

Healing with Words: A Writer's Cancer Journey

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Reviewed by Carol Hoyer, PhD, for Reader Views (06/10)

We don't want to ever hear the words "You have cancer." It stuns us, puts us in depression and makes us look at our life day to day." Ms. Raab tells us, in the beginning, as a child, she was not allowed to express her opinions to her family, so she wrote a journal instead. Hidden in her closet when she was a child, she wrote about her experiences as being a child who "was never heard." After she left the home and got married, she continued to write in journals. When life has finally given you hope and courage, it is most devastating to know that you might have or do have cancer. This diagnosis tore the author up and left her feeling that she didn't want this life.

Through her honest and candid remarks about how she felt, the author relates with many who have had the same thing happen to them. She doesn't condemn the medical profession or how she and her family handled the situation. She, in a quiet, easy tone explains what she went through but at the same time, throughout the book, gives those who have been given the same diagnosis cause to ponder their thoughts on when they went through the same thing.

These are her own words on how she felt, what she did and the many frustrations she went through. Regardless of how many opinions you get or comments from family members- each individual has to make decisions. It is not easy.

None of us as cancer survivors want to be a burden on others, and yes there are times as the author says "They would be better without me." But it is important that readers, either those diagnosed or their family members, read "Healing with Words." It is true feelings and thoughts- as readers we need to know the early warning signs, get support from our family, not pity and get second opinions. It is a journey none want to take, but journaling is a great way to express thoughts- as did the author. I hope many people read this and take to journaling and talking very directly to their families about choices.