part of the problem of ill health. It is easy to focus on the aspects of healing that are involved in 'doing'. Indeed we feel reassured when we are busy 'doing'. But our *doing* can be at the expense of our *being*. The state of 'being' is described in the Four C's at the end of these notes. These four qualities of 'being' are usually found in people who attain unexpected remissions, who far outlive their doctor's expectations or who are now entirely free of their disease when that was never expected. People don't always *do* the same things but they generally all have these same qualities of *being*.

The state of being described in the Four C's is a profoundly beneficial physiological state in which our bodies will do whatever healing is possible. A physiology of heightened fear, anxiety, agitation, disappointment, upset, depression and/or panic is less conducive to healing than one in which we feel calm, responsive, confident, capable, supported, loved, cared for and in which we feel able to make meaning of our experience and have healthy priorities that support our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health.

People who have these qualities described in the Four C's *do* all kinds of things. They may seek second, third or fourth opinions. They may research their options. They may get their relationships up to date and find improved ways of communicating. They may forgive people or past wounds. They may improve their diet and research what vitamins or other supplements may be beneficial. They may meditate, practice tai chi, qui gong, yoga, exercise, drink juice, have intravenous vitamins, take antioxidants or seek counselling, psychotherapy or attend a psychosocial support group. They may pray, sing, paint or fulfill a long-held dream. They may deepen their relationship with themselves, with others or with animals or nature. They choose to make meaning of their experiences through the choices or decisions they make.

It is invaluable for us to learn how to live in the present moment. When we are present to each moment, we are not projecting our fears or anxieties into the future or rehashing resentment, bitterness or regret about the past. In this way we contribute a more beneficial and powerful healing chemistry within our bodies than that when we are emotionally agitated. We love being in the present. It's the juiciest place in life to be. It's where life is unfolding moment-by-moment. It's where our intuition is heard or felt, where creativity is experienced, where humour and spontaneity reside. The present is where life is, love is, creation is unfolding. We cannot experience the presence of life, love or creation in five minutes time or five minutes ago. We have to be here, now in order to feel the glory, wonder and possibilities of the present.

However, our minds can create chaos, misery and suffering for us as they jump into the future or into the past; projecting endless possibilities that may never happen or regurgitating things from our history and giving life to them in the present.

What do we want from our surgeon on the day we go to theatre? In addition to years of experience and excellent training, what we want on the day is their undivided attention - their wholehearted presence. It is the 'gifted' surgeon who brings all of his or her presence to the operating table. *Then* they recall everything you've told them and may choose to explore in greater depth a seemingly minor symptom you mentioned three weeks ago. Whilst another surgeon might have forgotten that conversation altogether and sees you only as a routine procedure, rather than a person with an individual history.

The abundant harvest that we reap in being present to our lives at every moment brings the realisation that life depends as much upon our response to its events as upon the events themselves; that each moment is a sufficient end in itself rather than another step towards some future goal; that it is *now*, *this moment* that we sacrifice the glory and wonder that is in and around us unless we be present to its unfolding potential.

## **Intuition**

*Intuition is the voice of the non-physical world.*

Our intuition is perhaps our least acknowledged but greatest asset. It is the voice of the non-physical world though it can deliver messages about the physical world. If we train ourselves to discern its voice, it will provide guidance in every moment of our lives. So many of us have quashed our intuition through long neglect of it. It tends to speak in nudges or whispers and is only available when our mind is quiet. Our fears use the loudspeaker system and so consume our minds, that we're sometimes desperate for respite. The voice of love emanates from our creative spirit whilst fear belongs to the personality we have constructed since our birth. Our intuition is that 'still small voice' that 'knows' rather than 'thinks'.

Fears propel the mind with thoughts of 'will I, won't I', 'should I, shouldn't I', 'can I, can't I?' Our intuition however, 'knows' precisely what to do or say, knows how to 'be' or whether something is true for us or not as the case may be.

Some people talk of a 'gut' feeling or they say, 'I know it in my heart' or it 'feels' right. Some people talk of hunches or nudges. Interestingly enough, next to your brain your gut produces more neurotransmitters than any other part of your body.

It is time to recognise that intuition is a valid source of information. It has long been ridiculed and we've been indoctrinated to not trust its wisdom. Faith is not necessary when we rely only on that which is evidence-based. We need to train our intellect to listen to and express the intuitive voice. When we follow our intuition our lives have an increased joy, spontaneity, humour and sense of aliveness. It feels like more life flows through us.

