

BOOKS

The Pager Chronicles (Vol. 2). Patrice Rancour. Bangor, ME: Booklocker.com, Inc., 2010, softcover, 230 pages, \$15.95.



Based on her experience as a nurse behaviorist, Patrice Rancour has written a second book of vignettes. Again, she moves that narration along as each story begins and ends with her pager summoning her to a new location within the academic medical center where she works with patients with cancer and their families. This nonfiction book is intended primarily for lay audiences, with most nursing and medical terms underlined and later defined in the glossary. Although the professional audience may be secondary, journal club questions are included for healthcare professionals, students, and the general public, adding a dimension of collegiality and allowing for easy discussion starters.

The stories will be familiar for oncology nurses. They are tales nurses have experienced and shared with their own patients and families. However, the book contains a subtext that shifts between the stories and the events of September 11, 2001. The choice to weave these stories with 9-11 was confusing and did not capture the enormity of that tragedy.

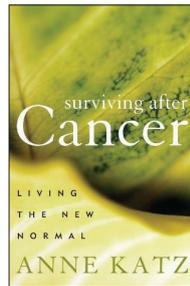
The book is not illustrated, but this does not detract from the stories. Rancour does an excellent job of presenting unique and interesting questions. What do you tell a male patient with breast cancer who wants to join a support group made up exclusively of women? What do you tell a patient whose insides are decaying because he received an overdose of radiation as a result of miscalibrated equipment at another hospital? How do you help a woman find peace after cheating on her husband while he was dying of cancer? The book also touches on difficult personnel issues such as abuse and staff illness.

Each story and response within *The Pager Chronicles* is different, but the book has one constant: Rancour always is available for the patients, their family, and the staff. She shows any reader

that nurses are professionals and can be strong advocates in any situation.

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Surviving After Cancer: Living the New Normal. Anne Katz.^a Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2011, hardcover, 208 pages, \$34.95.



Survivorship is a hot topic in oncology. In *Surviving After Cancer: Living the New Normal*, Anne Katz draws from her experience as an author and a nurse to shine a light on the lives of patients and their families once cancer treatment has been completed. This illumination reaches the corners of fear of recurrence, return to work, fatigue, sexuality and fertility issues, diet and exercise, survivorship care plans, and the cognitive and emotional difficulties that may or may not resolve.

Part 1 broaches the subtle problems inherent in defining just who is a cancer survivor. The definitions vary by the context of who is using the term and for what purpose. Beginning with the layers of meaning of *survivor*, Katz always accounts for one of the most important perspectives: that of the patient.

Part 2 is the largest section of the book. These nine chapters use a creative nonfiction approach to the issues faced after cancer treatment. The stories of struggles focus on a theme but give the major part of the narrative to the patient. This approach incorporates the reality, nuance, and detail of daily lives. For example, Chapter 10 introduces Gail, an RN who employs the magical thinking of many nurses: "When she was diagnosed with breast cancer, she was really shocked. She somehow always thought that taking care of patients would protect her" (p. 151). Her desire to return to her staff nurse position is strong, despite her overwhelming fatigue and cognitive dysfunction of inability to focus and forgetfulness. Well-written, the details blend seamlessly with the facts in an organized and clear style. Although the issues addressed are outlined in Parts 1 and 3, they are not clear from chapter titles. Sub-

titles may have helped the reader more easily identify issues of interest to them.

Part 3 recaps the issues. This is repetitive of the earlier chapters, but streamlined. The chapter on resources offers more than just books and Web sites. It includes exercises and directions for progressive relaxation, deep breathing, mindful meditation, sensual massage, sensate focus, use of lubricants and moisturizers, survivorship care plans, and assessing fertility services. One of Katz's strongest contributions in this book involves dealing with sexuality and reproductive issues for couples.

Surviving After Cancer offers insight and compassion for the 10 million current cancer survivors while echoing Hewitt, Greenfield, and Stovall's (2005) hallmark work, *From Cancer Patient to Cancer Survivor: Lost in Transition*. This is a narrative companion to other cancer survivor resources available from the American Cancer Society, Association of Community Cancer Centers, LIVESTRONG, National Cancer Institute, National Comprehensive Cancer Network, and Oncology Nursing Society, among others. For those who like to hold and read a book for information, whether survivor or healthcare provider, this text is current and helpful.

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Reference

Hewitt, M., Greenfield, S., & Stovall, E. (2005). *From cancer patient to cancer survivor: Lost in transition*. Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press.

NEW RELEASES

Designs for Clinical Trials: Perspectives on Current Issues. David Harrington (Ed.). New York, NY: Springer, 2011, hardcover, 160 pages, \$139.

Statistical methods for clinical trials have been an area of active research in biostatistics since the first modern clinical trials were mounted in 1946 by the British

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