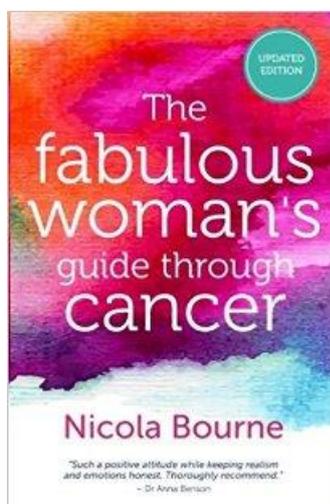


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BOOK REVIEWS

Read what people affected by cancer think about...



The fabulous woman's guide through cancer (2016)

Bourne N.

Nicola Bourne, 2016. 2nd edition.

x, 350pp.

ISBN 9781514315583

Average star rating 4.7 (out of 5)

Macmillan Cancer Support
89 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7UQ

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This book covers most aspects of living with cancer but breaks it down into understandable terms and gives advice on day-to-day life and aspects of a cancer diagnosis that may sometimes be forgotten.

It is broken down into sections e.g. treatment, how to tell the kids, and then into subsections within each chapter. This makes it easy to find parts that you may need to refer to later. The language is very easy to understand, and the author explains medical terms that readers may be unfamiliar with. There are useful contacts at the end for further advice as needed. The cover is eye catching, which makes you more inclined to pick up the book and read it. The layout is easy to follow and there aren't lots of large chunks of text. The style is quite light hearted, despite the difficult topics.

I like that this book has been written to help people with every stage of cancer and could almost be used as a bit of a bible whenever people need help or support. The way the book is written makes you feel less alone in the journey as the author is very personable and relatable with her struggles. She is very honest about even the most difficult parts, which may scare some people off, but others may be comforted by the fact that she has managed to get through the struggles and is passing on her advice so that they can do the same. A brilliant balance of day-to-day advice about coping with cancer and a more detailed look at what the effects can be and what to expect.

Relative of cancer patient (Under 25) (November 2017)

This is a fantastic read, for someone like me, my husband, sister, mum, aunt, in fact anyone affected by cancer, directly or indirectly. It shows how to get the best out of life and gives a very positive but practical approach to living life to the full and still having fun. How I wish I had known about it two years ago, when I was diagnosed.

It flows well, and you can dip in and out very easily; for example, I skipped chapters 4 and 6 as they didn't apply to me. It is so easy to read, it almost feels like your best friend is talking to you. Somehow Nicola manages to write with real sensitivity and warmth; she makes the reader want to read the whole book in one sitting! The design is just about spot on considering the very difficult subject the author is writing about.

I like the fact that it isn't loaded with medical statistics or details but neither is it a memoir. There are loads of good books that deal with cancer, but many are full of facts and figures and written by health professionals. There are also many personal accounts of a what is a very emotional journey. Both kinds can be very hard going even when the information is clearly presented. This book is the best cancer-related book I have read. I like everything about it. I found it really uplifting and it's humorous too. There is loads of advice, top tips, checklists, and useful coping mechanisms.

From the very first page, Nicola writes with incredible warmth and compassion. It is a fantastic book that I shall treasure always and keep dipping in and out of. I just wish I had known about it when I was first diagnosed. If you want facts and figures or a memoir, then this is not for you but I have already recommended it to several people.

Living with ovarian cancer (46-55) (October 2017)

This is such a positive and uplifting book, with masses of information for any woman with cancer. It is very accessible and easy to understand. The good contents and index make it easy to dip in and find things. The cover is bright, and the book has an optimistic appearance.

It is full of uplifting quotes from many sources and first-hand accounts by cancer patients and the author herself. It is a resource for most types of information. There is health advice, reminding people to consult their oncologist and seek help if they have any concerns, but there is a lot of self-help advice as well. It makes the reader feel that she is not alone, that many others have trod the same path. This is invaluable.

This is probably the best book on cancer that I have read since being diagnosed. I like it very much. If I was a man, I expect I would find another book suitable for me, but I don't think that it is exclusive because much of the advice would work well for anyone with cancer, regardless of gender.

Living with stomach cancer (56-65) (August 2017)

This is the best cancer resource I've read in a very long time. It's real and honest and a wonderful, practical resource. It is very helpful on a wide range of issues relating to living with cancer, from financial issues to ways to combat the often unintentionally tactless things that well-meaning people say when you're diagnosed with cancer!

It's very well put together and the bright colours on the cover mirror the positive tone. Nicola Bourne writes as though you're her good friend. There's a list of resources and an index, as well as chapter headings, so you can dip in and out (e.g. "Legal advice" and "The many emotions of cancer"). I love the little upbeat messages that pepper the book, such as, "A diamond is a chunk of coal that did well under pressure" (Henry Kissinger) and "After a while, I looked in the mirror and realised. Wow. After all those hurts, scars and bruises. After all those trials. I did it. I survived that which is supposed to kill me. So I straightened my crown and walked away. Like a boss".

