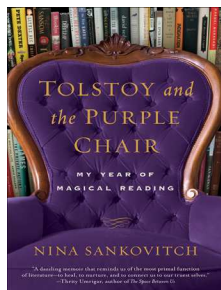


## BOOKS

**Tolstoy and the Purple Chair: My Year of Magical Reading.** Nina Sankovitch. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publisher, 2011, hardcover, 240 pages, \$23.99.



Read a book a day for a year, write a review of each book, and publish it on a daily blog. Who could commit to such a task? Nina Sankovitch

turned to reading to deal with her grief over the loss of her older sister, Ann-Marie, who had died several years before at the age of 46. Reading, it turns out, was the ultimate therapy for Sankovitch, a lifelong, avid reader.

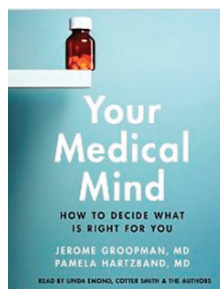
The rules for her were simple. The book-a-day project would begin on her 46th birthday, no author could be read more than once, no books could be read that she had already read, and a review had to be written about each book. She would publish her reviews on her Web site at [www.readallday.org/blog](http://www.readallday.org/blog).

*Tolstoy and the Purple Chair* is a memoir that skillfully weaves book reviews, many quotes from various authors, personal insights, family history stories, and grief lessons.

Although many memoirs are published, the sister's cancer illness makes this one significant for oncology nurses. More importantly, this particular memoir is a tribute to sisters and family. It refocuses the reader with the realization that our future is not infinite but, no matter our age, life holds endless possibilities. The feelings we experience are beyond our control, but our power to act is our choice. In the concluding paragraphs she writes, "There is no remedy for the sorrow of losing someone we love, nor should there be" (p. 221).

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**Your Medical Mind: How to Decide What Is Right for You.** Jerome Groopman, and Pamela Hartzband. New York, NY: Penguin Group (USA) Inc., 2011, hardcover, 320 pages, \$27.95.



How do your patients make decisions about their medical care? What do they consider when choosing a provider? When presented with

more than one treatment option, how do they make their decisions? Subsequently, how do these choices affect patient outcomes, satisfaction, and quality of life? Those are just a few of the questions that physicians and Harvard Medical School Faculty Members, Groopman and Hartzband, discuss in *Your Medical Mind: How to Decide What Is Right for You*.

Using personal introspection and years of observations in a clinical setting, the authors dissect how medical decision-making behaviors are a product of innate personality traits and accumulated life experiences. They theorize that people fall along a continuum from believers, who believe in maximizing medical and naturalist treatments while using medical technology, to doubters, risk-adverse people who favor minimal treatment.

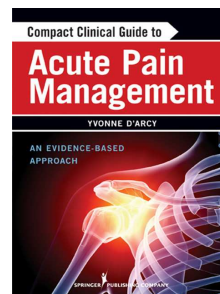
The authors argue that when healthcare providers recognize their own and their patients' decision-making styles or personal biases, they can better assist patients in optimizing outcomes and quality of life. "Sharing the decision with a doctor who understands your preferences means sharing the burden of choice, so you lessen your risk for regret" (p. 85).

The authors also describe factors influencing patient indecision using research on advance directives and end-of-life decisions as a framework. Ethical dilemmas presented by patient advocacy, patient autonomy, beneficence, and nonmaleficence are woven into the discussions. They conclude that, "A doctor who facilitates but also may challenge your decision-making process sometimes gives you more" (p. 217).

This work is a worthwhile read for oncology nurses, other healthcare providers, and patients. The vignette writing style and use of current research findings moves the narrative and holds the reader's attention. It also stimulates thoughtful reflection and questions for future research.

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**Compact Clinical Guide to Acute Pain Management: An Evidence-Based Approach for Nurses.** Yvonne D'Arcy. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company, 2011, softcover, 344 pages, \$45. **Compact Clinical Guide to Chronic Pain Management: An Evidence-Based Approach for Nurses.** Yvonne D'Arcy. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company, 2011, softcover, 368 pages, \$45.



*Acute Pain Management and Chronic Pain Management* by Yvonne D'Arcy are comprehensive and thorough evidence-based guides to the assessment and

management of pain. *Acute Pain Management* begins with a review of basic concepts about the nature of pain and summarizes current national standards and guidelines. The importance of comprehensive pain assessment is emphasized with a systematic review of pain scales and assessment tools. A special focus on assessment of pain in vulnerable populations such as the older adult, children, and patients with dementia is valuable. *Chronic Pain Management* reviews pain concepts, theories, and types of pain, and outlines the differences between acute and chronic pain.

The core of both books is the review and discussion of pain management. In *Acute Pain Management*, chapters are dedicated to specific areas of pain management, such as perioperative pain management, patient-controlled analgesia, and local and regional analgesia techniques. *Chronic Pain Management* reviews conditions such as lower back