



As Voltaire once said... 'Doubt is an uncomfortable condition, but certainty is a ridiculous one.'

While I am sure this message from Françoise-Marie Arouet (his real name. You can see that Voltaire sounds far more appealing! Especially when boomed in full dramatic style.)

was not written with cancer in mind, I can think of no better insight as you are plunged into the uncertainty of the cancer world. A diagnosis comes at you so far outside of your normal life.

Everything is fine and then BAM! You simply cannot believe it. Your head is crammed with doubt and mistrust of your future; for your future.

There is no doubt that after 54 weeks of treatment I feel completely battered. Aggressive treatment for aggressive cancer. But I also acknowledge that for some, that length of treatment would be bliss. No matter what



your treatment plan is, and over what time, you are a changed person. For good. 'Doubt is an uncomfortable position'. It sure is. Doubt and the uncertainty before you have it plagues many people's minds. I used to concern over a varying range of ailments or aches that felt unusual. Is it cancer?

My friends too. I've got this, that, or the other... it must be cancer. It's a fear many people hold. We hear about cancer and may have even experienced its devastation up close through a loved one, but getting it yourself?

Well that doesn't actually happen, does it? But just for good measure, I'll worry myself half to death over it.

As I was sat with my headscarf on last year, my lovely long dark hair gone; I found myself realising a little known or talked about fact. And it's this: All the worry in the world beforehand does not help you one iota once you have it! You can worry so much you make yourself sick. A bag of nerves. A walking pharmacy.



A catalogue of cancer knowledge. Worrying so well and in such earnest. Even so, when you find yourself saying I have cancer, you realise that worry was all a waste of time! All you were doing is weakening your mental state at the time.



It doesn't matter if you worry about it all day, every day. It still does not help you once you have it. Not one single bit. There is nothing in that worry and fear that contributes to either your knowledge of what you are facing or the betterment of it either!

As you move through from one treatment to another, with official medical and holistic back-up, some of your friends talk to you with fear pulsating out of their eyes. Some may even avoid you. Close friends take a nosedive because they can't handle the responsibility of either you or your cancer. It brings it too close to home. Another reason for them to worry about it. 'Doubt certainly is an uncomfortable condition.'

How many connotations are there to this magnificent set of words?

Keeping hold of your mental wellbeing at this point in your life is vital, and yet all the more difficult. As your head is crammed full of one treatment or yet another appointment (I have had well over 100 appointments). This prognosis or that statistic. It is relentless.

... but certainty is a ridiculous one.

It is ridiculous. Nothing is certain in this life. Not really. Apart from our departure from the life we are living, at some point. It's not over till the fat lady sings. I never understood that fat singing lady as a child, but it's fair to say I do now!!

This is what I understood throughout my year of treatment and the surgery before that - Life is for living. For relentless as cancer is, so is life. And while you are

lucky enough to have one you must take it. Without the worry. Nothing is certain. We simply do not know what is around the corner in both a brilliant sense and a not so brilliant sense. 'Certainty is a ridiculous one.'

I have had cancer. It may come back. It may not. Is it certain it will come back or is that a ridiculous one? So, I now have a choice. Do I worry about it returning or do I fly at my life and live? Do I let it rob me of the next few years until it possibly returns, or do I stick my fingers up and rinse every second I've got with love and excitement and gratitude for what I have? I have no doubt or uncomfortable condition around that one!

I have had the privilege of being around friends that I have made in my new cancer world, that have died. I have heard them say that they have maxed out every part of their life since they were diagnosed and don't feel any resentment towards their condition at all. They have chosen to live their lives in utter joy and happiness.

And that is the key. Choosing, that's right, choosing, to live a happier life. Despite it all. Despite cancer and the rest of life that flies at you. Choosing to drop the worry like a concrete weight off your chest. Ripping up the manual and spending time with those you love, in places you love. My deepest wish is that the BC worriers (Before Cancer) and those living with it, through it and surviving it can choose to drop the worry and have a life filled with deep love and adventure and wonder because 'certainty is a ridiculous one'.

Life gives you what you focus on. Where your intentions point. Instead of holding 'doubt' and 'certainty', let them go and no doubt you will certainly live a more affirming life.

Deborah Fielding is a speaker and writer. She is on a mission to support others going through a tough time. Deborah has launched 365 Days of Breast Cancer (www.365daysofbreastcancer.com) with 365 Days of Nutrition (www.365daysofnutrition.com) launching on 1st September. Watch out for more in the 365 series later in the year and 365 Events that are dotted around the country. Details on the websites.