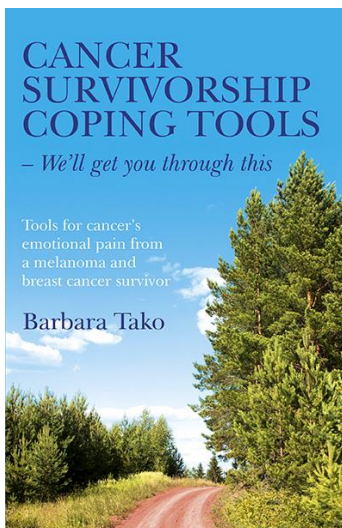


**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

BOOK REVIEWS

Read what people affected by cancer think about...



Cancer survivorship coping tools – we'll get you through this. Tools for cancer's emotional pain from a melanoma and breast cancer survivor (2015)

Tako B.

Winchester: Ayni Books, 2015.

104pp. ISBN 9781782797753.

Average star rating 3.7 (out of 5)

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A useful book for anyone touched by cancer of any type, as the “tools” or methods of coping are relevant to all. It is useful for the whole cancer journey, from diagnosis through treatment and importantly afterwards, when often there is more doubt and questioning than when you are actively involved in treatment.

It is divided into three main areas, but the tools and methods are adaptable to whichever stage of your journey you are at; the author makes this very clear and that you may want to skip parts that are not relevant to your own journey. This is a very reassuring approach; she describes her own journey but stresses that you are an individual and she is trying to help you, not tell you what to do or how to be.

It is very easy to follow and written in a friendly style. It is a small book and easy to pick up and put down. You can read it from cover to cover as I did first time round, and then refer to individual chapters or sections, it’s very accessible.

I like the straightforward way it’s written and the focus on the reader. It is an excellent book for emotional support and helps the reader explore their feelings and emotions; it never tries to tell the reader that they are wrong, just offers some friendly narrative, check lists and ideas for helping you cope – simple and effective.

Breast cancer survivor (3+ years) (56-65) (July 2015)

It took me a while to read this book, because it brought back a lot of memories. I appreciated the way the author wrote it; I think it comes from the heart. I have copied down the paragraph about her friend’s cancer scare (p. 9), which I think will be helpful for many people to read and maybe understand “feelings”. There are many meaningful quotes and many “tools”, “suggestions” and thoughts that are helpful. I could comment on nearly every page in the book, but that would make a long review.

My only concern is about when a cancer patient should read this, perhaps in stages. It will probably depend on the patient as we all react differently.

Living with breast cancer (66-75) (May 2015)

This book is written by a breast cancer and melanoma survivor, but it is relevant for any type of cancer. It is aimed at helping people deal with their emotions through diagnosis; treatment; and recovery. It talks through various tools for each stage, starting with how you might be feeling then ideas to try to help you deal with these feelings. Someone just diagnosed will get the most benefit from it but even though I finished treatment six months ago, I still found it really interesting and helpful. It will be less helpful for those with a terminal diagnosis, but there are still things they might find helpful. It may also be useful for friends or relatives who want ideas on how to help support the patient, but it is probably most helpful to just buy them this book!

I found it very easy to understand and it will be accessible for most people. There are many short segments, which make it easy to dip in and more manageable if you are feeling tired or struggling to focus. It's a small, light book, easy to carry around in a small bag. The price (£19.99) is high, but it seems to be available for £9.99 online.

It is full of practical tips and suggestions for dealing with the emotional impact of cancer. The author is very careful to remind people that they should only do the things they find helpful. In places, her writing reflects her Christian faith, but the book is suitable for those of any faith or none. I like how she quotes from the journal she kept during treatment, but re-examines her feelings based on how she was feeling when writing the book. She also says what she wished she had known but didn't. It is American, so a few things (e.g. building your own team) don't really work the same here, but this is a minor complaint as it's a tiny part of the book.

I really enjoyed this book. It is very easy (and quick) to read. I would recommend it generally as I think a lot of people would find it helpful when they are going through difficult times. There is a lot packed into it.

