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# Healing After Childhood Cancer

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## Résumé

Healing after childhood cancer is a process that involves not only the affected child, but the whole family. It is a journey fraught with contradictions, and unexpected challenges. In an autoethnographic narrative which draws on my MA thesis research, I explore the dissonance between my experience with persisting grief and fear, and the medical discourses we encountered during treatment that celebrated our medical successes and urged us to resume our 'normal lives' at the end of treatment.

Biomedical, institutionalized definitions of healing used by our treating physicians and care team would have me believe that my daughter is cured of her cancer, and that our lives have resumed as they were before. My experiences as a mother however, illustrate how cancer still is very much present in our daily lives. Similarly, the ongoing physical and emotional experiences of my daughter may involve some which are attributable to late effects from chemotherapy and other medical interventions.

According to our medical practitioners, healing occurred when they surgically removed her tumour, and could no longer find any detectable presence of cancer cells in her body after the prescribed course of chemotherapy. However, my experience of healing from cancer with my daughter and her two brothers, is rooted as much in the personal and the social as the biomedical, and it is a process which is still unfolding, nearly two years later.

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