

**MACMILLAN**  
**CANCER SUPPORT**  
RIGHT THERE WITH YOU

# BOOK REVIEWS

Read what people affected by cancer think about...



**I felt a right one... and now I feel a right one again (2013)**

Tighe K.  
Kibworth Beauchamp: Matador, 2013.  
x, 214pp.  
ISBN 9781780884639.  
£9.99.

**Average star rating 4.2 (out of 5)**

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A great, positive read, useful for all aspects of living with breast cancer. It is very easy to understand and is often amusing. If I had written this book it would have been in the same way; it's not too in depth into her life, just enough to know the journey she has been on. I like the cover.

I definitely recommend this book. I love the author's sense of humour.

#### **Ten-year remission breast cancer (36-45) (June 2019)**

The author writes superbly about aspects of her cancer journey from her point of view and those of her family, colleagues, pupils and friends. This could make it a helpful read for someone who is experiencing a friend or relative undergoing cancer treatment, so they have an idea of what to expect and that it is OK for them to have certain thoughts and feelings.

It is written in stages, which will be helpful at different phases of diagnosis and treatment because you can easily pick out a chapter that matches your current situation. Overall, it is easy to follow and the flow of the narrative makes sense. And, even though there isn't a glossary, anything potentially new is explained at the time, saving endless to and fro-ing. The cover is relatively simple, but still eye catching. The typeface is clear, the font a good size and the paper a sharp white. This made it easier to read, but I have early cataracts and it may not be as noticeable to others.

One of my favourite things about this book is the author approaches everything with humour and honesty, and without self-pity. I like her use of vernacular language; this gives the impression she is talking to you as if you were a friend. It 'draws you in' in that sense. I also like that two charities will benefit from the sales profits. The pictures of the hair-cutting event are wonderful. Having had my head shaved (also for charity) whilst undergoing chemotherapy, I am so glad someone else was able to make light of it and make it a positive experience. Thank you, Karen.

There is a rather bad-taste joke about Romanian orphans that could have been left out. Additionally, the author had some private medical treatment, which gave her a very different experience from those of us using the NHS; this could be confusing for someone looking up a procedure that they might be about to have. There are also some inaccuracies about medical personnel and other small details.

Even if your experience of treatment is likely to differ, the author explains things very well and in a down-to-earth manner. You can delve into it, either through the sections for experiences you wish to read up on or read it from cover to cover. The narratives about other medical problems (the author's back) and the teaching experiences make it a good read in general, even for someone not in that situation.

### **Living with breast cancer (46-55) (May 2018)**

The easy-to-understand, chronological style makes this book suitable for anyone; the author refrains from using technical words and explains her diagnosis and treatment well. Her open and honest style makes the book easy to relate to; it is a very positive, poignant and heartwarming read.

The author focuses on the positive side of things and how cancer changed her perspective of her life and family. She has a busy family life and adjusts her treatment around her life when possible. She has a few challenges to overcome but overall she is 'just a normal person'. She also gives a very good insight into what a someone with cancer has to go through, their thoughts and how they handle family and friends, and what they protect family from. Most people just want life to go on as normally as possible but it is very hard to express your thoughts and feelings.

I like the colour and that the cover photo was taken by the author's daughter. There are some photographs inside of when she removed her hair and she describes her feelings about this to make it a more positive experience for others and her children. The chapters are just long enough and follow on seamlessly. It is a good quality book, straightforward and easy to understand. Her warmth and values shine out, and I was quite sorry to come to the end.

I recommend it to others affected by breast cancer. The author covers emotions and managing cancer for herself and, as I have been through it, I found myself able to identify strongly with her. It is important for readers with or without cancer to know that they are not alone and that others are experiencing similar thoughts and have similar perceptions of treatment. It is light hearted and amusing and the author shows that there is a life to lead and that, when possible, cancer fits around it.

### **Lobular and ductal breast cancer survivor (3 years) (46-55) (April 2018)**



This book is useful for people going through breast cancer, for the whole journey; it helps people know what might happen and how they may feel about it all. It is also useful for family and friends – it will help them understand what the patient is going through and how to help.

It is in a logical order, from the start of the author's journey and is easy to read and understand. The cover is interesting and appropriate for the contents and the font makes the book easier to read.

This is an open, honest account of living with breast cancer and its impact on the author, her friends and family. It gives an insight into breast cancer, the highs, the lows, the setbacks. With determination and support from family, the author fought a tough battle. You will laugh and cry at the same time! A truly inspirational book.

**Relative of cancer patients (breast, lung, thyroid, bone, throat, liver), and paediatric staff nurse (18-25) (July 2019)**



The optimism, bravery and confidence of the author shine from the pages of this book, making it a warm, engaging read. Although I would describe it as perhaps not typical of every breast cancer journey and outcome, I consider it of interest to many – Karen’s writing could provide hope for someone newly diagnosed, or someone with a close family member or friend with this diagnosis. Particularly, the sections on early diagnosis and early detection will be useful to someone with a positive prognosis.

Karen writes clearly and goes to great lengths to enable the reader to understand different treatments and tests. The design is easy on the eye, and the content is modern, well written and affords hope to those who are reading.

Although I there is nothing I dislike about it, I don’t think it offers emotional support. However, it will equip the reader with knowledge about this diagnosis and treatment.

**Carer and health professional (56-65) (October 2018)**

Remarkably positive and told with good humour, this is a personal account from diagnosis, through treatment, to beyond. It is very easy to read, but I wouldn’t be attracted by the cover.

I found it saccharine in outlook and the author’s life with and without cancer seems too simple, although I’m sure it wasn’t like this. There are holidays abroad to exotic places, a job at her children’s school, private health care; it all seems too easy. This is not to belittle her story – everyone’s experience is unique and not having had this cancer, I can’t comment with first-hand knowledge – but everything seems too good to be true. However, perhaps this is what those with cancer and their loved ones need to hear: that it can be ok, you can have holidays, go out with friends, laugh...

What is interesting, however – and after reading the book and thinking about it, this stuck out more than anything else – is the significance of friendship. As the author says, family is important, but friends even more so. I suppose that one can almost take family support for granted, but friends? Who knows how they may react.

People with any type of cancer, and family and friends, could find this book a comfort; to know that all is not necessarily lost when one has a cancer diagnosis.

**Living with cancer (myelodysplastic syndrome) (46-55) (May 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.

**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](http://macmillan.org.uk)**

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