This page was exported from - Almost-Daily Diary & Shop News
Export date: Fri Oct 31 19:22:50 2014 / +0000 GMT

Livestrong, Cancer Research & Lance- it's not all bad

Livestrong. Lance's legacy, something that was supposed to be bigger than Lance and do great things for people with cancer. Of course, it doesn't take much cynicism at all to view it instead as a front, an alter-ego that Lance set up, to deflect criticism and make him untouchable against allegations of doping. And further, that Lance himself mis-used foundation resources, as he used a private jet to roam around the world to further the Livestrong mission.

People have gone after the foundation's finances in a big way. As they have anything involved with Lance. For the most part, it appears presently to operate with normal overhead; far as I know there are no missing piles of cash. But what people have found is the truth. That the Livestrong foundation contributed virtually nothing to cancer research.

Ohmygosh. That sounds terrible. A cancer foundation that doesn't fund cancer research! But truth isn't that simple, and despite what you think about Lance (and you're possibly certifiably-something if you're thinking nice things about Lance), the Livestrong foundation has done, and continues to do, great work, inÂ a completely different manner than most foundations, via cancer "awareness." TheÂ word "awareness" is tossed aside dismissively, as in, why do we need to be "aware" of cancer? Why does Livestrong think we aren't "aware" enough already? And so they look to the lack of research funding as evidence of a corrupt organization that exists only for Lance's own purposes.

And maybe that used to be the case. I can't say; it's possible that there's this small decent part of Lance that truly was changed by cancer, and that his creation of Livestrong was out of benevolence, not malevolence. But today, I don't think that matters. Today, we need to judge the foundation fairly on its own merits, what it's done, and what it continues to do.

And what it's done has been to take cancer and make it something we can talk about. Remove the shame (and yes, seriously, people with diseases often feel shamed, like they're less of a person than those healthy, less worthy even) and give people someone they can talk to. If you have cancer, you are possibly frightened and withdrawn and your doctors have you running down a path of their choosing, and you either just go along or you do nothing. The loss of control is tangible. But you pick up the phone and call Livestrong and there's somebody at the other end who can talk with you about it, can inform you of your options because yes, you have more options than just do this particular treatment or die.

There's great value in that. People's lives are literally saved when they feel better about their situation and feel comfortable making decisions instead of just going along, feeling badly, and thinking they've been dealt a sentence without options.

I fear I'm burying the lead here; that the important stuff is coming too late and maybe I don't need a preamble where I deal with Lance. But I think I need to address all the naysayers who believe the worst and will never have anything to do with Livestrong, because Lance has tainted it past redemption. I hope that is not the case, because I've seen, first hand, Livestrong change people's lives. Not the people out there riding a bike because they wanted to be like Lance, but cancer patients among my customers, who were surprised that you could just pick up the phone and talk to a real live person who cared, and who had relevant information about treatments and the best doctors in your area.

I don't want to see Livestrong fail because of Lance. I wish there was an organization like it for people with epilepsy, like my son. I hope that Lance & Livestrong find a way to somehow cause Livestrong to be elevated by Lance's fall. I can't figure out how that could happen, but it should. Those who criticize Livestrong for its lack of contributions to research aren't getting the point. Anybody can toss money around. Livestrong is giving people better lives.

Go on hating Lance. The guy deserves it for what he did to people like Emma & Betsy. The way he protected his lies was far worse than any doping he did. But give Livestrong a chance. --Mike--

This page was exported from - Almost-Daily Diary & Shop News
Export date: Fri Oct 31 19:22:50 2014 / +0000 GMT