Our intuition can give us valuable information about what's going on in our bodies even before a noticeable symptom appears. Countless people have told me they had an intuitive sense that something needed attention long before being diagnosed with their illness or with its recurrence. Don't give your power away to someone else because they're the 'expert'. *You* are the expert on you. Find someone who'll listen and respect your perspective.

Some men, and many more women, have told me that their doctors have accused them of being hypochondriacs or malingerers because they've returned again and again with more than a suspicion that something wasn't right. This delay in diagnosis can result in anguish for the person plus the consequences of a delay in treatment.

The incessant chatter that goes on in our mind often stops us from experiencing the possibilities in each present moment. In order for us to hear our intuition, our mind must be quiet and present.

For instance, imagine you're walking to the local chemist shop ten minutes away to purchase some goods. While you're walking, your mind chatters on. Perhaps you're thinking about your woeful financial situation or you're worrying about your kids, rehashing a recent argument, fretting over your relationship, resenting your job, sad about your unresolved childhood or pre-occupied with your plans for the future. You arrive at the chemist shop. You've forgotten why you went there. You've got no interest or energy to engage with the person on the other side of the counter let alone enquire about their day because you're so pre-occupied with your own problems. You avoid eye contact. You grab tissues because you're bound to need those and you walk home again worrying about the future, fretting about the past, frustrated with your kids, resenting your job, rehashing conversations or arguments and so on.

What you've done from home to the chemist and back again is secrete a chemical cocktail in your brain, gut and in other parts of your body in response to whatever your awareness has been focused on. If you've been pre-occupied with regrets, recriminations, worry, bitterness, anxiety, fears, uncertainties, resentment, rehashing of past events or projecting your worries, fears, concerns and dread into the future you've also been producing the chemicals of the feelings you've experienced. This chemical 'wash' significantly contributes moment-by-moment to our physical health.

There's another way to walk to the chemist shop. You're over your childhood because you've wept about it, written about it, talked about it or railed over whatever you needed to in order for those events to be in your history, rather than nibbling at your present. In this way you have forgiven yourself, others and life. You've got your finances under control because that's your responsibility. You're in the best of relationships because you know that they need daily attention. You know you've given your children the best start in life you were able to, given who you are, what happened to you and what you made of it, and can set them free to create a life for themselves. You know that worrying about the future changes nothing (except your biology!). Then, you're simply free to walk.

You hear the crunch of the gravel beneath your feet. You notice how your body feels as you walk and you notice if anything feels any different. You feel the touch of the air against your cheeks and catch the waft of blossom floating by. You see the flurry of petals set dancing by the breezes. You relish the play of light and shadow, You hear the laughter of children and birdsong.

You connect with the dog that tried to give you a smile. You enjoy every breath as it flows effortlessly in and out of your body. You arrive at the chemist shop. You've got boundless energy to greet the assistant and perhaps cheer up her day. You know exactly why you're there and you get your goods and walk home enjoying the sights, sounds, smells and feelings of simply being alive. It's as if you see life winking at you everywhere.

This is the meaning of that expression, 'Before enlightenment, chop wood, carry water. After enlightenment, chop wood, carry water'. This second way of walking may outwardly look identical to the first, but be completely different in our experience of it. This second way of walking produces a very different physiology. We've secreted the chemicals of peace, contentment, joy or even bliss. Because, why not?

Then our walking is not just a way of reaching our destination but a rich journey in itself. It's often at these times, when the mind is open and receptive to receiving the messages from our senses that our intuition operates. Messages pop into our mind - they might be as simple as to ring someone or to read a particular book or to visit somewhere - but they're important messages from a deeper, more aware part of our being.

If we've been trying to figure out a problem or find a solution to a situation, these are precisely the times when our intuition is likely to give some pointers, or indeed, the entire answer; those 'Aha!' moments of understanding or recognition. These moments might occur whilst we're showering, sitting idle at traffic lights, or involved in many of our daily routines or when the mind is quiet and receptive perhaps in the presence of music or nature or during a simple physical activity like washing up the dishes, cleaning the bathtub, brushing our teeth or taking out the rubbish. It is often when the mind is 'idling', not thinking about anything in particular, that these intuitive thoughts are experienced. We suddenly 'get' the idea that we should visit a particular person or place (for no apparent reason), go to the shelf for a particular book, revisit a conversation in which you realise you were misunderstood or whatever.