This is an outstanding book; without doubt one of the best cancer resources out there right now. Anything you can think of relating to cancer is here, from dealing with travel insurance, to learning how to meditate and even how to ask friends for help, without the stress of worrying about their feelings. Nicola Bourne writes as though the reader is a good friend and this warm tone makes the book for me. She was diagnosed with bowel cancer at a young age and shortly after the birth of her second child. Instead of retreating into self-pity, she came out fighting and this book is a fantastically practical for anyone dealing with cancer. It doesn't sugar coat anything but neither does it deal with cancer in a pessimistic way. It brims over with hope and optimism and is very infectious. I can't recommend it highly enough.

Burkitt lymphoma survivor (36-45) (July 2017)

This is a great resource for anyone going through cancer or who knows someone who is. It is useful for all aspects, especially keeping sane and boosting morale, as well as practical suggestions, such as child care. There is a great brief introduction to the author and then a mass of information that I found interesting and helpful, with new ideas (such as writing letters), new titles of books to read, and suggested resources to investigate new titles further.

I didn't much like the title to begin with, but I soon forgot that as I waded in and began to read. It is very easy to understand and written in a very chatty style, almost as if the author is having a cup of coffee with you. The chatty style must make the day-to-day living with cancer easier perhaps?

I like the positivity, and the clear information in a logical order. There is not too much information and it is easy to find. The chapter on nutrition and exercise is useful, but written from a personal viewpoint; one size does not fit all. Take what you need and heed, but don't necessarily act upon, the rest. Prescriptions are described as free for cancer patients. This is not wholly true; I have cancer and don't get free prescriptions because I am not being treated. I still must pay for my other medications.

The ideas in the book – intended to make the process of living with, or through, cancer – are interesting, fresh, and informative. I especially like where the author states that just because not everyone loses their hair whilst being treated (or indeed has cancer) that doesn't mean they are not ill. Those of us with cancer are fighting extremely hard every day. In some cases, just to get through it.

This is a great book and one which would be useful for anyone going through cancer or, in fact, any debilitating illness.

Living with cancer (myelodysplastic syndrome) (46-55) (May 2017)



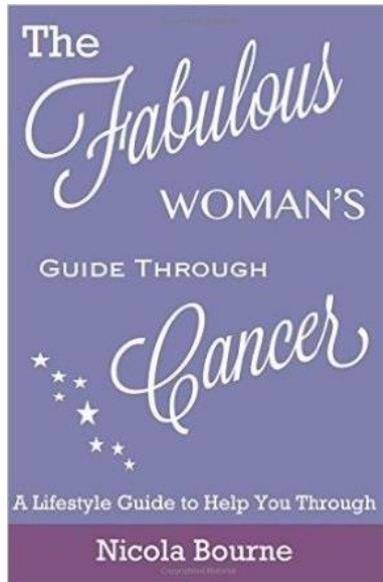
This book would primarily benefit someone with cancer at any stage, but a partner, carer, or friend may want to read certain sections, such as “Let people help”. The author writes with honesty and humour and has a very matter-of-fact tone. She says that she wanted to help women continue to be wives, mothers, employees, and friends after their diagnosis, and therefore her book isn't an academic textbook nor a memoir, but “the book I wished I had”. Her language is easy to understand and she explains any terms which may be unfamiliar to the reader.

I found the book appealing. The cover is colourful and the blurb informative and enticing. The book is well laid-out and progresses in a logical order. Unfortunately, there are lots of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. The author writes as if speaking to a friend, which I think readers will appreciate. The inspirational quotes are a lovely touch, as are the advice sections from other cancer patients.

This book is informative and positive, encourages women to do whatever works best for them in terms of coping with cancer, and provides useful contacts and even a few recipes. It is light-hearted and uplifting but I was put off by the errors and the repetition (others may appreciate the repetition). I would recommend it to someone who wouldn't be put off by errors.

A relative of someone with bowel cancer and friend of someone with breast cancer (26-35) (May 2017)

The following reviews are of the first edition.



The fabulous woman's guide through cancer (2015)

Bourne N.
CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2015.
182pp.
ISBN 9781514315583

Average star rating 4.0 (out of 5)



This covers most issues and will be useful for anyone affected. The order of the book is very good and it is very easy for anyone to understand; the quick reference index is comprehensive. The size is just right, the typeface is clear and the bullet points make it very easy to use.

This is the book I wished I had on diagnosis. It's full of useful information from a patient's point of view, no holds barred. I like the Top Tips and would have found them very useful during treatment. You know you are going to feel lousy but this book gives very good advice on how to cope. It is a must read for patients and carers alike.

Breast cancer survivor (56-65) (July 2016)

This will be useful for anyone dealing with cancer – patient, relative or friend. It gives a first-hand understanding. It feels as if the author is in your head; the journey and experience described is nothing more than how it is in real life. It is the personal experience of an ordinary woman, who could be anyone. It describes her life, from not feeling quite right, through diagnosis and treatment and of course the emotional roller coaster that goes hand in hand with a cancer diagnosis.

