

# KILLING cancer

## My promise to Sarah

**My journey to launch the KILLING Cancer charity started when I couldn't find a treatment to destroy a tumour in my daughter's arm. That was in 2005. None of the 'conventional' options had worked, and those that might would be so effective for Louise that they would leave her severely disabled. Combined this with the extreme pain she was going through daily, to her the only logical answer was amputation. As her Dad, I had to do something.**

I stumbled upon PDT – Photodynamic Therapy – via a friend who explained that PDT works with a combination of drug and light that can almost instantly destroy their target by temporarily stopping the oxygen supply to the tumour. Without oxygen, the cells - including cancer cells - die.

Where PDT really scores is that once the target cells have been destroyed, the oxygen is switched back on, and within days the body creates new, healthy cells that will complete the patient's recovery.

'Discovering' PDT was only one aspect of my journey. On finding that the **National Medical Laser Centre** at University College Hospital in London is one of the global leaders in PDT research, I started to appreciate the potential of PDT. It could, 'potentially', successfully treat many of the most devastating cancers and medical conditions.

But PDT doesn't because of a dire lack of funding. Who, commercially, wants to invest in a treatment that has the power to kill cancer with ONE treatment? How much self-interest is being protected?

I was THERE when **Louise** had the drug injected. I was THERE when the light probes activated the drug deep in her arm. I was THERE when Louise came round from her anaesthetic when she gently squeezed her arm. I HEARD her voice grow in intensity as she repeated the same phrase: "It's gone. Daddy, it's gone."

I was THERE when the MRI scan confirmed the news. And I have also been THERE when supposedly eminent people in the medical world have dismissed PDT and told me that we FAKED the scans and that the treatment failed.

I have listened when those same people have told me that anecdotal evidence about the *apparent* success of PDT is not good enough for them to support PDT research.

It's good enough for people like **Don Moulden** from Hertfordshire who is alive three years after having PDT for his lung cancer. The NHS had told him that nothing else could be done for him and that he had less than a year to live.

It's good enough for Don and the many hundreds of other cancer patients that this small charity has already helped.

There are two people – other than Louise – who have driven me and the campaign forward when challenges seemed impossibly difficult.

The first was **Sarah**, an 18-year old girl from London who called me in November 2004. She was so frail, so in pain, and knew that her time was very limited. But she was so completely relaxed about her impending death. She joked with me that she knew that God had run out of miracles for her. I had to explain how we didn't have the funds to develop a PDT treatment that would have saved her life.

"Perhaps you'll have one - one day - for someone else," she told me, squeezing my hand.

Before she caught her taxi home, Sarah gave me four American 'quarters'. She had kept them from her last holiday in Florida where she'd met **Snow White** at Disney. Her dream was to have a white wedding.

Sarah wished me all the luck in the world. She told me to invest the money wisely, and make sure I didn't let her down. I made a promise that day. That's why I have to keep pushing when doors have been shut to me. Three days before she died, Sarah rang me to remind me of my pledge.

The other motivation is my **Dad** and his death. He died in September 2003, aged 88, weeks after six hours in drastic surgery to remove a cancer in his neck, plus cancers on his head and in his mouth that left him unable to eat, speak or drink properly. It was a devastating end to a life. Any life.

While talking to the team that had treated Louise at the National Medical Laser Centre, I asked if my Dad could have had PDT. I broke down in tears when I heard that PDT is 'approved by NICE - the treatment regulatory agency - for all three of Dad's cancer killers. He probably didn't need ANY of the surgery - PDT could perhaps have saved him.

So that's why I had to get this charity on the map, and the money flowing in to fund continued research and drug developments so that more people will have a chance and an alternative to chemotherapy, radiotherapy and surgery - and all the 'joys' that these three bring.

Over the last six years I have become used to people not returning calls, and others saying stupid things like: "I don't have time for cancer."

Sarah didn't have time for cancer, either. Nor did my Dad. But cancer found time for them.

Thanks to the incredible people that are supporting KILLING Cancer, we are changing the life chances of more people like Don, Louise and Sarah. If you would like to meet and talk to a PDT cancer survivor, give me a call or drop me a line. With your help, we can achieve something extraordinary.

**David Longman, Director,  
Killing Cancer**

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*PDT is used and approved for skin cancer, head and neck cancers, Barrett's oesophagus and oesophageal cancer. But with funds and lobbying, the targets include early lung cancer, prostate cancer, pancreatic cancer, brain tumours, arterial disease and so many more life-threatening conditions. With the help of our supporters, including Sir David Frost OBE, Chris Tarrant, Phillip Schofield, Sir Alex Ferguson and numerous MPs, we are beginning to make a real difference.*

