

Boston Cured Cancer Club for Laryngectomees
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September/October 2016 Newsletter

Hello Folks!

As we sit on our back-porch in the evening darkness, which quietly falls increasingly earlier giving way to the late summer sounds of the crickets, cicadas and frogs we are reminded that August will be quickly waning. So, it is a good time to start thinking about our upcoming season of the BCCCL!

Our first meeting is scheduled for Sunday, September 11, 2016 in the 7th floor cafeteria at MEEI in Boston. "Meet and Greet" begins at 1:00PM with our formal meeting starting at 1:30PM. If you can't make it in September then do consider joining us at our October 2nd meeting...You may even win a "door prize"! Being with others who truly understand the experience of having a laryngectomy is both affirming and inspirational. Whether new to being a laryngectomee or a true veteran of the lifestyle, those who attend find inspiration and support. Topics range from the very mundane to the merry! So often, a member will bring up a particular issue he/she is dealing with and someone else has some insight which helps to alleviate the concern. Please join us for light refreshments and good conversation. Free validated parking in the MEEI lots is available to attendees.

At our September meeting we will welcome Richard Crum who has been a laryngectomee since 1988 and is a consultant with InHealth Technologies, one of the major companies that manufactures supplies for the laryngectomee. He will share first hand information on medical products and supplies for the laryngectomee as well as his personal story of rehabilitation following his surgery. Mr. Crum who is a career auctioneer has been able to continue in that role since his surgery. He has been well-received in the past as he is very engaging, informative and inspirational. We found his information within the following link very helpful with regard to attaining a secure seal, whether Andre is using hands-free speech or button activated: http://www.inhealth.com/category_s/62.htm. If you do not have Internet access we will be happy to send you a copy of the article. We are definitely looking forward to his presentation.

At our last meeting in May, we welcomed world-renown physician and author, Itzhak Brook, M.D., who is himself a laryngectomee. Dr. Brook's awe inspiring presentation was entitled, "Life Challenges as a Laryngectomee". He spoke from a medical-professional point of view as well as from a personal perspective as one living the challenges of a laryngectomee. A fascinating man who is also a veteran of both the Israeli Army and the United States Navy, Dr. Brook likened a cancer diagnosis and treatment to a war in which one is literally fighting for one's life. He also pointed out that one is not alone in that fight and once the experience is past the individual is left with a greater appreciation for life. Dr. Brook eloquently shared his

experience with his own doctor and spoke of "the power of a hug", whether that hug be physical or emotional, but that essentially it communicated the assurance of steadfast attention and dedication throughout the treatment process and beyond. Copies of Dr. Brook's "The Laryngectomy Guide" were offered free to those in attendance. Members also had the opportunity to purchase signed copies of "My Voice: A Physician's Personal Experience with Throat Cancer," In addition to his books, Dr. Brook's blog (<http://dribrook.blogspot.com>) contains information about head and neck cancer and videos of Dr. Brook's experience as a laryngectomy. Dr. Brook was joined by Dave Barry who is ATOS Medical's Northeast Regional Manager. ATOS is another of the major suppliers addressing the needs of laryngectomees. We were delighted to welcome these guests. Members agreed that this meeting was especially informative, inspirational and enjoyable.

Our schedule for the upcoming series of meetings is as follows: We will meet in September on the Sunday after Labor Day and then on the first Sunday in October, November and December. Due to weather concerns, we will not meet in January or February. We will resume meeting on the first Sunday in March, April and May. Other than a possible summer gathering, we do not meet in June, July and August. Newsletters will go out four times a year.

Speaking from our own personal experience, meeting others who have had a laryngectomy is truly affirming and has tremendously helped many individuals and their loved ones adjust to all the changes necessitated by such a surgery. It takes time to find the "new normal" and while it isn't easy to live as a laryngectomy it is certainly doable. Yes, life changes dramatically but that just makes the joys in life that much sweeter....We gratefully and sincerely say, "Life is good".

Please join us on September 11th and again on October 2nd. We draw strength from one another's presence. We are not only living, but thriving, as cancer survivors and their loved ones.

Enjoy these remaining days of summer.
'Hope to see you in September!
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"Courage does not always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, 'I will try again tomorrow.' " -Mary Anne Radmacher

HOPE = Holding Onto Positive Expectations