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Pulling on a favorite pair of boots, sipping a special tea as a daily ritual, or curling up in premium sheets can have a powerful effect on shaping a cancer survivor's identity. Professor Vanessa Patrick, Ph.D., MBA, investigated this phenomenon in "Mastering Survivorship: How Brands Facilitate the Transformation to Heroic Survivor," published in the *Journal of Business Research*. The findings are critical for women – and the businesses and organizations that serve them. In previous research, women were found to be more likely than men to deny feelings associated with disappointment and fear, and less likely than men to absorb cultural cues for traditionally masculine warrior traits such as strength, bravery, and courage.

"While cancer survival for men is portrayed as a test of pre-existing character, for women it is a significant identity transformation," the authors reported. But when called upon to create and sustain a survivor identity in the face of serious illness, female consumers use brands to help their transformation, the study shows.

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