

Susan Beausang cheated cancer, battled an auto-immune disorder, and in these struggles found a niche to help women.

Survivors

May 31, 2012



What personal and professional life experiences are you the most proud of?

In my professional life, I am proud that I was the first woman to work as a trader on the floor of the Philadelphia Stock Exchange. I am also proud that I have been able to turn a major negative (Alopecia areata) into a positive—namely my business, 4women.com—with a mission to help other women and girls rise above their own hair loss. In my personal life, I am proud that I have overcome serious health obstacles, having had a double prophylactic mastectomy and oophorectomy upon learning I carry the BRCA2 mutation, AND for having undergone a Whipple upon learning I had a precancerous cyst in my pancreas. After watching my grandmother, aunt, mother, and sisters all battle breast cancer (as well as my father's battle with pancreatic cancer) I am proud that I have been as proactive as possible in cheating cancer.

If you were invited to speak at Davos, what societal, economic, political, or environmental issues would you address?

I would wish to address the fact that the World Economic Forum is globalization for and envisioned by the elite of the world, and that as such, we are undermining the future of humanity and the planet—unless and until we re-envision a globalization that does not privilege the rights of investors and the financial industry over the rest of humanity.

Tell us about 3 extraordinary women who have had a profound impact on your life, and why.

Anita Hill - for standing her ground and being true to herself. Eleanor Roosevelt - for being the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate and a President's wife who didn't stand in his presidential shadows. My Mother - for doing a fabulous job raising 9 children in the 1950s, when women did not have careers. Talented, smart, and a devoted mother, she put her life on hold until her children were raised. She has been admirable in the face of cancer, as well as losing a daughter to an accident and another to mental health problems. Upon losing my father, she embraced life with positivity, generosity and passion. Living with lymphoma at age 90, she continues to amaze me with her energy, spunk, and drive.



What would you attempt to do if you knew you could not fail?

I would swim some great distance so as to overcome my fear of swimming.

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Tags

Aung San Suu Kyi, body image, breast cancer, cancer, education, Eleanor

List 2 people (men or women, past or present) whom you would love to exchange ideas with, and why.

Jackson Pollack - because he redefined modern art in the US. I would love to discuss the thought process and the confidence he must have possessed in order to deviate from representative art to abstract expression. Some thought he was great, but he was also misunderstood. I would love to explore that conflict of emotion that he must have possessed and explore his bouts of self-doubt, which must have plagued him throughout his career, so I could learn how he maintained belief in himself and his art form. Princess Diana - as a commoner who married into the Royal Family, I would love to discuss the difficulties of early married life—and a more or less arranged marriage. I would love to know how, in retrospect, she felt about her decisions, how she overcame her unhappy marriage, and how she gained the confidence to forge onward with her own beliefs. And amidst all that, I'd love to ask her how she developed her own style and felt about being a style icon.

What would a woman's life be like if society did not focus on appearances as the ultimate gauge of a woman?

Imagine a world where Madison Avenue images were not what everyone aspired to mirror, a world where what was inside was valued as much or more than what was seen on the outside. If as young girls we had never learned that we are expected to attract attention with our looks, that it is our physical attributes that most earn women esteem, or that achievement is written in our wardrobe, our eternally youthful bodies, and our flawless appearance, we would be free to focus our creativity and our minds on defining "success" for ourselves.

Susan Beausang is President of 4Women.com and designer of the twice patented beabeau® head scarf, a fashionable head scarf designed to meet the unique needs of women and girls experiencing hair loss. 4Women.com's mission is to help women and girls cope with the emotional upheaval of medical hair loss with dignity and confidence and to advocate for greater understanding of the emotional impacts of medical hair loss among medical professionals and the public. Susan lost her hair quite suddenly in 2002 due to the autoimmune disease Alopecia Universalis. She channeled her fear and depression into a positive and proactive goal of ensuring that she, and other women and girls with medical hair loss, have a fashionable accessory that would empower them to step back out into the world with dignity and confidence, feeling beautiful. Susan comes from three generations of breast cancer survivors and has the BRCA2 genetic mutation that significantly increases her odds of developing breast and/or ovarian cancer. A "previvor," Susan is cancer-free, but very much empathizes with women who lose their hair during chemotherapy. Susan strives to be a source of strength and hope for women and girls with medical hair loss.



Check out her website at: www.4women.com and connect with her on [Linked In](#).



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