

My name is Joseph M. Stephenson. I was born December 7, 1981 in Onslow County Hospital in Jacksonville to Thomas S. Stephenson and Marcia D. Mazzochette Stephenson. My father was stationed at Camp Lejeune at the time of my birth. We were housed at Tarawa Terrace (I don't know if it was 1 or 2, but I do know we lived at both) with my two older sisters, my older brother, and my mom and dad when I was born.

My sisters seem to have no medical conditions as a result of the contamination. My brother has mental illnesses including, but not limited to, depression, substance abuse, anger management, the list goes on. These may or may not be related to contamination. No known medical conditions for him.

In 1999 my mom and I were diagnosed with cancer. Mine was first. I was diagnosed with Testicular Cancer at the age of 17. With surgery and radiation I have beaten my cancer. It has been 8 years now. I am cured, for now. I have always had the notion that I have not seen the end of my cancer days and if I am ever diagnosed again, I have no intention of fighting it.

My mom was diagnosed shortly after I was. She was not so lucky. She had Breast Cancer and lots of it. She began her battle with chemotherapy which almost killed her. The chemo did not reduce the rate of which her cancer developed. She then had a radical dual mastectomy followed by more chemo and some radiation. The doctors believe they removed all of the malignant cells, but she never believed she was cured.

Like my brother, I have several mental conditions. None have been diagnosed by any psychiatrist in the past 15 years. I was clinically depressed and institutionalized in the fifth grade. I now suffer from anxiety, depression, anger management and alcoholism just to mention a few.

My mother has suffered from all of the above mentioned mental conditions as well.

That is all I can say for now. I am going to seek help for my mental health issues. I am interested in group therapy and hope to find some local sessions that I may attend.