Recovering from inflammatory breast cancer (36-45) (May 2015)

This book covers the cancer journey from diagnosis so it would be useful at any time. It is very easy to read, partly because it is short but mostly because the author has a very honest and straightforward way of writing. Although she is American and this influences her approach to medical treatment, she writes from the heart about her reaction to her diagnosis and the impact it has had on her life and family.

I really like her writing style. She says things like "I hate cancer" and "I have lost certainty"; so true, you lose certainty and control. She allows you to be selfish. By this I mean that she verbalises how difficult it can be to deal with other people's feelings and reactions, especially when people say "I know how you feel". She also identifies the huge shock of the words "you have cancer"; your life is changed forever, you have to find a new normal. I like how she suggests ideas that may be helpful.

This book could be very helpful to cancer patients and their families and carers and therefore I would highly recommend it. Don't be put off by her references to her faith. She acknowledges that it may not work for everyone but her tips and personal experiences should strike a chord with cancer patients and their loved ones.

Breast cancer patient (56-65) (October 2015)



This book would be of most use to someone recently diagnosed, to keep hold of going forward. It is very easy to understand, particularly as a survivor myself, although the order was not too logical for me; everyone's journey is different, plus it was a little repetitive. However, that said, it was like reading a conversation with someone and conversation can jump about and things can be said over and over.

I like the cover, although, at certain times of cancer treatment it is difficult to picture the sun ever shining again.

Breast cancer survivor, three years down the road (46-55) (June 2015)

This could be read at any stage of the cancer journey although it is perhaps of most benefit when first diagnosed. It is also useful for those who have recovered from treatment for cancer but still worry and for carers or friends because it gives good advice on how to approach the topic with the patient.

The language is pitched well for someone just diagnosed. There are not too many technical terms so a glossary is not necessary. The author uses positive language throughout and gives the reader permission to use the book as it best suits them. The good, logical order means you can dip in and out. It is a quick read and a good size to keep with you if you want reassurance through your journey. The cover and typeface are clear and the bullet-point lists are a good source of support and reference when dipping in and out as emotions fluctuate.

The author also uses other people's experiences, which help realise a broad range of thoughts and emotions. She is realistic in her explanations and outlook, in particular when she states that it is not a sprint, it's a marathon. There is scant reference to melanoma; however, the emotions are similar regardless of cancer.

It is an American book with reference, quite rightly, to American support services. Certain aspects of treatment may not apply here. For example, we don't appear to be able to 'assemble the best team'; we have the team we are assigned to. I don't think we have psychotherapists but we do have other sources of emotional support, such as Macmillan nurses. This might put off someone who is looking for something more UK based. However, the tools can be used by anyone of any nationality or culture.

From the outset, this book lays the foundation of realisation that cancer is an individual journey along which others can offer support. The author empathetically describes her own feelings of shock and isolation when first diagnosed with breast cancer and then melanoma. The three sections make it a resource that can be used at different stages of the journey and the tools encourage the patient and supporters to formulate their own coping tools. I like the ability of the author to empathise rather than sympathise. Most readers will recognise many aspects of their own emotions in their journey with cancer.

Post breast cancer treatment (56-65) (April 2015)

This book addresses the emotional aspects of having cancer and provides coping tools for various stages, i.e. at diagnosis, during active treatment and after active treatment has finished. It discusses the feelings that the person may be experiencing and ways of managing these. Although it is written for people who are experiencing cancer themselves, it might also be useful for partners, carers, family and friends and health professionals, to help them understand how someone may be feeling. They might also be able to pass on some of the suggested coping tools to the patient.

The author has based the book on her own experience of having (two types) of cancer and follows this chronologically; this makes it flow well and easy for the reader to read only about the stage they are at themselves if they wish. Her style is conversational and she does not use any technical jargon so the book is easy to follow and understand. There are no factual inaccuracies that I am aware of, though the author is American so a few things are not applicable to most people here (e.g. researching and choosing one's own team of professionals to provide treatment).

It is a slim volume and the paper is of poor quality, considering the price of the book. The cover is bright and positive, with a picture of a country road (possibly representing the cancer "journey"). There are no other illustrations and some line drawings would have been useful to break up the text and provide interest.

