

I'M TOO YOUNG FOR THIS!

"If one dream should fall and break into a thousand pieces, never be afraid to pick one of those pieces up and begin again."

- Flavia Weedn

He describes himself as a precocious, angry young man. You may not agree with all he has to say or his tone of voice, but Matthew Zachary is on to something.

Matthew was studying music in college with the ambition to be a Hollywood composer when his encounter with brain cancer forced a career change and left him feeling jaded and angry.

There were no support groups, no internet resources. The word *survivorship* didn't exist within the oncology community. After surgery and treatments, the doctors told him, "You're done. Go home. Get on with your life."

Matthew didn't know what he was going to do. He held in the anger for a very long time, eventually migrating into the advertising industry. And then Matthew found himself thrust back into the world of cancer when he produced a CD and was asked to share his story with other young adult cancer survivors.

In due course, Matthew established a non-profit organization whose site was ranked a TIME Magazine Top 50 Website for 2007 – the *I'm Too Young For This!* Cancer Foundation. It is a one-stop site for sharing resources, raising awareness and connecting Gen X and Gen Y cancer survivors.

Disenfranchised and angry

Matthew first started playing piano at age eleven. He was a senior in college in 1995 when he began losing motor coordination in his left hand and had to give up his musical ambitions.

Matthew was misdiagnosed for six months. And then a massive tumor—medulloblastoma, an ominous name for a pediatric brain tumor that generally presents itself in children under the age of six—was detected in his cerebellum. Had it been identified even a week later, it could have caused irreparable damage or taken his life. Located in the cerebellum, it was expected to result in permanent ...