It's so easy to understand and relate to. The details are not complicated or technical. The cover is immediately appealing. It looks bright, not at all depressing and I think it will appeal to any age group. It looks like a good read in as much as it's a factual book, about real people and experiences. Anyone touched by cancer can relate to it.

I couldn't put it down. It's full of moving stories and information about the devastating changes that take place. There is nothing funny about cancer but as well as shedding tears, I laughed a lot when I read the experiences that I could relate to in so many ways. It's a lonely place and while no one should have to suffer the terrible things it brings physically and emotionally, there is a comfort in the quiet understanding that we all feel the same things – worry, dread, fear. For me, the battle really started when my treatment was over. It's difficult to come to terms with what happened and the emotional flood gates opened. Reading about other people's experiences and realising that you're not the only one who feels this way is a great comfort. It's difficult to describe, but by reading genuine and heart-warming stories and finding we can have the same feelings helped me cope with the situation. I don't feel so alone.

Cancer is a serious business. The medical information about procedures and treatment can be overwhelming. It's uplifting to hear about other people, real people, and how they coped and managed to get through the journey. We have so much in common and it's good to share tips and information. If only one good thing happens as a result, then that's a good result. I definitely recommend this book to anyone touched by cancer. It's a brilliant read – factual, funny, sad, but informative. It is very reassuring to know that I'm not the only one.

Living with triple-negative breast cancer (46-55) (April 2016)

This book would be great at all stages, from diagnosis to after treatment finishes. It captured my attention and kept me engrossed. It is very easy to understand; technical jargon is explained so you don't have to look it up. I like the cover with the stars and the title stands out well. The quotes at the start of each chapter are good and Nicola's tone is friendly, upbeat, and practical. Lovely.

I like the whole tone of this book. Nicola had an awful diagnosis but the book does not reflect the despair she must have felt at times. She addresses practical problems in a very helpful way, for example, telling people (or not), and permission not to feel "brave" all the time. I wish I'd known about Google scholar when I was diagnosed.

Endometrial adenoma and serous cancer survivor (56-65) (February 2016)

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book and feel it is useful for anyone touched by cancer at all stages. The section on feelings is very useful for patients and carers.

It flows well but does not have to be read page by page; it can be used for reference as needed. It is easy to follow and understand with appropriate language. I did notice a few minor typos. The different typefaces used to highlight issues kept my interest and added value. The paper is good quality and the cover is appealing.

Overall, this is easy to read, factual and informative but also accessible, especially for people going through treatment where tiredness may be an issue. I would like to see it readily available in cancer centres.

Eye cancer patient (46-55) (January 2016)

This is primarily written for women going through treatment, but would also be useful for a partner, carer, or health professional as it gives insight into what a patient may be feeling and some useful tips on how to help manage the journey. It will be most useful for going through treatment from initial diagnosis to coming out the other side; as it says in the title it is “a guide through”.

It flows well in a logical order; chapters can be read sequentially or the reader can dip in and out. It is very easy to understand, in a conversational style highly appropriate for the audience. The title, cover, size, length, and typeface are all good, and the author writes in an honest, open, and frank manner, sharing her own experiences, and offering some good, practical advice. I didn't notice any inaccuracies but the spelling mistakes really bugged me and let down an otherwise fantastic book.

I like the author's style and honesty. She has been through some major treatments and has experienced missed diagnoses but has still come through with a positive attitude. The sharing of her experience offers some excellent tips and hints – I like the recommendations at the end of each chapter of websites to look at – and she also brings in some other patients' views and experiences. It covers subjects that I've not seen in other books, such as how to talk to a toddler about cancer, what to pack for hospital, how to manage child care when in treatment. I particularly like the chapter on how to stay sociable when you're feeling awful!

This excellent book provides emotional and practical support and ideas to help a patient get through treatment as best they can. The author is someone who has experienced cancer and its treatments and she provides lots of practical advice in a friendly, understanding manner. There are great new ideas here, like holding pamper parties, revamping your wardrobe, starting a film club; I wish I had had them when I went through treatment. It would be a useful book to recommend to any woman going through cancer; it is a great “ideas” book, uplifting and positive – well done that girl for writing it! BUT, please can the publisher be encouraged to reissue it without spelling mistakes as there really do let down an excellent publication.

Breast cancer survivor (46-55) (January 2016)

This will help people with cancer to feel human and in charge of their world. It is also great for family members. It is easy to understand and not condescending; it's as if a friend is giving you advice, but not pushing it onto you. I think it looks good and would appeal to all ages; the stars on the front give it a girly edge (the stars on the back are obscured by the barcode).

