



Speaker Profile: Belinda Hawkins (BMedSc), P.S.H. Therapist

P.S.H. Therapist Belinda Hawkins is the developer and founder of the Embracing Chemo programme.

Embracing Chemo is a programme designed to help people overcome the fear and anxiety that often accompanies a cancer diagnosis and the prospect of treatment, while reducing the side effects of chemotherapy.

And if you think it's just another cancer support programme, you would be mistaken.

Embracing Chemo is specifically designed to counter the psychological mechanisms that have been demonstrated to exacerbate the side effects of chemotherapy. Factors such as expectation can be inadvertently set up through therapist-patient interactions.

Belinda's brainchild, Embracing Chemo, arose out of her own experience of breast cancer. With a fascination for how the mind can influence our physical bodies spanning back more than 20 years, Belinda has first-hand experience both as a patient and a therapist in how these psychological mechanisms work within each and every one of us and what we can do to make the whole experience easier.

When Belinda is not helping people one on one, she loves to speak with other health professionals to help them understand that the healing benefits we can offer our clients can be so much greater than simply those delivered via the modality we use.

Piqued your interest? You can read more about Belinda's work here:

<http://belindahawkins.com.au>

<http://embracingchemo.com.au>

The Emotional Brain: Implications for Healing – Present, Past and Future

Healing the emotional aspects of cancer has to date been given reasonably short shrift in the area of cancer treatment despite volumes of research demonstrating the connection between psychological wellbeing and improved survival.

Emotional trauma has not only been implicated in reduced immune function but also contributes to the post-traumatic stress symptoms that may continue unresolved even after the completion of cancer treatment. Recent research suggests that chronic stress enhances the spread of cancer.

Belinda's presentation will focus on the role of the emotional brain, how it differs from the conscious mind and why it is so important that we elevate our treatment of emotional traumas to the same level as physical interventions in the cancer care environment. The importance of the therapist-patient intervention is also considered, as once we understand the vulnerability of a person in shock or fear, this is an area all therapists can leverage to assist people in their recovery and reduction of side effects.