It is a very practical book, containing many ideas to help people cope with the emotional aspects of having cancer, e.g. anxiety, feeling down, feeling overwhelmed, worrying about the possibility of recurrence. Many different tools are included – the author suggests that the reader can pick and choose the tools that they feel will be relevant to them. The author writes about her own emotional experiences and thus is able to reassure readers that whatever they are feeling is normal and understandable and that things can and will improve. She has had two completely unrelated types of cancer so it is particularly useful for people who share this experience, as I do.

The author is a committed Christian, so there are references to her beliefs throughout the book. Although she suggests that people who do not share her beliefs can ignore these references some people may find them off-putting. She also frequently uses the term "cancer journey". Although I recognise that some people do use this term to describe their experience I also know that others find it unhelpful and irritating.

This book offers useful support to help patients cope with the myriad of emotions that a cancer diagnosis, its treatment and their aftermath can bring. Most people will be able to find something to help them. Thinking back to when I had my own primary cancers, I would have found it helpful to have a book like this. The initial shock of the diagnosis, the grinding months of treatment and the longer-term effects are all covered and the author is extremely open about her own difficulties and the times she struggled emotionally. She has written the book she would have liked to have had herself to help her get through her cancer. It is wonderful that she has been able to use her experiences in this way to help other people. I have rated it as four stars because, although the content is good, the book is poorly presented and expensive.

Cancer patient (metastatic breast cancer) (56-65) (February 2016)

This is written as a practical self-help guide based on the author's experience of what helped her cope with her cancer at various stages from diagnosis, through active treatment, to beyond. The cover implies it is specifically relevant to people affected by melanoma and/or breast cancer but it is applicable to any type of cancer. It is also useful for carers/friends/health professionals to understand the feelings and emotions someone is going through to inform how they might effectively provide support.

The order seems logical and the short sections and comprehensive contents enable the reader to use the book as a reference at different points in their journey. It is easy to understand and the journal extracts and quotes help to convey the points being made. In a few instances, the text seems repetitive, e.g. the lists on a similar theme, but this does not detract from an informative read and may be intentional to reflect subtle differences in how the author was feeling at different stages in her journey. The author's experience is based in America and therefore includes references to nuances in American healthcare provision; for example, it talks about selecting your medical team, which is probably not so relevant for patients in the UK.

I like the practical suggestions of things the author found helpful, in particular the various lists and the focus on living with a cancer diagnosis after active treatment; I haven't seen many other publications that acknowledge the challenges this brings. I like how she describes the challenges of living in limbo – 'waiting for the cancer NOT to come back'. She also addresses the need to face the risk of recurrence – often played down by people in a support role in an effort to promote positivity.

The author acknowledges that everyone's cancer journey is unique and does not advocate that her suggestions will be appropriate for everyone. I quickly felt an affinity with her, when early on she conveys the magnitude of a cancer diagnosis by describing her feelings of cancer as 'relentless, continuous, all-encompassing and overpowering' and how it brings a loss of certainty. I was a little apprehensive of the multiple faith references early on, but these do not dominate the rest of the book.

On pages 10-11, there is a great summary of what she would want as a cancer patient in a list format and on page 16 there is a list of things that bother her about her cancer; this is obviously personal but many of the sentiments will resonate with other patients and may therefore be invaluable for carers and friends in understanding how they can provide effective support. I like the suggestion to try to articulate the positives from a cancer journey – reflecting on what has been gleaned from the experience so as not to consider it a period of 'lost time'.

Whilst the sentiment of the author is positive in terms of offering practical steps that can be taken to help process a patient's experience, at times the tone feels a little effusive e.g. 'we'll get you through this'.

Living with ovarian cancer (36-45) (April 2015)

This book is easy to understand. I like the ideas and tools to help you cope with all aspects of cancer and how to survive.

Breast cancer patient in remission (36-45) (May 2015)

This matter-of-fact book covers the bad and good side of cancer survivorship and how to cope. It is perhaps best used after treatment. I like that it is factual and pulls no punches. It's easy to understand and it makes sense but it may be a little difficult for some to follow depending on their prior knowledge of cancer.