It is the unresolved issues in our mind that take us away from experiencing this present moment in all its glory and block our intuition from being heard.

Science continues to discover new hormones and chemicals which act as neurotransmitters. These chemical messengers are constantly tweaking our cell's performance. One of the hormones that we secrete has been named anandamide - the bliss hormone - ananda being a Sanskrit word meaning bliss. When it locks onto the receptor on many of our cells it gives a positive message that encourages the cell to optimise its performance. It's part of our body's internal pharmacy of hormones and chemicals that improve and maintain our health. Why wouldn't our body secrete self-healing, health maintaining hormones and chemicals to help fulfill its purpose - to house the spirit that is here to be realised?

We're only just beginning to understand the contribution our feelings make through these chemical messages. We smile about people in love because the world looks different through lover's eyes. We even say they've got stars in their eyes because people in love have a sparkle about them. The chemicals of love and joy tingle in our bodies and give a sense of peace and wellbeing.

It's obvious by the lines on our faces which emotions visit their most frequently. Those who live in the present and are content and peaceful have an aura of joy about them. They are spontaneous and available to fully experience the present moment. Their minds are uncluttered by unresolved issues or perceived threats to their peace.

The chemicals of joy, peace, love, contentment and bliss are powerful immune and health enhancers whilst the chemicals of fear, blame, resentment, entrapment, hopelessness, anxiety, stress and powerlessness are not.

We need to honour and listen to this wise inner voice because it is our greatest asset in life. It is the voice of our creative spirit and the guiding light for our journey to full consciousness. It is in the presence of this intuitive self that we feel a deep sense of connectedness to that which is sacred within us.

We don't heal *from* something we resist or fear we heal *into* that which we more deeply desire. Healing requires that we're willing to examine every belief, judgment, value, desire, inhibition, expectation and assumption we hold. In time, we discard everything but those things that we find true in their depths.

To aim for a cure requires the same kind of thinking processes that we use when we're problem solving and not listening to our intuition. It is only focused on ridding ourselves of something. Yet, life is a process of unfolding rather than a finite state that we achieve. Curing is only about the finite state not the process. Healing addresses the whole person taking into account the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects thus leading to a deeper understanding and wisdom about our selves. After all life is not a competition to see who stays alive the longest. We value a life by the passion with which it was lived, by the love made evident, by the peace or joy given to others rather than its length.

In modern medicine a cure is normally considered an external medical intervention that reliably removes physical disease in most people. Whereas healing in contrast, is an inner movement towards wholeness and can take place at physical, emotional, mental and spiritual levels. Most ancient healing traditions of medicine place their primary emphasis on this inner healing, on caring for the human soul, rather than on curing.

Real health is our capacity to embrace every moment, regardless of its challenges, with an open heart and a quiet mind. This definition of peace is embodied in the Four C's: We regain a sense of **control**, choosing not to react from our history but making an appropriate response to the situation in which we find ourselves. This requires awareness and a desire to participate rather than feeling a helpless victim of our circumstance. We care enough to be **committed** to getting emotionally up to date with our life so that we can be here now - in the present moment. We have healthy priorities, are in clear communion with ourselves and have the capacity to communicate with our loved ones. We find our life positively **challenging** recognising that we're here to grow in wisdom and our capacity to love and we make meaning of our suffering. We feel lovingly **connected** to those we share our life with and to our own spirit or we have a profound sense of connectedness.

When we desire to live with this sense of peace in our lives the outcome is guaranteed. Peace is always possible and regardless of the circumstances of our lives, peace becomes our reality.

The living presence of these qualities creates the ideal environment in which physical healing can take place. If physical healing is not to be our lot then we still have peace. This is the peace that passes all understanding and which allows us to take our leave of life lightly if that is to be our pathway.



## The 4 C's ~ Peace of Mind

Peace is not a passive wishy-washy state of acceptance. It is a dynamic state in which we feel fully alive and able to embrace each new moment, with a clear mind and an open heart.

The following four qualities provide a guide to see what makes up peace of mind in a very practical way. As each quality begins with the letter 'c' they're known as the Four C's.

Common sense tells us that anyone who feels completely out of control with their life, is ambivalent about living, all their challenges are overwhelming and they feel no one loves them, won't fare nearly as well as one for whom the opposite is true.