I love the honest and non-pushy style. It focuses on you doing whatever is needed for you to get better, stay well, and feel in control of your own destiny. It helps you to feel that you oversee your own wellbeing and future. I love the quote at the beginning: “a woman is like a tea bag”. I really appreciated the index at the back of the book; this enables you to dip into it whenever you think of something. The areas in little dotted boxes stand out and help to make a situation real. I love the Britishness of this book; it's not all “cheerleadery” like most American books that I have read.

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

This would be useful for anyone affected by cancer and for health professionals. It gives an insight into how someone may feel when they are going through treatment and the little practical things that will make a difference, especially if they have young children; for example, cooking meals, housework, child care, driving them to appointments. It will also help carers understand how the patient's self-image may be affected, especially if their hair falls out. It flows well, is easy to read and is very well written in layman's terms. The cover and title are very attractive and I like the typeface and quality of the book.

I like the whole book; it's an honest account of the patient journey and experiences and very useful, especially the tips on how to hold social events in the patient's home so that the patient doesn't miss events.

Breast cancer in 2011 (56-65) (November 2015)

This book is organised into sections, which makes it easier for the reader – versatile and worth referring to in the future. The sections cover most common questions patients or family/friends may ask and medical/technical language is explained in a clear way. The author brings a positive and personal approach, creating a comfortable tone for such a difficult subject. It feels as if it was written by a friend. I like how the author writes from the heart; it is clear she wants to share any insight that may help someone else.

I would recommend it but I would be aware of how the reader would relate to it, e.g. Chapter 8. I get the impression that the author is from a middle-class background or may be financially comfortable; this is apparent in her advice and some readers may not be able to relate to this.

Cervical cancer, now spread to lungs (26-35) (November 2015)

This book has been written by a very young woman who was diagnosed quite late with colon cancer. It shows how sometimes it is essential to push your doctor if you think there is something wrong. I like the way it has been written more as a reference book so that an ill person who can't be bothered to read long books can just dip into it and find what they might like to know.

It is an excellent reference book for the lay person who is newly diagnosed with colon cancer, or their relatives and friends. The author has young children and it would therefore be a useful resource for a young family dealing with such a devastating diagnosis. It is most useful for knowing what to expect regarding treatment and how you are going to feel. The resources it gives are excellent particularly Google Scholar, which I didn't know about.

It is short, very easy to read and can be used for quick reference; it is well divided up and there are no long bits of text that require concentration. When you have cancer, you might not want to read a long descriptive book, this is easy to dip into.

I like this book because it is to the point, addresses relevant concerns and, particularly for younger women with children, how to cope. I highly recommend it for cancer resource centres and for young colon cancer patients. I probably wouldn't recommend it for people with other cancers, although they might find some of the coping methods useful.

Womb cancer survivor (66-75) (November 2015)

This general overview of dealing with cancer has lots of very useful practical advice and tips, from explaining your diagnosis to the family, through dealing with treatment, to how to cope with the change in your appearance. It is great to read before treatment or after and it does not just concentrate on one cancer. The author is truthful about treatment but upbeat.

It is very easy to read and understand and deals with everything in good order; you can dip in and out of and choose the sections that are relevant to you and it is easy to go back and re-read information if you want to. There are references throughout the book and at the end of every chapter. This is great as when you want to go back to something, perhaps to get a website address, it's easy to find. The cover is very to the point with no fancy pictures, the paper is lovely and the general layout is good.

I like the fact that she involved people she knew for aspects that she hadn't experienced herself. For example, she involved a breast cancer patient for information on losing hair as her chemotherapy was different.

What a refreshing book. I loved it! I couldn't put it down and I will use it in the future for reference. It is a positive book that left me feeling that I was not on my own.

Living with breast cancer (36-45) (October 2015)



I like a book by someone with first-hand experience and this has very informative and practical information for patients and carers and good ideas and suggestions for coping with the stages of cancer and treatment. It is divided into clearly labelled sections with bite-size chapters and it is easy to find what you are looking for. It is easy to read and everything is explained well. The cover is eye catching and the book is a nice size and easy to carry in your bag. It has a lot of useful information that will benefit patients or family members. It is easy to dip in and out and therefore useful for those who want to get information quickly without reading the whole book. It is full of hints and tips. I like the quotes and stories from other women.

Living with breast cancer (56-65) (February 2016)

This is a guide to helping you through a cancer diagnosis so is useful for all stages. I like all the little tips throughout. It is easy to dip in and out of, flows well and follows the stages you go through in order. It is easy to understand and any technical terms are explained. I couldn't find any inaccuracies apart from a few spelling and grammatical errors. The typeface is easy to read but I don't like the feel of the cover; it feels like plastic and not nice to the touch!

I think most women would find this book useful. If you have a very structured life and a cancer diagnosis that throws you in at the deep end, then I think it would be quite useful. However, I don't think I would have found it useful when I was first diagnosed as I'm not that kind of person. I take each day as it comes so just got on and did what I had to do. Worrying about my hair falling out or how people would react around me because of my diagnosis was not something that bothered me.

