

## TITANS OF TEAL



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Why did I become involved in OC awareness? Hmmmm..... Initially, I learned about OC through my ex (who I remained friends with after we parted ways).

He was helping to organise an escort motorcycle ride to bring an entertainer into Texas from Louisiana.

It then morphed into an OC awareness ride at the behest of the bike rally organiser.

He asked that I attend a meeting of the We Fight Like A Girl "gang" so I agreed.

The reason I even did it was out of curiosity.

His mother had died from OC and for him to have some passion about that got me to the meeting. I didn't know a damned thing about OC, but I learned a lot about it from the

[www.wefightlikeagirl.com](http://www.wefightlikeagirl.com) website.

It kind of creeped me out because I had undergone a complete hysterectomy a couple of years prior. While the doc was in there hacking out all the affected parts, he did find 2 ovarian cysts amongst other intruders. However, his passion for this group was not what held me there.

Once I met the founder, Ruth Helton, I just fell in love with her and her cause.

The group had just held a large fund-raiser a few weeks prior. I had found out about it but was out of town at the time and did not attend that event. At the meeting I met the group, including her co-founder Theda Foster. Founding **We Fight Like A Girl** was a labor of love, I recognised that right away.

My mother had endured a bout with cancer when I was a child, right after my brother was born.

Seems she had some sort of cervical cancer but I do not really know much about her illness. All I can recall is my father carrying Mom into the house and laying her in bed after she got home from the hospital. Well actually, Daddy took her to my grandmother's house to be looked after.

We children were shoed out of the house and told to "stay out of the way" so we hung out with

Grandpa until the coast was clear. Anyhow I digress.... My role in the organisation seemed to

evolve into my naturally BIG mouth being put to work helping do PR, donations etc. I was not

really all that effective in gaining donations, but I knew people and networked that way. I am kind

of a shutterbug and it worked out that I was able to document what was happening through

photography. I joined in with some other groups that were already well established and set up

informational booths at their events.

There is a gal pal of mine, Tierney Lyons of [www.SimplyHenna.net](http://www.SimplyHenna.net) who is a gifted artist in body

painting and henna tattoos. At my invitation, she threw her efforts into the mix by offering her

services to attendees at this child abuse awareness event (we had put up a booth). Tierney is a

survivor of Hodgkin's disease. The henna and body painting created enough interest that more

people stopped by our booth than might otherwise stop. To me that made a lot of sense to put her

to work and we all enjoyed ourselves, maybe we were a little crazed due to the extreme heat. We

actually did that a couple of times and I feel like we were pretty successful. Most people are not

naturally drawn to an informational booth unless there is something that can spark some interest

or at least some curiosity.

We found that many of our visitors were pretty unaware of what OC really was. That was when

we offered up small items that contained declarations of signs & symptoms for them to read later

on. As we talked to more people and asked them questions, they would reveal that some

significant person in their life had had OC or something similar. You could see the "light bulb" go

off in their heads.

That was progress IMHO and I felt that we had accomplished our goal of waking people up. The

teal ribbon was less known compared to the famous pink ribbon. I mean everyone loves boobies,

but come on...if you think about it, where do babies come from? Minding one's health is vital of

course. But the ovaries, now think deep here..... if your ovaries are on the fritz, you won't be

having any children. Boobs of course are designed to feed them, but in our current times we can

keep the kids fed in other ways (though breastfeeding is always best in a perfect world). My

brother says about breasts "even when they are bad they are pretty good" what a chauvinist pig!

Men!!

They make for good entertainment though. It has occurred to me a lot of people in the past were

squeamish about discussing breast cancer and other female reproductive issues. The pink ribbon

put breasts in the mainstream of everyday language and now it is commonplace to say "breast"

and not see someone cringe. So it IS all about awareness Baby!

Getting the word out about **TEAL**, what it means and why the public should care will take some time. Please do not misunderstand, all cancer awareness projects are important. There are male cancers also that are under-represented. I have had men lament to me about how they wished that all the money lavished on Viagra, Ed research & development would have been spent on cancer research. Everyone likes to have a good time behind closed doors, I got that part LOL. But it is really true and begs the question of how much further along we would have been if the research dollars had been redirected to cancer detection and finding a cure.

I guess the question becomes "Do you want to get laid or do you want to live?" Then we get all into a quality of life issue. Getting back to why I am still involved with OC... I would say it would be love, compassion, empathy and the hope that one day we will at least have a test out there to detect OC early so ladies and those that love them will have a second chance. Time ticks quickly for those who have OC.

My advice to anyone and everyone would be firstly to open your eyes to what is going on around you, listen to your bodies and do not ignore subtle changes. I could list the symptoms here but this is not a science project. If people want to find out more, for Pete's sake click on the links Deb posted for medical info. I am not a doctor. All I am doing is clueing folks in on why I care & hope others will care too. Secondly, regardless of our circumstance we can choose to be as positive as possible about what happens in our lives and use it to our advantage. That is what Ruth did when she developed OC. She told me several times that because of OC she has met many more people because she has a message, a cause. In a backwards way I almost want to say "thanks OC" because in spite of the hardships it brought her, Ruth became a stronger warrior than she already was. It kind of gave her a purpose to help others. That is just my personal observation. I will wager there are many days when she does not really feel that strong or want to have to be strong, but she is hanging in there fighting and thus far I feel that she is winning the battle. It all boils down to loving what you do and doing what you love.

Lisa

CYA!