Needless to say we'd all prefer to feel that when the unexpected or the unthinkable happens in our life that we'll:

- have resources within and outside of ourselves to call on in response.
- care enough about ourselves to seek healing and peace.
- feel positively challenged and excited by the opportunities present.
- feel loved and supported by the people we share our life with and that, what we're experiencing, has meaning for us.

### 1. Control

The first is that we have a sense of control over our life. We consciously choose our response to life's challenges rather than habitually re-act. We are active participators rather than helpless victims. This recognises that whilst we can't always change what happens to us, we can change our response to what happens to us.

### 2. Commitment

Secondly, we feel committed to living – we're willing to get emotionally up-to-date with our lives. This may involve a re-focusing of priorities, issues of forgiveness of both ourselves and others or resolving relationship or communication difficulties. To live wholeheartedly in the present we must resolve the issues of the past. In this way, we glean the wisdom from the past but don't live with the woundedness of it.

### 3. Challenge

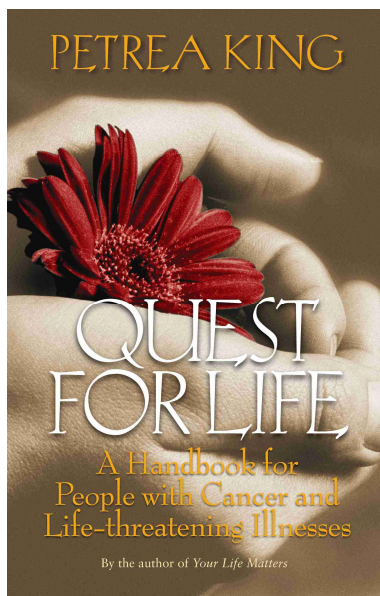
The third quality is that we feel challenged and excited by our lives. What is it that gets our 'juices' flowing and our eyes sparkling? Can we make meaning of our suffering? We need our limiting beliefs to be challenged or we will not grow. Are we living our dream? We feel that we're living the lives we came here to live.

### 4. Connection

The final quality is that we feel a sense of connection – that we're loved and supported by those we share our life with or that we have a sense of belonging or place, or that we're connected to what we consider sacred or divine.







## Quest for Life

Living well with cancer and other life-threatening illnesses

---

This best-seller is an essential handbook for anyone with cancer and for those who love or care for them. It is the story of Petrea's recovery from leukaemia combined with the practical knowledge gained from working with tens of thousands of individuals with cancer and other life-threatening illnesses.

In *Quest for Life* Petrea provides accessible guidelines for combining the best of medical care with commonsense lifestyle practices and naturopathic advice—all based on Petrea's training in health, healing and meditation.

## Our Program

*Quest for Life* is a nourishing and uplifting program for men and women living with cancer and other serious illness. Suitable for those who are actively seeking ways to contribute to their own health and to make meaning of this challenging experience.

## Spirited Women

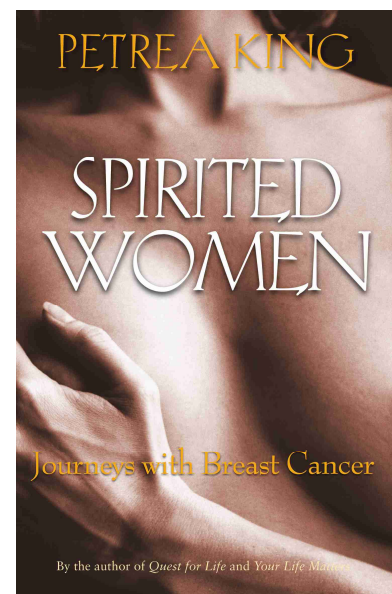
Journeys with Breast Cancer

---

*Spirited Women* is filled with hundreds of quotes from women and a wealth of practical information that educates and empowers those whose lives are touched by breast cancer.

## Our Program

Women living with cancer or other serious illness find sustenance and companionship with other women on this program. Participants regain a sense of control over their lives and learn to put themselves first. The role of intuition in healing, taking charge of thoughts and feelings and practical strategies to manage aspects of illness are covered. Partners, friends and loved ones are also encouraged to attend, as long as they're women.



*For the purchase of Petrea's books and 12 meditation CD's please call us or visit our website  
shop@questforlife.com.au      www.questforlife.com.au  
Tel (02) 4883 6599*

We look forward to hearing from you and assisting you with any queries you may have

**The Petrea King Quest for Life Centre**

PO Box 390 Bundanoon NSW 2578

Tel (02) 4883 6599

info@questforlife.com.au

www.questforlife.com.au