The Story Behind the AnaOno Partnership: Q&A with a Meijer Apparel Expert

We're launching a first-of-its-kind partnership between AnaOno, a woman-owned intimate apparel brand for individuals recovering from chest surgery, and our own Tranquil & True Brand. In celebration, we spoke to Annette Repasch, our Group Vice President of Softlines, to learn more about the partnership and why it's so important. Annette also bravely shared her story to help increase understanding of the benefits of this new line and how it can help breast cancer survivors and anyone who's undergone chest surgery.

Annette Repasch, Group Vice President of Softlines, Meijer

How did the partnership between AnaOno and Tranquil & True form?

I met Dana, founder of AnaOno, at a Women in Retail Leadership conference back in 2022. We immediately bonded over our shared experiences, both as breast cancer survivors and fashion enthusiasts, working with brands created to make women feel comfortable and beautiful. When she told me about her company, AnaOno, and the story behind its creation, I was so impressed. I knew right then that we wanted to work with her and find a way to help increase access to the garments they were making.

Can you share your story about your cancer journey, from diagnosis to being a survivor?

I lost my mother to Stage 4 breast cancer at the youthful age of 52, and I was diagnosed in 2013 with Stage 1 breast cancer. Since my mastectomy later that year, I have struggled physically due to my body rejecting the reconstruction. I have had five surgeries over the past 11 years to try to relieve and reduce the constant pain. My last surgery was in February of this year, and now I'm just waiting to see if it was a success, or if I'll have to continue with more surgeries. Having surgery mastectomy bras back in 2013 would have been a big help with the pain journey. At the time, I tried to find non-wire bras, but mostly they didn't fit, and caused additional pain.

How was your recovery like and how is AnaOno helping you in your recovery process?

The good news is that my cancer is in remission, but when your body cannot adjust to a radical mastectomy, the only option is more surgeries. Having comfortable bras that fit after surgery when I started this process 11 years ago would have helped my pain tremendously. I am currently wearing the AnaOno bras I purchased at Meijer and have been very pleased with the comfort and styles.

Why is this a good partnership for Meijer?

We want women to be able to shop at Meijer, and not only find everything they need for their families, but for themselves too. Cancer patients go through so much, both physically and mentally. It also takes a toll on their families, so anything we can do to make these products more accessible where people are shopping every day is a step in the right direction. Partnering AnaOno with Tranquil & True ensures we can continue to deliver on our long-standing commitment to making sure everyone feels confident and included when shopping our stores.

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Dana Donofree, Founder and CEO, AnaOno