

## Transcript: Communicating

**Thomas P. Sellers, NCCS President and CEO**

[Tom Sellers]

Cancer... survivor.

For nearly one and a half million people in the United States who will be diagnosed with cancer this year, that first word is most frightening. To the twelve million who have already heard that word applied to us, the second word is ever so important. Survivor... a word that represents the strength, courage, and determination to face your worst fears and to move forward.

[Tom Sellers]

Hello, my name is Tom Sellers and I am a cancer survivor. In 1999 I was diagnosed with and treated for prostate cancer. Twenty years before my own cancer, I was a caregiver for my mother who died of lung cancer and I cared for my father as he battled brain cancer just a little while ago. My experiences living with, through, and beyond my own cancer and the issues my parents dealt with taught me many things. Probably the most important among them is that each of us can do something to feel in control during a very frightening time. Even when facing a diagnosis of cancer, we can, with the right tools, take charge of making informed decisions about how we will live our lives.

[Tom Sellers]

In my role as President and CEO of the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship, I have had the good fortune to meet many extraordinary survivors, who, every day, help others find the tools that will help them survive. I have met men and women who have taken their experiences with cancer and turned them into positive actions that help others in their communities deal with this difficult diagnosis. They write, speak, and testify about their lives with cancer. By doing so, they allow people, who may be living alone with the diagnosis, learn how others are surviving. Some of the more impassioned survivors have gone on to become advocates and activists at the national level. I am especially fortunate to bring you some of these tools that will assist you as you learn about cancer survivorship. Through an educational grant, I am pleased and proud to present The Cancer Survival Toolbox<sup>®</sup>.

[Tom Sellers]

For most of us, cancer is a crisis -- perhaps the most serious crisis we have ever faced. Like me, you were probably scared, confused, and overwhelmed. I was in shock. My whole world was suddenly turned upside down. Like you, I had vitally important decisions to make about my treatment. And, I didn't know where to start or what questions to ask in order to get the best information -- a critical first step after a diagnosis of cancer.

[Tom Sellers]

There is good news -- you can do something. Through the numerous resources available to people with cancer today, you can learn how to take charge in this important decision-making stage of your diagnosis. We hope this series of programs can assist you in becoming an expert about your own survivorship, to learn what to expect medically, how to work with the health-care system, and deal with cancer-related employment, insurance, and personal issues. Millions of us are living proof that you can develop the skills you need to get through this difficult time in your life.