

Love Your Nuts – in a Nutshell

October 2018

Introduction

Love Your Nuts (LYN) is a registered Section 18A, non-profit testicular cancer awareness campaign based in South Africa.

The goal is to raise awareness of testicular cancer by educating communities about the 'rarely spoken about' cancer that often remains undetected in young adults due to the diverse society in South Africa, where cultural taboos, stigmas and lack of knowledge about the subject is rife.

In his thirties, Torsten Koehler, the founder of LYN Foundation, was diagnosed with testicular cancer in 1995 ironically whilst educating young teenagers about sex education at a school where he was employed as a teacher.

His journey of survival started by openly confronting his thoughts and emotions, relating the reactions of his friends, family and not least, his students, who gave him enormous help and hope. With their encouragement, the German version of his book "Love your nuts" was published in Germany in 2004 and thereafter in English in 2011.

The motivation to start this foundation was inspired by a former student who thanked him for making him aware during his awareness sessions at the school they attended:

"Because you made us aware I went to the doctor in time. I've got testicular cancer too. I'm 16 and you saved my life".

Torsten is now sharing his story through the platform of the Love Your Nuts Foundation emphasising how everybody is valuable the way they are. How fantesticle life can be and therefore has a passion for this campaign.

Our Purpose

The goal of Love Your Nuts is to raise awareness of (testicular) cancer by educating communities about the "rarely spoken about" cancer that often remains undetected in young adults due to our diverse society in South Africa, where cultural taboos, stigmas and a lack of knowledge about the subject is widespread.

What we believe

We believe that no men would die of testicular cancer if they knew about this young man's cancer and were aware of how to prevent it.

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Boys/men die for the following 2 reasons:

- During puberty the body changes. Boys feel these lumps but think it is part of growing up. So they think it will go away again. If they knew that it could be cancer their lives could have been saved!
- Men feel the lumps but find it too embarrassing to go to the doctor. If they knew that it could be cancer their lives could have been saved.

If we can bring awareness to all boys/men in an early stage in their lives they will be saved. Knowledge and early detection is the best weapon against cancer!

This can be changed through LYN awareness where men which know their bodies can have a better outcome and have a chance of correct diagnosis and hence treatment. Testicular cancer is one of the most common cancers in males aged 15-40, which are young teenagers and their fathers (*Reference: CANSA – Men’s Health*).

LYN will focus on establishing a continuous awareness campaign through engaging with young males (and females) at school, where the 15-year old teenager and his (her) father of 35 years of age is actively engaged and share this knowledge and potential support for their families to overcome myths of cancer.

In traditional homes boys in puberty spend in general most of the time in the company of their mothers, while their fathers are at work; hence the importance that girls learn about this young man’s cancer too.

Our impact on society

The aim is to change men’s (lady’s) behaviour through education and awareness that it becomes a habit for men (ladies) to look after their health starting with monthly testicular (breast) cancer self-examination. This can lead to becoming more health conscious and adapting a healthy lifestyle in general – which often lacks because of cultural taboos, stigmas and knowledge.

The foundation’s projects include:

Education

- Cancer school programme to all South African schools for Gr 3 to 12
The major goals throughout the programme are:
 - What can I do/or where can I find help if I’m diagnosed with cancer?
 - How can I support a family member or friend that is diagnosed with cancer?
 - What can I do in my community to educate and raise awareness?
- Educational stage play “Nuts about you!” for high schools. Aldo Brincat, an actor and playwrighter was inspired by Torsten’s book and wrote this humorous play.
- Talks at schools, corporates, sport clubs
- Donating the book “Love your Nuts – Testicular cancer touched my life” to the school library

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Awareness

- Events: Comrades, Two Oceans Marathon, Cape Town Cycle Tour, Amashova Cycle Race and other
 - Info stands
 - Water points
 - Runners/cyclists/swimmers in branded LYN gear
- LYN own runs & mountain biking events.
 - Sponsored annual trail runs/mountain bike races
 - Vale 2 View Cycle Race – 5 day/720km cycling trip Johannesburg to Durban
- Nuts & Bolts Rally – a 4 days trip with old cars into the Karoo. The cars must be 30 years or older and shouldn't have cost more than R 15 000. This means some of them will break down. The rally simulates a cancer journey: it's a tough road, it goes up and down and if you break down you need buddy support to get you going again
- Merchandise for sale: Shirts (running & cycling), Speedos, Caps, Underwear, Bike Nuts, Book

Support

- Emotional support for men diagnosed with testicular cancer
- Building a network of survivors nationwide/worldwide

How can LYN promote your products/service?

