

GIVING BACK

Healing Light in the Tunnel of Despair

Phoenix Advocate Empowers Women to Take Responsibility for Their Health

BY LEONA CHRISTENSEN

In all her years of community volunteer work, motherhood and marriage, Phoenix resident Michelle Robson never dreamed that she would become a women's health care advocate. Having battled her own health ordeal, she knew that someone had to stand up for women's health care and speak up for women who are too besieged by the fog of illness and confusion to speak for themselves. So she asked herself, "Why not me?"

Three years ago, Robson underwent a complete hysterectomy, which culminated in a devastating health experience. For the first time in her life, the vibrant, active woman struggled to get out of bed in the morning. She sought out the top physicians in the country and explored the Internet for science-based information that would explain her illness or offer solutions. There was nothing to be found anywhere.

"It was a matter of survival," says Robson. "Everywhere I looked, I couldn't find answers to my health questions. It seemed there was no one who could help me. I had to educate myself about health and act as my own advocate. Out of necessity, I became a health care advocate so that no other woman would suffer like me."

Robson cites a glaring lack of clinical trials for females, making it nearly impossible to find gender-specific health information and leading to distress and anxiety among women. This month, Robson is test-launching EmpowHer.com, a social media networking Web site for women's health. EmpowHer.com provides the best in health information and resources and gives women a place to share their personal health ordeals. The new site, she says, is a place where women can find the answers that elude them, and connect with other



women who understand what they are going through.

"It's truth-to-truth discussions about issues [that] women just don't know where to turn to talk about," Robson says. "It's like MySpace for women's health care."

Presently, the site focuses on what Robson calls the "big six." These topics are the initial six areas that Robson wants to drill down on and provide as much information about and resources for as possible. These health concerns include menopause, osteoporosis, heart disease, postpartum depression, premenstrual dysphoric disorder, and thyroid disorders. The Web site content will continue to add topics, with the goal of addressing every topic relating specifically to women's health.

"It's time for women take responsibility for their health," Robson says. "We have been passive for far too long and allowed others to think for us and to make decisions about our health. Before, women did not have the information they needed. Now, we do."

Think of it as Women's Health Care 101. EmpowHer.com provides objective information and shares facts that women can share with their physicians. Additionally, EmpowHer.com arms women with the tools they need to act as advocates for their own and their loved ones' health.

"EmpowHer.com takes a girlfriend-to-girlfriend approach to health care," says Robson, who personally answers each e-mail and correspondence. "You may think you are alone and no one understands your suffering. All you need to do is log on to EmpowHer.com to find that, yes, there are answers to your questions and [there is] someone who understands your plight because she is going through it, too." ❧

For more information, visit EmpowHer.com.

"[Women] have been passive for far too long and allowed others to think for us and to make decisions about our health. Before, women did not have the information they needed. Now, we do."



Thinking of Buying or Selling?
Call The
Ana & Tracy Team
(623) 587-1670

With over 20 Years Experience, Ana Woods & Tracy Capote are Committed to Excellent Service, Elite Marketing & 110% Dedication.

Visit www.anatracyteam.com
Specializing In Luxury Homes on 1+ Acre.



Visit the Team at our NEW LOCATION!
(Carefree Highway & 27th Drive)

34225 N. 27th Drive, Bldg 5, Suite #138, Phoenix AZ 85085
Ana's Cell: 602.565.5644 Tracy's Cell: 602.499.2374




PREMIER IMAGE
CONTRACTING
YOUR HOME. YOUR WAY.

- Home Additions
- Custom Cabinetry
- Crown Molding
- Interior Trim



- Built-Ins
- Painting
- Flooring
- Doors & More!

Complete Home Remodeling
(623) 218-3216
bonded • insured • roc#211068