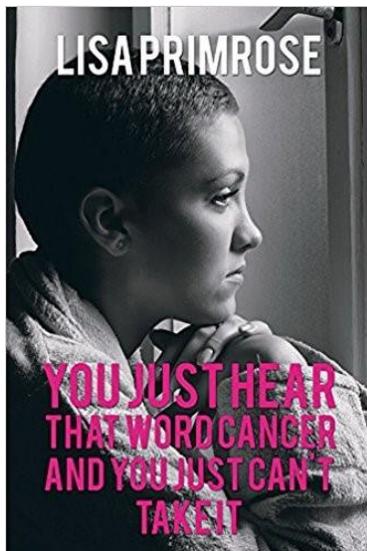


**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

BOOK REVIEWS

Read what people affected by cancer think about...



You just hear that word cancer and you just can't take it (2017)

Primrose L.

London: Austin Macauley, 2017.

40pp.

ISBN 9781786298201.

£4.99.

Average star rating 1.8 (out of 5)

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This is someone's account of their cancer experience in diary format. It is not a technical book at all. The cover is appealing, and the general layout is fine, but the grammar and punctuation are not of a good standard.

I understand that the book is a true account of someone's experience and their diary, but it could have been proof-read before going to print. I don't like the basic content, lack of punctuation and the lack of emotional content.

Husband has advanced colorectal cancer (36-45) (July 2018)

This book touches on the medical terms and possible effects and feelings of a cancer diagnosis but I didn't find it overly appealing and I probably wouldn't recommend it. It is very short, and I like the diary format but there is a lot of medical jargon that perhaps a carer, friend or family member wouldn't necessarily understand.

Living with follicular lymphoma (36-45) (February 2018)

This is a very short read – it took me about 20 minutes – but memorable in content. Lisa Primrose is diagnosed with colorectal cancer, and her book is a short diary of events that take place between her diagnosis and the end of her successful treatment. Lisa does not delve deeply into her feelings about the purpose of this book, except to question “Why me?”.

Lisa is passive in her reaction to cancer, going for appointments and experiencing lots of pain, discomfort and unfortunate toilet accidents along the way. The book has apparently not been edited but this is not a problem, as the words come from the author spontaneously, and without a great amount of structure. However, she mentions people's names without explaining who they are, nor what they mean to her. As it takes the form of a diary, it would be applicable to someone who is about to embark on treatment for this condition. It is written in the same tone as many of modern reality magazines, such as “Chat” and there is no jargon. If a potential reader is offended by swear-words or graphic description of bodily functions, then this is not the book for him or her. The cover is attractive. It shows a black and white photo of a profile of a woman in a dressing gown, looking pensive.

This is a very short diary account of the Lisa's treatment of colorectal cancer. She does not offer advice. In fact, some of the book may be off-putting and frightening for someone newly diagnosed, in terms of toilet "accidents" and pain. I do not like to read that she goes to MacDonald's, Starbucks and Krispy Kremes so often, especially as she claims to eat healthily. There are also references to coupons that I do not understand and that she does not explain.

What I do find particularly interesting – in a positive way – is that, unlike many writers describing this condition, she goes into detail about "farting and shitting". It certainly is down-to-earth. No details of toilet functions are spared, and for those who have this diagnosis, that is no bad thing. The reader is left in no doubt about some of the unfortunate symptoms that she suffers, especially "accidents" that happen, and having to enlist the help of her husband to clean her up. Fortunately, her treatment is successful. What this book lacks in depth, it makes up for in straight-talking.

Former Health Professional. Friend. Former Carer (56-65) (July 2017)

This book just wasn't for me. It is another diary from a cancer patient, detailing symptoms, how she felt and various treatments. It is an easy read, but nothing new. The references to others were unclear at first and I was confused as to who was who, but I did get over that.

It is very easy to understand and very easy to handle and read as it's so short. (I read from cover to cover in the bath). The photo on the cover is good.

Lisa's account is frank and positive, but for me, there is nothing particularly outstanding that would make me recommend it to others.

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



This short, personal diary is very easy to understand. However, it includes lots of personal references to names, events and general issues that are not relevant to the subject or for the reader. For example, there are too many inconsequential references to "having a cup of tea". It is not very informative and lost my attention.

Breast cancer survivor (46-55) (January 2018)

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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