

## *Let's Start a Movement!*

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I lost a good friend this past fall to colorectal cancer; he would have turned 53 in December. His journey began in July of 2013 when he returned from a family vacation not feeling well at all (he was in pain). He went to his doctor and after a great deal of testing he was diagnosed with stage IV colorectal cancer. I soon learned that he had never had a colonoscopy and I suspect that he may have ignored many signals that his body had sent to him along the way that something was not quite right. Oversights that had he taken action on much sooner may have changed his fate. He had everything in life that one could ask for, a successful business, a wonderful wife and daughter, family, friends, clients and co-workers that truly loved him. Now he is gone.

I have thought a great deal about him over the past 18 months and I continue to come to the same conclusion. Had he been more proactive about his own health and wellbeing he would still be with us. After he passed I started to think to myself, what could I have done to prevent this? Did I take the initiative to ask him, or tell him when he turned 50 that he needed to be sure to schedule and have a colonoscopy? It would have been easy for me to share with him that I had been through it and the procedure itself was a non-event. What if he was hearing a similar message from other friends, family members, co-workers, from his doctor, on TV, or if messaging about cancer awareness and prevention had started when he was very young, perhaps as early as grade school? Would it have made a difference? I can easily rationalize that it would have! The fact is that I did not and I should have. Our society has simply not put a high enough priority on the topic for it to become a part of our culture; we failed him and countless others. We can't fix what has happened in the past but we can make an impact on the future!

My 2015 New Year Resolution is to be certain that I do my part to spread the word that many cancers (particularly colorectal cancer) are in fact preventable. There have been tremendous advances made in cancer treatment but none can make as significant an impact on our population as a whole as cancer awareness, education and the importance of prevention. For reasons that are confounding to me, our society has yet to embrace the importance of cancer awareness education and prevention in a way that is similar to other highly successful public health campaigns targeting smoking, drinking and driving, seatbelts, drugs, littering, etc. History has proven that these types of campaigns work extremely well and we need to push for cancer awareness and prevention to become a part of the dialogue.

Let's face it cancer is very big business. It is incredibly expensive and if not identified and treated in its earliest stages, the ultimate price can be paid, as was the case with my friend. As employers we have a vested interest in the health and productivity of our workers and their family members. Please help by embracing the importance of promoting cancer awareness, education and prevention. The workplace is one of many great places to start.

## ***Let's Turn Cancer Prevention into a Movement!***

Much of the groundwork has already been laid; Click Here: [Reducing Your Risk of Cancer](#)

This information is brought to us by the non-profit organization, 15-40 Connection. At 15-40 Connection they are empowering individuals with the knowledge that will save and improve lives through early cancer detection. I am convinced that they are on the right track with their message; the foundation for "The Cancer Prevention Movement" is already in place. Making it a success will take the efforts of many. It can be done.

**Do you smoke at work, in a restaurant, at all? Do you wear a seatbelt? Do you think before you drink and drive? Do you litter?** Think about how far all of these things have come as a result of creating awareness and spreading the word.

***We need your help! Let's Turn Cancer Prevention into a Movement!*** I am confident in saying that if successful it will likely change the lives of many, perhaps even someone that you know and care about.

Thank you for your consideration. If you are interested in learning more about promoting the importance of cancer awareness and prevention feel free to reach out to me directly.

From all of us at Sullivan Benefits we wish you and yours a Healthy and Prosperous 2015!!