A very good read; it's a book that can elate as well as deflate, everyone copes with survivorship in different ways and may not feel that this book is useful. At the same time, I am sure that others will find it incredibly useful and a book to refer to. It's a good read and has good coping strategies; people finding it difficult to cope, could find this a very useful resource that could help them to find ways to cope

Family members had cancer (56-65) (June 2015)

This book is ideal for anyone who is going through their own cancer journey, but it is equally valid for family, friends and health care workers. It would be a great tool to have after diagnosis when you are ready to learn how to start coping with such life-changing news. There are strategies to help you take control of your coping mechanisms to get you through your journey, emotionally, socially, and physically.

The author's approach is methodical, explaining different coping tools and discussing the different stages from diagnosis, through treatment to survivorship. It is very easy to understand and follow. She does not really use technical words as the book is based on her cancer journey. Abbreviated organisational names are referenced and web pages are listed at the back under 'website resources', complete with a brief explanation of what the website offers. The author also includes a bibliography to assist readers with additional reading material if required.

Overall, the book is quite appealing. The size is handy – it fits easily into a small handbag – and the vivid colour of the cover is eye catching. The picture can be interpreted as a long road that you must travel when you are diagnosed; although we don't know where it will lead us, the blue skies ahead are an analogy. The pages are off white and the font is a good size and easy to read. Bold sub-headings help identify separate sections. There are no photographs. The tone is friendly and matter of fact and the author ensures you understand that these are her own thoughts.

I like the fact that the author has been open about what she went through, her thoughts and feelings and desire to help others to cope with their illness in a positive manner. Although I do not have any issues with the author's religious comments, they may be off putting to readers that do not share her religious views. It is American and some of the terminology is therefore American; for example, she refers to 'dollars' and 'The American Cancer Society'. However, although this may make it a more engaging read for an American audience, it is not a problem, as the overall content of the book is very much appropriate and would be useful.

This could be a very useful resource; I have personal experience of using some of the coping strategies discussed and there are some valid points that could benefit cancer patients and help them to cope with their own journey in a more positive way.

Breast cancer survivor (46-55) (August 2015)

This competent, previously published, author has written a personal account of her early breast cancer, now in remission with a second, unrelated cancer that may also have been successfully treated. Most personal accounts by people with cancer are sad stories that end shortly before the death of the author. The unusual and useful point about this book is that it is, so far, a happy story. It gives those with 'early cancer' permission to feel psychologically upset instead of reproaching themselves for making an unnecessary fuss.

It is easy to understand and there are no technical words. It is a thin paperback with no illustrations. The binding seems strong, the typeface is well chosen and the paper quality good. The author's previous book was a 'self-help' manual and this book is written in that style, a style that I dislike. She is American and although the book is published in the UK, the American English is evident but not difficult.

For me, the virtue of this book is the permission the author gives, very firmly, for someone with a cancer diagnosis to feel thoroughly upset and the advice to take steps to return to a mental state of equanimity. My dislikes are most likely a personal idiosyncrasy; I just don't like the self-help type of book.

It is easy for cancer patient to feel very upset despite their good prognosis and treatment given 'with curative intent'. This book might help with the process of self recovery. I definitely recommend it to those for whom the permission aspect might seem useful and maybe to others who might like the self-help tone of the book. There are plenty of staged suggestions as to how one can regain a better frame of mind.

Living with breast cancer (Over 75) (May 2015)

This is an easy to read book with practical tips to help with the emotional side-effects of cancer, from diagnosis to life after you are told you are 'cancer free'. If you have cancer, it will make you feel like you are not alone. If you don't, it will give you an insight into what it is like.

The contents are in a great order – just as you experience it. There is a little overlap in some chapters but there is in life. It is very easy to understand – the author writes as though she is talking to a friend and doesn't baffle you with jargon. The language is very appropriate; it's almost an 'idiot's guide' to how you may feel. The author is American so some details are not relevant to the British health care system.

I don't think I would pick this book up off the shelf but I am pleased I read it. There are no pictures; the author gives her email address and asks the reader to contact her but it would be nice to see a picture of her. The length is good, not overwhelming, and there are options along the way to skip the bits that don't interest you.