Five-year womb cancer survivor (46-55) (January 2016)

Although this is very personal to the author, it contains a lot of practical tips that readers will be able to relate to and learn from. Everyone is different and would refer to it accordingly. It's easy to understand and the author includes experiences from other people who have been affected (highlighted in boxes) as a way of making a connection. The front cover has a feminine look and the tone is empathic.

I like that the author keeps reinforcing that it's her experience and that readers can choose areas they can relate to. She encourages her readers to consider a course of action that will work for them and to be true to themselves by seeking help/support and she normalises depression as part of the disease pathway. It will help people identify personal coping strategies to refer to in a crisis and maintain a sense of control by having an emergency list. The boxed messages are very encouraging and empowering and there is lots of reputable signposting.

One thing I dislike is that although the author acknowledges that being fabulous is expensive, a lot of her suggestions are expensive; this can leave someone who is vulnerable feeling inadequate.

Living with the consequences of breast cancer (46-55) (January 2016)

I really enjoyed this book; it does what it says on the tin. It really does give you a guide to what it is like on the front line of cancer – the practical tips, such as what to expect when you have a scan (I wish I had read this before I had my first one). You get the very clear impression that this woman knows what she is talking about.

The descriptions of what to expect from treatment – chemo and radiotherapy – are really useful and a great addition to the information leaflets from the hospital, which didn't mention the hanging about and waiting. Neither I nor my husband had a real understanding of what happens and this book would have been useful. The contacts at the end of each chapter are also very useful.

It follows a logical order and, although not all her experiences were the same as mine, the structure allows you to just refer to the bits that interest you most. It is very easy to understand; I read it on a long coach journey and really enjoyed it. The language and style are engaging and I got the strong impression that a real woman like me had written it. I didn't notice any errors, although the constant misspelling of "Remember" is annoying (e.g. pp. 20, 77). The cover is a bit chick lit in style and quite inviting. I assume it is self-published and I like that it isn't too polished (I can even forgive the "Remeber") but it feels like a quality product and is lovely to handle.

This book would be a useful additional resource to the information provided by hospitals. It is useful for explaining what to expect and what you could try to do. I like that it spoke directly to me as someone with cancer and, unlike other books that I have read, it doesn't matter that it wasn't the same type of cancer or that the treatment was different. The author manages to tap into the common themes about treatment and the impact of living with cancer. I really like the tips in boxes too.

Living with breast cancer (46-55) (January 2016)

This is a very personal book about one woman's journey through treatment and after. I think it will inspire others in several ways: that you can get through this and have a life after treatment; and the practical advice and experience that patients can relate to and take some pointers from. It doesn't talk much about before diagnosis but it would be good for newly diagnosed patients to read to show that it isn't all that bad. I also think it would be good for a person during treatment to read about how another person coped. I don't think there is too much about after treatment has finished so if anyone is looking for advice long term, maybe this isn't the best book for them.

I was aware of a few differences between the author's journey and my own so it is important to know that this is one person's journey and not true for everyone. For example, treatment side effects were explained to her as she went along whereas I was sat down for three hours and told in blunt terms all the possible side effects that I may experience. I was also told specifically not to drink any alcohol at all.

It is very easy to read and well explained. There are no illustrations. The text is fine and accounts from other people are in a different font in a box so they are highlighted as other people's opinions, not those of the author. The important websites and points of reference are highlighted at the end of the chapter and so are good for reference. The cover is a bit disappointing and lets down the contents. The title led me to expect a bit more of a glamorous cover.

I enjoyed reading about someone else's journey and it also gave me some things to think about that maybe I could include in my life to help me get through my journey. I thought it was very well researched and I would recommend it to other patients. I liked that it wasn't focussed on the author's specific cancer and that it is good for patients no matter where their disease is. However, readers should be aware that this is one person's journey – their experience may be different.

Living with Hodgkin lymphoma, Stage 2, also Research Scientist in Haematology (26-35) (January 2016)

This will be useful for patients at any stage of treatment as it gives hints and tips throughout. It will also be invaluable for family and friends who would like to make a difference. It does not give medical advice, just practical. It flows well and is very easy to understand as it doesn't contain any medical information. The cover is very striking and tells you immediately what the book contains and who it is aimed at.

I like the straightforward information and that you can dip in and out. I would like to see practical solutions for some aspects of treatment, such as the awful taste in your mouth from chemo – what solutions can be bought over the counter to counteract this – and perhaps advice on wigs and their availability from the NHS. There is no mention of the free workshops that Breast Cancer Care offer showing you how to apply makeup and how to look after your skin during treatment.

I particularly like this book as Nicola Bourne has experienced cancer herself so it is written first hand. I recommend it to women who are going through cancer. It should be in all cancer treatment centres.

