

The Great Adventure

 by: Liz Shaw (Liz, dressed for hiking, enters with a walking stick in hand and wearing a backpack.) Hi! My name is Elizabeth Andra Shaw and I'm on a great adventure — a journey called Life, a journey to answer the question, "Who am I?" The first 44 years of my life, I lived in a place called Hatville. It was an exciting place. Everyone was very busy because they were wearing many different hats. In Hatville, hats are very popular. People collect hats, and some hats are so rare that they confer great status on their owners. There is competition and envy surrounding high status hats. I picked up a few hats myself while I lived in Hatville, including the Daughter Hat, the Sister Hat, the Physical Therapist Hat, the Medical Editor Hat, and the Wife Hat. In fact (Liz shrugs off her backpack and extracts a hat) here is my favorite, the Phoenix Mercury Fan Hat! (Liz excitedly models the hat for the audience.) (Liz turns suddenly serious and leans on her walking stick with both hands.) There came a day, however, when I received word that I could no longer stay in Hatville. I was told I would need to go to the neighboring country. Well, I didn't want to go! I had heard about that country, its rough terrain, the pain and suffering that were commonplace amongst its residents. But I was given no choice, and so I set off from Hatville to Cancer Land. I was interested to learn when I arrived that the residents of Cancer Land also collect hats, but there is no status attached to them. Hats are merely a way of keeping the sun off a tender bald head. There was less hustle and bustle there, but just as much activity. Instead of chasing status, the residents of Cancer Land kept very busy counting their blessings. A gorgeous sunset that God painted just for me. The whirr of a dragonfly passing by. The softness of a kitty's belly. As I became busy counting my blessings, the terrain didn't seem quite so rough and the suffering didn't seem quite as unbearable as I had heard it would be. I learned to be content in Cancer Land by living in the moment and receiving all of its blessings. I also met my inner child, and here is one of her favorite things. (Liz extracts a stuffed animal from the backpack.) This is Gideon, my chemokitty. He went with me to treatment because my other cats weren't allowed. Yes, Gideon and I did a lot of tough stuff together. After about 2 years, I was healthy enough to leave Cancer Land. I could have gone back to Hatville, but by this time, I had no desire to do so. I ventured instead into the unknown territory beyond Cancer Land, and I found myself in a vast open area with choices open to me for miles around. Infinite choices. But there was no road, no path, no direction. I didn't know what to do! I scrambled around, trying to find a path and found myself going in circles. Finally I found a wise woman who said to me, "It's time to stop DOing and to simply BE." It was at that moment that I realized that this part of the journey would mean going deep inside, into the core of my Self, to discover the treasure within. Once grasped, the treasure would enlighten my choices and the path would appear. (Liz lays down the hat and the stick, and takes a deep, cleansing breath.) Let me introduce my core Beingness to you tonight. I am Liz.

I am courage and hope.

I am laughter and joy.

I am sorrow and tears.

I am pain and forgiveness.

I am compassion and empathy.

I am responsibility and integrity.

I am a child and I am an adult.

I am freedom and respect.

I am paradox.

I am The Beloved.

I am a song that God sings in the shower every morning and then can't get off His mind all day long. I... am... Liz.

About the Author

Liz Shaw has survived everything life has thrown at her and has been called "The Energizer Bunny" and a Timex watch (Takes a lickin' and keeps on tickin'). She now devotes her life to coaching others who are stuck or in a downward spiral and need a guide. She can be contacted via her web site at <http://www.wingstosoaroverstorms.com/>