If I had read this book when I was going through cancer my personality would have said not for me but I can see now helpful it would be to others. Overall, it's a really good book that makes you feel not so alone. I may recommend it but it will depend on personality; definitely for some but definitely not for others.

Bowel and breast cancer survivor (36-45) (October 2015)

This is most relevant for someone with cancer, but will give health professionals or carers an insight into what patients may be feeling and thinking. It is useful from initial diagnosis on, for anyone struggling to come to terms with diagnosis and treatment.

The chapters follow the cancer pathway – diagnosis, treatment, life afterwards – and it is easy to understand. The author is American and this is obvious in the language, aspects of treatment and the references. The cover is obvious and corny. This, together with the paper, makes it look self-published or from an alternative publisher. The author has a strong faith (as evidenced by a dedication to God on the first page) and as someone who does not, I found this and other references to religion off putting. She does say that she hopes she is not alienating readers by doing this. I also do not like the letters to self and to my body, and the poetry!

This book gives a different perspective from some I have read by going into detail about the feelings and worries that patients may experience. It is very heartfelt and written from personal experience – it shows – and therefore much better than some books by physicians or psychologists. Her lists of worries and concerns echoed my experience. I especially like the section about moving on after treatment. I could empathise with her experience and recognised myself when she talks about the need to put away all the “physical paraphernalia from a cancer journey”.

It is a good book, written from personal experience and with lots of useful advice. However, I didn't really like it. It handles thoughts and feelings well, but I found some of the reflections too much. It is not for everyone; some may find its tone and style (Americanisms and religious references) not for them. Everyone deals with cancer in their own way and I am not sure I like the author, especially as I am not religious. It may be useful for the ‘right’ person; some may find it of great help, others not.

Breast cancer survivor (46-55) (September 2015)

This book has lots of information on support and what could help people see something positive after diagnosis. It is most useful for the patient, for keeping a positive view and getting support from diagnosis, through treatment and prognosis.

It is very easy to understand and full of positive advice. On an emotional level, the author handles the topic positively and well, but the book does jump around slightly depending on her emotional state. The cover is very tranquil and it is an appealing, no-frills book; the author has done well to portray a positive attitude.

What I like best about this book is how, even with all the trauma of a cancer diagnosis, the author decides to go out there and use all the support facilities that are available to her, and find something positive in them all. There really is nothing to dislike – it is a ray of light in somebody's darkest hour. It is quite inspiring and emotionally charged, and still manages to portray resilience. I definitely recommend it as a positive way to look at an emotionally charged life-changing diagnosis.

Carer (non-Hodgkin lymphoma) (46-55) (December 2015)

I wanted to read this as soon as I heard the subtitle – ‘We’ll get you through this’. I lost count of the number of times I was told this during treatment but I never noticed any special treatment to help me through; eventually it just seemed a tired cliché. I was interested to see if this book is any different. I am happy to say that it is.

Barbara Tako shares her journey, offering practical advice on how to cope with the fallout of diagnosis. The book is divided into four sections: coping with diagnosis; getting through treatment; post treatment; and conclusions and celebrations. She has lots of good suggestions and ideas to help you from the minute you are diagnosed, all based on her own experiences. She is very clear what worked for her – her faith helped greatly – but acknowledges that others may disagree. She sensibly says just skip the parts you don’t think will work for you and choose your own way through the advice; it’s not a one-size-fits-all experience. This made me more open to considering her suggestions – sometimes I can be a bit resistant to trying something different.

The cover is attractive and the book is well presented. As it is organised in sections, it is easy to dip in and dip out. The writing style is easy to read and I felt the warmth of the author. It really feels like she wants to share her experiences to help people through a very difficult period in their lives. The only downside is that it is quite short and expensive, although it can be bought much more cheaply on Amazon.

This is a great practical book to help you through when your whole world is turned upside down. All the advice and suggestions have been tried and tested by a fellow cancer patient. It says it how is it and offers great ideas. It delivers on its title – it will help you through this.

Breast cancer patient (56-65) (February 2016)

This is most useful for partners, carers or family and friends, particularly for the emotional and physical effects. It looks good, is a good size, and is quite easy to understand. I don’t like the American references, for example, we talk about appointments differently here. It is quite useful but it is repetitive.