Breast cancer patient in 2003 (56-65) (December 2015)

This book contains much helpful advice about coping with the more mundane, day-to-day experiences that many other self-help guides fail to mention, e.g.: What to pack for a hospital stay; How to prepare for, cope with and enjoy a “special” social occasion. It is packed with hints, tips, information, and encouragement to make life easier and more fulfilling at a difficult time. As well as writing from her own experiences, the author also recounts the thoughts and experiences of others to illustrate those aspects of which she has no experience, (e.g. dealing with hair loss). The only thing I don't like is that the author spends rather a lot of time advocating the employment of nannies when discussing childcare – a luxury, I imagine, that is not within the reach of many people.

It is a manageable size and can be read in bite-sized chunks if necessary. The author has a very friendly, down to-earth approach, which makes it extremely readable; each chapter begins with an “inspirational” quote, (which may not be to everyone's taste!). There is an index and the book is illustrated throughout with lists of useful contacts, websites and boxed quotes and tips. I did not notice any factual inaccuracies but there are some proof-reading errors, (e.g. sight instead of site).

This book fills a gap in the market as far as “surviving cancer” books are concerned as she covers some topics that I have not seen mentioned before. I especially appreciated the section on “staying social”. It is good to be reminded to keep doing the normal, everyday things as far as possible, although just reading about some of the suggested activities left me feeling exhausted! The diet and exercise section is useful without being too preachy. I also like the idea of writing a journal or diary to release innermost thoughts privately. I could particularly identify with the author's thoughts about moving on after finishing treatment, how it may not all be just plain sailing. I remember being surprised by the feelings of vulnerability when the support of highly skilled professionals is removed.

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

The book is written with the assumption that the reader is directly affected by cancer but I can see it being an insightful read for family members and friends, to understand some of the emotional challenges and to identify some practical ways they could offer their support. The author is affected by bowel cancer but her advice is applicable to any cancer. She suggests lots of ways in which people directly affected by cancer can be kind to themselves; not all suggestions will appeal and some may not be viable due to circumstances, but nonetheless it offers lots of good advice. I didn't warm to the use of the term "fabulous" in the title, nor to the reference of "cancer superstars", but don't be deterred, this book's full of practical advice on lifestyle which in my experience can be hard to come by at the time it's needed most.

The content is grouped into logical chapters and there is a very comprehensive index. Some sections are quite specific to the author and may not be applicable to the reader but these can be skipped; for example, the author has two young children and so discusses the need to arrange childcare support and evaluates the options available. There are no illustrations, but the text is broken up intermittently by boxes in which the author highlights key messages or presents perspectives from other cancer patients. There are a few typos but they don't detract from the read. The cover design is very simple but I don't think that's important for a book of this nature. The text on the cover conveys that the book is written as a lifestyle guide to help you through cancer. Upfront it states it can be used as a reference book allowing you to dip in and out of sections when appropriate. The book contains lots of web links and details of recommended literature such as that produced by Macmillan; hopefully these will continue to be available and remain relevant as time passes.

It is very practical; there are lots of suggestions for how to make life easier and be kind on yourself, when if, like me, you don't find it easy to lean on others for support. There are frequent reminders that the suggestions should not be construed as "must dos"/ "should be doing" to avoid putting additional pressure on yourself. It highlights how everyday events can seem overwhelming post cancer diagnosis. This I can relate to well. The author cautions against letting the thought of an occasion overwhelm you; whilst I don't think I could avoid being overwhelmed by certain events, the book provides some useful pointers around preparation to lessen the sense of being overwhelmed.

I particularly related to the section on the "many emotions of cancer" and specifically the discussion of irrational guilt (p. 71), which can be consuming at a time when it's important to focus on what's right for you as an individual to facilitate physical and emotional well-being. The author writes of her experiences of depression during treatment and beyond and includes some of the typical symptoms of depression; this could help people to distinguish between feeling low and being depressed.

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

This is a good reference resource for what to expect. It is very easy to understand and written very sympathetically. I definitely recommend it.

Living with endometrial cancer (46-55) (November 2015)

This book is useful for patients, partners/carers, family and friends, and health professionals but especially helpful for someone supporting someone with cancer to understand how treatment affects the patient and the emotional aftermath. Some sections are better than others and the most useful sections are those on practical ways of helping someone with cancer, dealing with the emotional effects of cancer, the information on antidepressants and the constant reminders to be gentle and kind to yourself. I would like a little more information on telling children, including some websites or publications to help you do this.

It is a very easy read. The author uses informal language, like talking to a friend. I like the front cover with the star motifs. The colour is subtle and not overly masculine or feminine so both sexes would be comfortable to be seen reading it. I like the use of different fonts and the little quotation at the start of each chapter. The layout makes it very easy to read, for example bullet points and the well-spaced text. The tone is warm, understanding, matter of fact – this takes away the fear somehow.

