



Breast Cancer Survivors

Inspire at 5th Annual Yoga Unites for Living Beyond Breast Cancer

When breast cancer survivor Sue Faden joined five hundred others to practice yoga on the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art on May 20, she recalled attending her first Yoga Unites for LIVING BEYOND BREAST CANCER with her son by her side. "It was the first time since my diagnosis that I felt strong in my body and mind," says Faden. "It was that day four years ago that I felt a big change waft over me. I felt stirrings of strength coming back to me and I knew I was going to be all right."

Surrounded by hundreds of women affected by breast cancer, family members, friends and community leaders, yoga instructor Jennifer Schelter and volunteers from yoga studios across the region led an all ages outdoor yoga class for the fifth consecutive year. As founder and artistic director of Yoga Schelter in East Falls, Schelter has traveled and trained in yoga around the world. Schelter was inspired by friend Courtney Kapp, whom she helped through her breast cancer treatments. She partnered with Living Beyond Breast Cancer (LBBC) for the first Yoga Unites for Living Beyond Breast Cancer. She continues to promote yoga as a tool for health, partnership and transformation.

LBBC produces the annual yoga event to raise awareness of breast cancer issues and funds for LBBC's education and support programs. According to Executive Director Jean Sachs, "LBBC's mission is to empower all women affected by breast cancer to live as long as possible with the best quality of life. Yoga Unites for Living Beyond Breast Cancer is a beautiful way to illustrate that message. It is so inspiring to be among hundreds of people sharing in a yoga practice. LBBC is proud of how this event has grown and the difference it has made in people's lives." The event includes a Healthy Living Expo with a wealth of information on fitness, natural cosmetics, healthful foods and other complementary goods and services.

Attorney Risa Ferman's world was turned upside down in 1992 when news of her mother's breast cancer diagnosis came as she was preparing for the Pennsylvania bar exam. After the exam, she took time off to help her mother recu-



perate after a mastectomy. This experience propelled her to follow her dreams of becoming a prosecutor, rather than the safer, less challenging course she was planning to follow. Now Ferman is running for District Attorney of Montgomery County. On May 20th, she was joined by her mother (now seventy), her twelve-year-old daughter and her sister-in-law, and all three generations practiced yoga on the Art Museum steps.

A bold, bald and beautiful Cindy Roberts attended her first Yoga Unites for Living Beyond Breast Cancer this year, just days after her most recent chemotherapy treatment. She attributes her vitality to the benefits of exercise, both physical and mental. "As a compulsive walker, I am always looking for more ways to get the benefits of exercise," says Roberts. "The physical benefits of exercise are what most people focus on, but I have found overwhelming mental relief from all forms of exercise. I hope to be a breast cancer survivor and plan to get into a yoga program after I complete treatment to help me find peace."

Breast cancer survivor Dorel Shanon remembers the first year she participated: "Looking out over the city skyline and listening to Jennifer, it felt great to be able to move, stretch, breathe and feel my body coming back from its long journey through treatment. I was grateful to be alive." According to Shanon, "Yoga Unites has been one of the most inspiring experiences for me, and I look forward to it every year!"

Proudly joined by her sister-in-law and stepmother, two-time breast cancer survivor Andi Morris understands first hand the importance of exercise during recovery. "After I had my double mastectomy, I could not lift my arms past my ears," says Morris. "However, after enduring painful physical therapy and exercise, I can now raise both arms straight above my head! I find it so inspiring to see hundreds of breast cancer survivors doing yoga for my favorite charity, LBBC. It lets me put aside all of my daily worries and just concentrate on healing my mind, body and soul."

"I can say, without a doubt, that keeping active helped with my physical and mental healing and recovery from breast cancer," proclaims Joy Rubeo. "Today, besides walking and running, I enjoy doing yoga and Pilates and rely on the stress relief that they provide."

"Growing up, fitness was not a priority in my family," says Rachel Ezekiel-Fishbein, who participated in Yoga Unites for Living Beyond Breast Cancer for the first time this year. "After a breast cancer scare several years ago, I began drawing from my practices over the past twelve years in meditation, Pilates, yoga, swimming and walking. Each provides me with quiet time to turn inward and focus my mind in a way to understand my body more deeply."

According to breast cancer survivor Cheryl Dudley, "All those people together uniting in body prayer affects you in a very deep place. I now live in New York, but I traveled to Philadelphia because I wanted to again be a part of this wonderful event."

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Living Beyond Breast Cancer, founded in 1991, is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering all women affected by breast cancer to live as long as possible with the best quality of life. Programs and services include: conferences; teleconferences; the toll-free Survivors' Helpline (888-753-5222); a website, lbbc.org; free quarterly newsletters; publications for African-American and Latina women; recordings; networking programs; healthcare-provider trainings; and the Paula A. Seidman Library and Resource Center. For more information visit www.lbbc.org or call (610) 645-4567.