

# Diversity research paper

[Health & Medicine](#), [Cancer](#)



Diversity Board Written Assignment Living with Terminal Cancer Texas State University- San Marcos COMM 1310: Fundamentals of Human Communication Daphane Mitlo Living with Terminal Cancer I've always been the active type and kept my body in shape throughout my youth. Healthy eating habits and an active lifestyle allowed me to feel confident for my future quality of life as an older woman. I never thought being diagnosed with stage IV breast cancer would be the determining factor of how the last days of my life would be. Stage IV, is the later or advanced stage, refers to breast cancer that has already spread to other parts of the body when it is first diagnosed (Bellenir 2009). This means I am no longer getting treated because a cure is no longer possible in my case. Although being diagnosed with cancer has cut my life short, my outlook and attitude towards life has never been more positive and fulfilling. A typical day for me is spent depending on how I'm feeling. If I am feeling well I will go for a walk either around the neighborhood or at a nearby lake. If not, I will spend the day resting at home and spend time with my family and friends. (Question 2). I no longer have a job because my health does not permit it. (Question 3). I have lost most of my hair and I am quite thin due to the cancer treatments I have undergone (Balducci 2003). In my trying to stay active I find myself out in the public eye frequently. Most people around me display other-oriented communication. Because cancer is a subject that people either know someone who suffered from it, or suffered from it themselves, it enables people to display empathy in it's highest form. Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in this country (Bellenir 2009). It is a subject that people think about and are conscious of it being a possibility in their own

future. See others display empathy and other-oriented communication is a big part of my everyday life. The most difficult part of my day is dealing with those who are not mindful of how they communicate verbally, and nonverbally with me. (Question 4). There are those who stare without shame, as if they were trying to grasp if I am really there or not. There are also those who will avert their eyes at all cost, as if looking at me would entail that they themselves would spontaneously combust. The staring is not only difficult for me, but also for my family and friends who are also in my company. (Question 5). It makes them feel uncomfortable, and like they are also being judged. No one likes to be stared at, or viewed as “different” in a negative way. People treat me differently because they think I am incapable of doing things for myself. (Question 5). Fatigue is one of the most prevalent symptoms I experience (Balducci 2003). Despite this symptom, there are many things I can and do on my own. I am not helpless and do not like to be treated as such. There are many people who are interested in how I am feeling, and display appropriate listening/asking questions. People ask me questions about my diagnosis and how I found out that I had it. (Question 6). I enjoy answering these questions because it raises awareness and educates those who are ignorant on the subject. If educating and talking to people about breast cancer makes even one person get a mammogram on a regular schedule, than I feel like I have done my job. My favorite things to do is spend time with others. (Question 7). Family and friends become a very close support system during this time in a person’s life. I also go to support group meetings for other women with breast cancer (Balducci 2003). These support groups allow me to relate with other older women who are going

through the same thing that I am. This sense of community raises morale for myself, and improves the quality of life for myself and other women. Despite the decline in function, and life roles that comes along with being diagnosed with terminal cancer, I feel a sense of wholeness and well being (Balducci 2003). I live my life in a clearer mindset, allowing myself to appreciate the little things in life and quit stressing about the little things. My family and I are more open minded to diversity in others because of the prejudice we have experienced throughout my battle with cancer. Because of my newfound value for life, I appreciate and value those who are different in this world. All life is valuable even if it is different from your own.

References  
Bellenir, Karen. (2009). Breast Cancer Sourcebook. Detroit, Mi: Omnigraphics. Retrieved from Balducci, Janine. (2003). Older Cancer Patient: A Guide for Nurses and Related Professionals. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.