I enjoyed reading this book. It is easy to read and down to earth, the author's warm tone came across. It takes away some of the fear surrounding cancer by treating it practically and is excellent for anyone wanting to know how to help friends or family going through it. There are lots of snippets of information, which avoids information overload; for example, it refers people to Macmillan literature for more details, rather than trying to explain it all in the book. You can dip in and out as you please and you don't have to read the whole thing, just the bits that are relevant to you and yours.

Vulval cancer patient 2013 (46-55) (November 2015)

Nicola Bourne writes simply but effectively. Her book covers a wide range of issues and circumstances, giving practical and emotional advice and support in an engaging yet matter-of-fact way. It is most useful for patients, for learning how to cope with diagnosis, illness and recovery at the same time as sharing this and day-to-day life with friends, family, and children. I read it from start to finish and then dipped into areas that were more relevant to me.

The cover is attractive, the paper quality good, and the typeface and font size easy to read. There are no illustrations but the sections are well defined and the top tips, "Remember" and "Contacts" are well highlighted. Nicola Bourne's tone is engaging and conveys compassion and practicality. The writing itself is easy to understand. Most technical words or abbreviations are explained but not CT, PET, or MRI scans. There are some spelling mistakes, for example, "remember" (pp. 20, 77, 79,148), "tumor" (p. 5) and "behavioural" (p. 84). There are also some errors in the indexing; for example, colostomy is indexed to pages 11, 84, 106, 108, and 112 but appears on p. 10; PET is not mentioned on page 59; PICC is not mentioned on pages 63, 64, or 174 (blank page); CT is not mentioned on page 65; and "counselling" is not mentioned on page 89, which is a continuation of how to give the perfect facial.

I like the wealth of information, particularly the chapters on "The emotional rollercoaster", "Staying social when saying in" and "How to survive an occasion", which I don't think I have ever seen before. I didn't find anything to dislike and even the chapters that are not relevant to me, such as "What about the children, nannies

and childcare”, gave me interesting information. It's also very helpful to read the Top Tip(s) and have useful contacts at the end of each chapter.

This honest, truthful, and simply written book delves into how cancer impacts your life and how to cope with this on many levels and in many ways. It covers a wide range of issues and offers sound practical information together with real stories from women who have had cancer. It offers a positive approach and answers serious life questions so you can honestly feel in control of your life on several levels while you fighting to overcome this devastating illness. I particularly like the final chapter “Life after cancer” and what a cancer patient will now consider a “normal” life. After reading this book, “What next?” can really be a fantastic life opportunity. It just missed five stars because of spelling mistakes and an inaccurate index.

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



This is a very frank and friendly approach to managing your life and feelings when diagnosed and will help people to organise their thoughts. There are some really good moments where you realise you are not the only one who felt like that.

It is well designed and the paper feels good to handle; I would have picked it up in a bookshop. I like the layout – the bullet points and subheadings make reading easier. The bite-sized chunks make it feel manageable rather a mountain I had to climb. It can often be hard to do the smallest things when you are fighting off nausea or dizziness. Knowing that I could read it and put it down at will was really inviting.

The author’s tone is frank, friendly and knowing. She made me smile or laugh aloud at points, really nice when reading about such a potentially heavy topic. Occasionally she is perhaps too friendly. A level of authority provides the illusion of stability and reassurance as someone who has “been there, done that”. If the author spends too much time showing us that they are at the same stage as us, people might not feel the need to buy it; this is a pity as it is a nice read.

I really like the “remember” sections and that Nicola drew on the experiences of others with cancer. This is one of the book’s most appealing aspects. When you have cancer, you spend a lot of time trying to find where you fit in, to find that one person, story, or situation to identify with. By including a variety of experiences, she gives the reader more of a chance to find their place in the stories of others. I like the fact that there are lots of references to help in the UK. So much information is US-based.

The order could be tightened up; it can be repetitive at times. That would be easily solved by varying the language throughout. The word cancer is used far too many times. I felt like I was being force-fed at times. It could have been interchanged whilst maintaining its impact. The spelling and grammatical errors make it hard to focus. Overall, however, it’s a nice book. People could definitely be impacted positively by it.

Living with the effects of acinic cell carcinoma (36-45) (January 2016)

This will be useful for anyone who is going through cancer or who is touched by it in some form. It is a “how to” guide that will help you manage the practical issues. If that is your need now, this book is bang on.

It is very easy to understand; the author uses very simple language, which my chemo brain appreciated! She has kept it simple, although I would like to really understand what a colostomy bag is. I do not really understand the details of this type of cancer – a little more information would have been nice. The language is appropriate and the occasional humour and the free-flowing style of writing make it an easy read. I did notice several spelling errors, so proof-reading could have been better; for example: remeber for remember; bowel for bowl; manucire for manicure; and visa for vice.

The title made me smile and feel fabulous. The paper quality is good, the font is pretty and large and there is lots of space. The tone is fun and straightforward; the author has clearly gone through a massively challenging experience and has crystallised her thoughts on how she could help others through their experience.

