

TOGETHER AS ONE

A speech by Ms Tamaryn Green

When I say the word “TB”, what comes to mind? Do you get afraid? Do you think that it may be the end? Do you hit a sudden panic and check your shortage of breathe?

Well, I am here today to tell you that your reaction should not be one of despair or fear. Good Afternoon all, my name is Tamaryn Green and I am a Tuberculosis survivor. In the fight to make a Tuberculosis free world a reality, I have had to face certain truths and learn more regarding the facts about the disease.

After noticing a lump in my neck I knew that something was wrong and I needed to go to the doctor. I went to my private GP who performed a number of tests. Following this I had a surgical operation to excise and biopsy this lump to find out that I had Pulmonary TB. Throughout my various ups and downs with treatment, re-diagnosis and trying to hide my status, I suffered alone at the hands of the stigma and shame that is attached to the disease. Much like myself, many people have to endure the trauma of being alone during this time due to the alienation, judgement and misconceptions that society imposes on all those that are infected.

Suffering at the hands of the fear of being ostracised could have been avoided had I knew that an open recovery process with TB and the cure for TB is very possible. Earlier treatment could have been reached if I had the courage to open up about infection and because of that experience I have chosen to fly my flag high in support of awareness not only around Tuberculosis but also revealing your status to not only protect those around you but also yourself against the fears of keeping quiet about the disease due to shame.. Educating those around you and, by extension, the world at large is the greatest gift one can give to anyone that has been affected by Tuberculosis.

Throughout my personal journey of healing and emotional recovery from my experience, I have found confidence in knowing that I am not alone in the trauma of being infected with TB. Being a survivor of this disease has made me stronger as a person and helped me build up the courage to face other challenges that I have faced with my head held high.

Let's break the stigma, hand in hand, side by side to defeat this disease and see a brighter tomorrow.

Thank you for taking the time to allow me to share my story and I hope that your story will not only inspire others but also allow other to know that we are all in this fight together, as one.