

# Dealing With My Life-Changing Diagnosis

**I got cancer when I was 13.** I was really sick and spent a lot of time in the hospital. I even lost my hair. I was so happy when I found out the cancer was gone. When my hair grew back, I knew I could get on with my life.

Last month, I found out that the cancer came back. At first, I did not believe it. I told myself the doctor must have made a mistake. Once I realized it was true, I got mad. How could this happen? Did the doctors do something wrong?

It's not fair that I have to go through this again. My prom is coming up! I don't want to lose my hair again. I don't want to be in the hospital and away from my friends.

I started going to a support group for teens with cancer. I found out that other kids feel angry and scared too. I'm not alone. Last week, we made paintings of how we feel about cancer. It helped me sort out how I feel.



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**At my support group, we talked a lot about our strengths.** I wrote out a list to remind myself how strong I am. I even asked my family and friends to add to it.

When I told my mom about it, we came up with the idea to make t-shirts. On the front, we drew our feelings about cancer. On the back, we wrote out the strengths we have to fight cancer. We are going to sell them to raise money for cancer research.

I don't know what will happen in the future, but I'm taking one day at a time. Because of this, I've learned a lot about myself. One thing I know is that I'm stronger and have a lot of support this time.

Feelings can get messy! Here are some examples of positive and negative feelings.



Worried I might die

Relaxed when listening to music

Scared about treatment

Jealous of healthy kids

Mad at the cancer

Happy when friends call to talk

Hopeful I can beat it

Use this canvas to write in your feelings.

negative

positive

Design a t-shirt of your feelings.

**FRONT**

Show your feelings about your illness as a picture or design.

**BACK**

Write words describing how you can deal with your illness.