I like the practical tips. When there is cancer in our lives, something that is otherwise normal can become a colossal task; this can happen every day, day after day, for months or even years. This book is unlike most of the cancer books on the market. Its objective is clear and simple: to help people deal with the practical challenges that a cancer diagnosis brings. The entire book is based on practical things that a cancer patient will need to sort out. Each chapter ends with a useful list of resources.

I would like to understand more about the emotional and psychological side of the experience. I guess that was not really the author’s intention but I was left feeling unfulfilled; I wanted to know more about she felt and about her type of cancer, which was different from mine. I am usually ok if someone wants to share their experience and “tell” me what to do, but a full “how to” guide did get to me eventually.

I will probably recommend it; it is a useful book for those who are overwhelmed. The author has simplified everything and includes additional resources at the end of the chapter. If you are looking for a how-to guide to deal with changes that cancer brings, this is the right book. If you are looking for the rest of the “cancer stuff”, it is not.

Cured of breast cancer (36-45) (December 2015)

This is best read as you have treatment, not when you have finished. It is also good if you have young children. The author has had radiotherapy and chemotherapy and writes from one cancer patient to another. She doesn’t use technical words and the language is easy to read and the book flows well. There are some spelling mistakes.

I would like some photos, or drawings, and some colour; the layout is good with a nice quote at the start of each chapter but there is nothing to break up the text and it could look a bit daunting to read in one go, especially compared to “Recognise yourself. Beauty despite cancer”, which is full of colour and photos.

The author was the same age as me when diagnosed and had the same cancer so I could relate to what she was saying; it was great to have a book written by someone the same age as me. I don't think I would recommend it for older patients.

Living with bowel cancer (26-35) (December 2015)

This is probably most useful for patients or those involved with them day to day. It covers a lot of general areas about everyday life with cancer, how it affects the family, side effects, the emotional roller coaster, and how to try to stay on top of the demands it places on the body, mind, and spirit. The author covers a lot of useful topics for those recently diagnosed with cancer. The tips on handling family and friends and how to get people to help in the way you need are interesting; I wish I'd read this when first diagnosed! The chapters about holidays and travel and surviving an occasion are good, although most newly diagnosed patients may feel that it is too early to think about these issues and come back to read about this at a later stage.

It doesn't flow particularly well but it is difficult to identify a better order. If you give it to ten different readers, each will suggest a different order, depending on need. However, there is a good contents and index, so you can dip in for specific information as needed. The language is straightforward and not technical, with no need for further explanations in a glossary. I didn't notice any factual inaccuracies and I also checked the links to most of the websites mentioned – all were current.

The design isn't particularly appealing. The cover is uninspiring and the colour drab. The size and quality of paper are fine and the text is clearly laid out the spelling errors are a distraction. One crops up several times: in the "Remember" box at the end of some chapters, "Remember" is often spelt "Remeber". If you are going to have a special box to bring issues to the attention of the reader, then it should be spelt correctly; this is particularly annoying!

It is a nice enough book, with some useful hints and tips but not a "showstopper" in terms of the information provided. I might recommend it but a great deal of it is general common sense and most people will probably navigate their way successfully through their treatment and beyond without this book to guide them.

Living with womb (endometrial) cancer (56-65) (November 2015)



This may be a useful reference tool to support someone recently diagnosed. There is a logical order to the content; however, the book includes only brief details of the author's personal experiences.

It is easy to understand and the language is appropriate for the intended audience. I like the cover design and size of the book. I like the summary and life after cancer sections and enjoyed the motivational quotations.

I might recommend it; at diagnosis, there are so many questions about the future and any reference material is welcomed. However, although it contains some useful coping suggestions and is designed to be a reference that you dip into when you need, I didn't feel that I would pick it up again after I finished it.

Living with breast cancer (46-55) (November 2015)



This book gives some very basic ideas about how to deal with the effect of cancer on a physical, emotional, and practical level. Depending on the age of the reader, they may find some or all the ideas useful, but there is little depth to the suggestions and therefore I feel that this book is more of a starting or trigger point.

There is a logical flow to the book and the structure and the typeface make it very easy to read. The chapter headings are clear; you know what the chapter will cover and this enables you to navigate easily around the book, dip in and out and skip information that does not feel relevant. You can easily read it in an evening.

However, the advice is very simplistic and based on common sense. I found reading it a little frustrating as I did not learn anything new; it is written at a very basic level. I felt it did not have anything new to offer in the way of informing my knowledge on any of the subjects discussed. Whilst acknowledging that the book is based on one woman's experience and hence the title, I do not see why the author defines it as a guide for woman – men may equally have had similar experiences.

Living with bowel cancer (46-55) (January 2016)

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.

We're here to help everyone with cancer live life as fully as they can, providing physical, financial and emotional support. So whatever cancer throws your way, we're right there with you.

For information, support or just someone to talk to, call 0808 808 00 00 or visit macmillan.org.uk

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