Here are a few ideas and options for discussion – please feel free to contact us if you have any other ideas from your side where you see a possible partnership:

LYN Goodie bag – a bag that can save a child's life – this is our main drive

Content of the branded bag:

- Your advertising (eg. flyer, competition, samples, etc)
- LYN cap
- LYN stress ball – the students have to give this stress ball to their dads. A humorous way to reach the community through their connection to a school.
- Information on cancer for men and women.

One goodie bag is likely to reach more than 7 people due to the household situation in South Africa. This means we educate about cancer and raise awareness for less than R 21/child.

One Goodie bag costs R 150 and the impact could be a saved life.

Up to 500 bags = R 150/bag; 1 000 bags = R 140/bag; 5 000 bags = R 120/bag; 10 000 bags = R 100/bag – *we gladly discuss the price structure.*

As this is an ongoing initiative endless amounts of bags are needed for distribution.

LYN trail run/mountain bike events once month

Why a testicular cancer awareness event every month?

- The running/cycling event is a monthly reminder for the self-examination which should be done once a month.

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- The majority of participants at these events are in the age group 15 to 40. The age where testicular cancer is the most common.

The events will be timed events because runners/cyclists prefer that. It will be a family day which includes play area for the children, etc.

Sponsor's exposure includes branding options at start/finish/prize giving area, exposure on social media, possible radio coverage and goodie bag/medals for runners/cyclists.

The Battle of the Balls

This campaign is in the development phase.

Just a little bit of background. On my cancer birthday (23 August 1995 – the day to doctor told me that I will survive but need treatment) every year I invite friends for dinner and I always serve meatBALLS and butterNUT soup. Nuts are ingredients in my meatball recipe.

The idea is to have a meat/veggieBALLS competition as a social event, teambuilding day, yearend function, etc. Rules for the competition could be that your product must be an ingredient or part of the competition. *This will be easier to discuss at a meeting.*

Branded running and cycling gear

Running and cycling events are great places to raise awareness because of the amount of participants and exposure on social media. A Facebook post with LYN branded runners saved a life already. Read the story on our website under the success stories.

To be part of that impact on saving lives there are different options for your company:

- Co-branded gear that LYN can distribute to runners/cyclist and encourage them to raise funds.
- Co-branded team sponsored by your company.

LYN educational App

If you are in the IT world and like to make a difference in the young generation's lives please contact us. An app needs to be developed that teaches students about health and early detection in a humorous and interactive way.

Website and social media

Website: www.love-your-nuts.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/loveyournuts

Twitter: www.twitter.com/LoveYourNuts

Instagram: www.instagram.com/loveyournuts

References

The founder of Love Your Nuts has to date been actively involved in the following initiatives:

- Guest speaker at Testicular Cancer World Summit, Medical University of Colorado, Denver, USA – 2017
- Initial conceptual discussions with American documentary film company for founder's cancer journey (produced for Discovery Channel & National Geographic)

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- Educational stage play “Nuts about you!” performed the first time in Cape Town - 2017
- Guest speaker at the Men's Health Seminar of SORSA (Society of Radiographers of South Africa)
- Guest speaker at the University of Western Cape – medical students and nurses
- Interviews at TV stations: News 24, SABC 3 Morning Expresso Show, ED190 (DSTV) Sexual Health Talk Show, Cape Town TV
- Interviews at radio stations: KFM, 5FM, Radio 702, PowerFM, Smile90.4FM, CapeTalk, JacarandaFM, Bokradio, BushRadio, RadioWave, Namibian Broadcasting Cooperation, Hitradio Namibia
- Articles published: Cancer Knowledge Network – Canada, Cancer Treatment Website – USA, Cape Times, Cancer Buddy Magazine, German Medical Aid Magazine, The Citizen, Atlantic Sun, ICON (Independent Cancer Oncology Network) Magazine and more
- Testicular Cancer Trek (an international awareness hike) up Mount Snowdon, Wales - 2013
- Annual LYN events:
 - a. Nuts & Bolts Rally,
 - b. Caps & Undies Run,
 - c. Marathon runners in branded LYN,
 - d. Cyclists riding from Johannesburg to Durban
- Awareness talks at numerous schools in Namibia and SA
- CANSA – promoting Shavathon in Cape Town
- Cancer buddies – active member
- Namibian Cancer Association – Guest speaker at annual Movember function, Windhoek, Namibia
- Namibian Cancer Association – Guest speaker at Men’s Health Breakfast, Swakopmund, Namibia
- Guest speaker at the annual Daredevil Run organised nationwide
- Official ambassador for the 2017 Daredevil Run
- Guest speaker at Sanlam Cancer Challenge Golf Tournament in Cape Town
- Guest speaker at CIPLA head office, PicknPay head office, Cape Gate Oncology Centre
- Using Social Media (active on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram) with links to international testicular cancer awareness groups

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