



# Pink Wheels keep on turning



**E**nglish philosopher Thomas Hobbes used to say that “Life is nasty, brutish and short.” My favourite Greek philosopher, Aristotle, disagreed. He believed that we should all strive to live a “good and happy life.”

We all agree that life has a beginning, middle and an end. We also agree that every life is different, and special. The time we spend on earth is as varied as our experience of life.

When we are young, we rarely think about the limits of our

time on earth. We just live day by day. As we start maturing (I am not there yet!) our first morbid thoughts start hitting home.

My grandparents and my mother have passed away. A few of my classmates and friends are no longer alive. Some have survived difficult illnesses, others have not. I am thankful for every day that I live.

This spring I was once again hit by the unpredictability of life. Elina, a neighbour and fellow sport enthusiast, was diagnosed with incurable cancer. She had first conquered breast cancer, but was later hit by leukaemia. Doctors told her she only has a few weeks to live.

Elina is not the type of person who gives up easily. She decided to live the rest of her life, as she always has, to the fullest.

Wanting to raise

awareness of breast cancer and stem cell registers, she created the Team Pink Wheels movement. She leads by example and wants to show that every one of us can make a difference. And boy, she has!

By now we, the Pink Wheelers, are in the hundreds. We are active in social media, raise money for charity and wear funny pink stuff in every little sports event we participate in. Yes, yes, I admit that us “dandy” boys enjoy wearing pink....

**THE WONDERFUL THING** with Elina is that she has motivated all of us on at least three counts. First, she shows us what

resilience and a positive attitude to life means.

She refuses to become a victim and is thankful for the life she has lived.

Second, she gets us middle-aged moaners off the couch and on to the

exercise trail. Last year she participated in the Finnish Championships of time trial cycling, which was impressive as she had just recovered from breast cancer.

Third, she will leave a legacy. The Pink Wheels movement she has created will save lives. It will increase awareness of cancer and raise money for research. The world will be a better place because of Elina, even after she has left us.

For these reasons, and many others, I want to thank Elina for everything that she has done for us. I wish all of us could be as good and happy as Elina. And finally, she has made me realise that Aristotle must have worn pink! ●

*For more information and donations, visit [Oma.syopasaatio.fi](http://Oma.syopasaatio.fi)*

---

ALEXANDER STUBB is Finland's Minister of European Affairs and Foreign Trade and a member of Team Pink Wheels.

---