Breast cancer patient (46-55) (November 2015)

I like the frankness of this book. It has pages and pages of very moving scenarios and experience that would be useful for anyone interested. It is an easy read, well written and informative although it can be repetitive.

Cancer Support Worker (36-45) (March 2016)



I didn't get a lot from this book; I did however find it interesting to read about real-life issues from a fellow breast cancer patient. Anyone who reads it will take away some knowledge about caring for someone with cancer. It is very easy to understand, straight to the point, with no big words. If I found it in a bookshop or library I would browse through it but I wouldn't buy it. I like the author's frankness, but she is American and writes about all the medical help she received and is still receiving; unfortunately, the NHS doesn't work like that, I was quite jealous. I might recommend it; it is quite useful for general interest.

Breast cancer patient (46-55) (August 2015)

This is easy to understand and not complicated but I found some of it repetitive. I was glad it was short as I fear I may have given up if it had been any longer. I didn't notice any inaccuracies, but it is American and I don't understand their healthcare system.

You can relate to the author on certain things but it was not appropriate for me; I could not relate to her message that "you can get through this", which is repeated through the book; it's a different ball game for secondary cancer patients and the term survivor doesn't apply – I'm simply living with cancer and doing the best job I can. Also, I live in Scotland and couldn't agree with how medical teams are set up. In the NHS, you take what you get; although you can voice an opinion, when time is of the essence, you have to trust the medical team you're given

I couldn't get into it and it differs so much from my own journal, which is more upbeat and general. My journal, although deep in some places, is mostly about who I am and how I live my life despite cancer, so I'm afraid that maybe I wasn't the right person to read the book. That said, I totally understand her fear and perhaps someone with a primary diagnosis will relate more to this book. Everyone is different with a different journey, so it may appeal to a lot of people with breast cancer.

It is certainly a great way to help people and I am not saying it's not a good book; it should just be targeted at a specific market. I fear anyone with a secondary diagnosis will not take the time to read it, certainly not to the end.

Living with secondary breast cancer (36-45) (January 2016)



Most people newly diagnosed with cancer will be able to identify with the writer's experiences. Two areas of discussion particularly interest me: 'the loss of certainty', something with which I can very much identify; and finding 'a new normal'. These ideas will resonate with many people once treatment is completed and life goes on. The writer emphasises that progress is not always strictly linear or steadily uphill.

It is rather slow to get going and the many faith-based comments may not be to everyone's taste; however, they are easily skipped. There is no glossary but there is a bibliography. The paper feels of poor quality.

This feels a harsh judgement of the usefulness of this book but there are so many books on the experience of cancer these days and I feel that a more detailed and informative book would be of greater interest. It contains only the basic tools but is useful in detailing the uncertainties felt after treatment is completed. It would not be the first 'go to' book of choice after a cancer diagnosis for me.

Breast cancer patient (66-75) (April 2015)

The benefit and value of this book are personal. It has the potential to assist anyone but should be read shortly after diagnosis. I completed my treatment a couple of years ago and am getting on with my life and it was of minimal benefit. I struggled to write this review after I had finished the book as very little of it has stuck with me even after such a short time.

It's not too long and can be used as a reference at different times of treatment. I did like the element of 'be kind to yourself'; good advice that we could all benefit from. Individual chapters are a little long; sometimes I like to read for a short time and stop at the end of a chapter but at times they were too long and I had to stop mid chapter. The title and cover are aesthetically pleasing and the typeface is of sufficient size. There are no illustrations but the book does not suffer as a result. The tone is conversational – you can imagine two friends having this discussion. There isn't a glossary but one is not really needed as the author is speaking more conversationally as a friend to a friend and technical medical terms are not really used.

I don't like the continual repetitiveness of certain comments and the 'list' approach to everything. That's surprising as I'm a list person in terms of organising my life, but for me it felt too much like dwelling on things; it may work for some people.

Breast cancer survivor (36-45) (June 2015)



Someone who has finished treatment for breast cancer, or who lives in the USA, may find this interesting, but only if they have been diagnosed at an early stage.

