

# The self-perception of Long-term cancer survivors

— Focusing on their cancer experiences and their  
relationships with others —

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine long-term cancer survivor's self-perception acquired through their cancer experiences and their relationships with others. Participants were eight Japanese women who had operations after diagnosis of cancer. The researcher collected data using semi-structured interviews and conducted a qualitative analysis, focusing on their self-perception. The results were as follows: 1) while they feel the fear of the cancer, they live positively without yielding the cancer. Moreover they are conscious of self-growth or enlightenment; 2) they realize the bond with others and are supported by people. These results were discussed with the studies of adaptation process to cancer among adulthood cancer survivors conducted in Japan. However, the results suggested that some of their self-perceptions conflicted within themselves. One occurred between "fears" and "I will not yield and will live positively", and another occurred between "the bond with others" and "Others cannot understand my cancer experiences.", "I do not want to worry others." Long-term cancer survivors live positively without yielding their distress to the cancer and overcome their own perception that the pain which are not understood by others or do not want to worry others.