

THE BIG FIGHT

So many people use the excuse "I'm too old for that." What age makes you "too old?" To many it's their 40's, some may even think by 30 they are to old to be physically active. But Anne Swartz and Richard Ballard are prime examples that there's no such thing as being too old. Not only are they both in their 60's and more active now then ever, but they're also both cancer survivors. These enthusiasts did just that they survived cancer and time. Their mission is to inspire and often provoke the question; If I can do it, why can't you? Find out how they learned: There is life after cancer, and after 60.

Ellen on Anne

"Anne never started working out until she was 47, and now she can do 15 pull-ups by herself. When you meet Anne the first words out of her mouth is that she's a breast cancer survivor, she's mentions that when she introduces herself, and always has. She wants people to realize if she can do it, anybody can do it."

Anne Swartz

Diagnosed: At the age of 51

Cancer free: For 10 years now

Training with Ellen: It will be 3 years this May.

When did you decide to make fitness a priority?

I had never really worked out before until I was 48 or 49. So it's been a part of my life for about 12-14 years now.

What helped you stay positive through the whole thing? I had to. Ya know I had a choice, I could either sit there and be upset about it or I could fight it and exercise. I had to do it. After I had all my surgeries I could not wait to get back to do it. It was my escape it just took me away to a better place. My husband always says now I'm in a better mood when I work out.

How has fitness changed your life as a whole? It's awesome I'm passionate about it... I just try to take really good care of myself. Of course having cancer makes a big difference you really want to take good care of your body having a second chance.

Do you have any fitness goals for the future? To stay in the best shape I can be in I guess, to keep on working out, to keep on eating healthy, to be an inspiration to my children, my husband, my family and my friends. Just to keep on the track I'm on I guess because right now it's pretty darn good.

Do you have any advice for people that may be going through a similar situation? Don't give up, be positive! If I can do it, you can do it. The body's pretty remarkable if you treat it right, it's going to respond and really treat you well. Set goals, not unrealistic goals.

But some realistic goals, it will help take your mind off what you are having to go through.

Ellen on Richard

"If a 61 year old can start training during radiation and has started training for his first triathlon, all I can say is wow. Richard can run on a treadmill with a 20-pound vest on and outrun the 30 year olds. Richard had ran but never lifted weights, in a matter of 6 months you would never know that he had never lifted. No matter what I throw at him he just smiles and does it."

Richard Ballard

Diagnosed: March 2009

Cancer free: Since December 2009

Training with Ellen: Since August of 2009

Was fitness a part of your life prior to being diagnosed? I've been a runner for 30 plus years, I've done marathons for lots of years but that was about it. I hadn't really worked in the gym.

What are your fitness goals for the future? I think just for my age, I would like to be physically fit and try to be able to remain as active as I have been. I made the decision back when I started training with Ellen I needed another goal out there. I'm going to probably do a mini triathlon this year and assuming I can get through that ok I would probably try to work my way up to a normal one.

Has the change from running to training for a triathlon changed your outlook? I always told myself that as a runner and being fairly cautious about my diet that I was in pretty good shape, but it has become evident pretty quickly I certainly could be in a lot better shape. The weight training and cardio training with Ellen and the swimming with the swim coach you know all of those things certainly improve your health. For me I feel good doing it and can tell certainly tell I feel different because of it.

Do you have any advice for people that may be going through a similar situation? The better your physical fitness the better you're going to handle that or anything else. I don't think there's any downside to physical fitness and trying to improve your health. I would encourage anybody with or without cancer to do that, I'm a big fan of quality of life, I would most certainly like to improve mine and I'm sure many would want to do the same.