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## *Workshops Give Cancer Advice Year Round*

By Oliver Peterson

On Saturday, the Sag Harbor organization Fighting Chance will offer the latest in a series of free workshops for cancer patients and caregivers.

The workshop, "What Cancer Survivors Need to Know About Treatment After-Effects," will be led by guest speaker Dr. Christian Nelson from Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York. Dr. Nelson will inform participants about the aftermath of treatment and the potential side effects and after-effects patients might face. Also, strategies will be offered to help patients manage and cope with fatigue, hot flashes, hormonal shifts, pain, and the mental fog and lethargy sometimes called "chemo brain." The 90-minute program is part of Fighting Chance's "Days of Hope" workshops, which run throughout the year. The workshops are replacing the organiza-

tion's annual "Day of Hope" symposium, which ended abruptly last year. "In the past we've had one long conference," said Heather Matthews, the patient navigator at Fighting Chance. But last year, the keynote speaker bowed out at the last minute, forcing the group to cancel the 2007 Day of Hope. "It was just too costly to start from scratch again," Ms. Matthews said, but the new workshop format is working well.

The most recent workshop had 30 attendees, and Mr. Matthews said she was pleased with that number, though she can accommodate 50, noting that the programs serve the entire East End population.

Saturday's workshop is the second this spring and will be held at the Fighting Chance office in Sag Harbor. Last month, the organization offered a discussion in the Riverhead Library on the legal rights of cancer patients and caregivers, and another is scheduled at the office on Saturday, May 3,

designed to encourage those living with cancer and their loved ones during medical testing and treatments.

Because summer is high season for fund-raising on the East End, Ms. Matthews said the May workshop will likely be the last of the "Days of Hope," but additional workshops and meditations will be held in the coming months and counseling is available year round.

Ms. Matthews said it's possible that Fighting Chance may someday offer the "Day of Hope" symposium again, but "for right now this is working." She said that the single, all-day conference was physically and emotionally overwhelming for some attendees and the more specific subjects in shorter periods are tailored for a smaller population that can see greater benefit.

Fighting Chance was founded as a clearinghouse of cancer care resources and offers counseling and patient navigation services, free of charge, during all stages of the disease for both patients and caregivers. According to the organization, since 2002 it has counseled about 2,000 people, distributed 10,000

guides and receives 5,000 visitors per month to its website, Fighting-Chance.org.

"What Cancer Survivors Need To Know About Treatment After-Effects" is also presented by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

The workshop will be held Saturday, April 5, from 10:30 a.m. to noon at Fighting Chance on 112 Hampton Street in Sag Harbor. Admission is free, but seating is limited and reservations are necessary. For more information, or to make reservations, call (631) 725-4646.

Sag Harbor's Fighting Chance is offering free workshops for cancer patients and caregivers.



*Heather Matthews, Patient Navigator at Fighting Chance*