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A Love Letter

My Y Story, My Cancer Journey

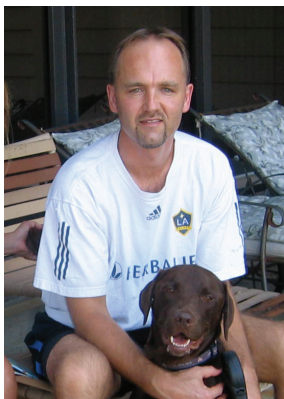
By Michael Roberts

The frightening grip of cancer uncovers strengths and weaknesses within the human spirit. For Ethan Clarke, a very personal battle with the disease reveals hidden demons that had been stifling his sexual identity and his connections with others. These demons had kept him from enjoying health and happiness and from accepting the healing powers of change.

Ethan, however, had some formidable allies to face down these foes: Ethan's close friend, Sophie, the camaraderie found at the local Y, the **LIVESTRONG** at the YMCA program, the idea of one day finding love, and the human will to survive. When Ethan is persuaded to mail a letter to a fellow survivor, a sporting hero from the past, and faces the possibility of meeting this hero, he realizes he must find the strength to fight the disease and the strength to embrace hope and self-confidence.

A Love Letter describes one man's fight against cancer, the many levels of support and community found in the YMCA, and the power of friendship.

A Love Letter is dedicated to all cancer survivors, with a special thanks to the inspirational participants in our **LIVESTRONG** at the YMCA program. Love and respect to all the dedicated YMCA staff leading this effort around the country. Thanks to Marc Woods and Nick Teague for being good friends, the staff of the **LIVESTRONG** Foundation for all of their support, Carol Lazarus for her editing skills, Robert Pruett and BrandyLane Publishers, and of course to my wife, Mary. Without her, I would not be in a position to do what I love to do.



About the Author

Mike Roberts was a semi-pro soccer player and part-time coach in England until he discovered the mission of the YMCA. He began his new career in London, encouraging homeless young men and women to become active and exercise before he moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan to develop a youth sports and camp program. After spending a year with the Y in Zimbabwe, he joined the YMCA of the Suncoast in Clearwater, Florida, where he became a project manager, helping to develop **LIVESTRONG** at the YMCA, an exercise program for cancer survivors. Mike is now an Executive Director in Petersburg, Virginia and helps to spread **LIVESTRONG** at the YMCA to new Y's around the country.

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