It jumps around quite a bit and there are lots of quotes from the author's journal. There is no glossary but there are few technical words. The paper quality is fine but the general layout is a bit strange. The tone of the author is a bit like a teacher to a pupil and is repetitive. There are lots of quotes from the Bible – I don't like being 'preached' to. The websites are American and a lot of the ideas don't apply in the UK, for example there is a whole chapter on 'choosing and interviewing your health team.

The subtitle 'Tools for cancer's emotional pain from a melanoma and breast cancer survivor' made me interested, but melanoma is not mentioned until page 85; on reading this section I don't feel the author can say she has 'survived' melanoma when she was stage 0, or at worst, stage 1A. This is exaggerated. I think the author wanted to write an autobiography but decided against it. There are many quotes from her journal and this book would have worked better as an autobiography.

Living with incurable cancer (malignant melanoma) (56-65) (October 2015)

I am very glad that I wasn't given this book when I had breast cancer. I would not recommend it to another breast cancer patient or any other cancer patient. I dislike the entire tone and was overwhelmed with its depressive nature. It is based on the author's experience and is therefore about her. She states that she has suffered from previous anxiety issues and perhaps that influenced her writing decisions.

At first glance you think that you could probably read it through without too much trouble. I don't particularly like the cover – it reminds me of the 'journey' cliché. The author is American and a lot of the expression and language is American in style, with unnecessary, dramatic descriptions. The American health system may be an added confusion for the reader. Some relevant subjects are missing, for example, how not to scare yourself to death by reading internet chat rooms and blogs.

I don't see how it would be helpful for new patients; there are much better resources available, e.g. the Macmillan website. It encourages the state of 'victim'. The author's use of her diary to demonstrate her points reads as self interested and self centred; this book is written for her, not for others. During my treatment, I met many others with cancer; many of them carried on working through their chemotherapy and other treatments. Introversion was not part of the answer for me or for them. I had a radical mastectomy followed by 18 months of adjuvant treatment including chemotherapy, radiotherapy, herceptin and reconstructive surgery. My advice for survivorship is to get on with life 'as normal'; do not allow cancer to make you a victim.

Breast cancer survivor (56-65) (May 2015)

Further information

Why does Macmillan Cancer Support review books?

We use reviews to help us compile a list of suggested cancer books, the [Macmillan Core Book List](#). Cancer information centres and public libraries can use this list to select appropriate and relevant books for people affected by cancer.

We add reviews to the [Directory of information materials for people affected by cancer](#) so that people affected by cancer can see what others in a similar situation think about a book. You can also see details of all the books reviewed in the [Book reviews listing](#), which also has links to all the reviews.

We recruit most of our reviewers through the [Volunteering Village](#) and the [Cancer Voices Network](#), people affected by cancer who have signed up to help Macmillan Cancer Support in a number of ways. Volunteers are a vital part of our book review process; since 2007, over 1,500 Macmillan volunteers have written more than 6,000 reviews of over 500 different books.

If you are a health professional who would like to review books for us, please [email Sue Hawkins](#), Information Materials Researcher, Macmillan Cancer Support.

Information and support for people affected by cancer

If you are looking for support to help you live life with cancer, you may wish to contact one of [Macmillan's cancer information and support services](#). Or you can call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00** (Mon-Fri 9am–8pm). We have an interpreting service in over 200 languages. Just state, in English, the language you wish to use. If you are deaf or hard of hearing you can use textphone no 0808 808 0121 or Text Relay.

You can also email us using the [website enquiry form](#). Alternatively, [visit our website](#).

Feedback

If you have any comments, please [email Sue Hawkins](#), Information Materials Researcher, Macmillan Cancer Support.

Being told ‘you have cancer’ can affect so much more than your health – it can also affect your family, your job, even your ability to pay the bills. But you’re still you. We get that. And, after over 100 years of helping people through cancer, we get what’s most important: that you’re treated as a person, not just a patient.

It’s why we’ll take the time to understand you and all that matters to you, so we can help you get the support you need to take care of your health, protect your personal relationships and deal with money and work worries.

We’re here to help you find your best way through from the moment of diagnosis, so you’re able to live life as fully as you can. For information, support or just someone to talk to, call 0808 808 00 00 or visit macmillan.org.uk

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