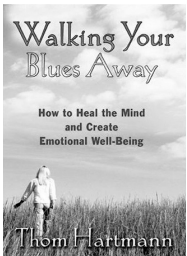


B O O K S

**Walking Your Blues Away: How to Heal the Mind and Create Emotional Well-Being.** Thom Hartmann. Rochester, VT: Park Street Press, 2006, 112 pages, \$12.95.

     Softcover



The title of this book is enticing in that it suggests that the benefits of walking go beyond the physical. However, *Walking Your Blues Away* takes a different direction from what the title implies or what the reader initially may expect to find. The author introduces the concept of “bilateral movement,” also called bilateral therapies or rhythmic side-to-side, which is not specific to cancer. In that movement, the “stimulation of the body causes nerve impulses to cross the brain from the left to right at a specific rate or frequency” (p. 4). The author suggests that if one recalls a persistent emotional issue while performing those movements, the process will reframe or put the issue into a different context. So immediately in the introduction of the book, the reader starts to see that “walking,” as defined by the author, is one way of achieving bilateral movement.

The book is divided into 12 easy-to-read chapters. The first 53 pages of the 112-page book are devoted to discussions of the development of bilateral theories and the physiology and psychology of the mechanism. The author ties in the works of many notables from Darwin to Freud to support the theories. Chapter 6 depicts the five steps to performing a “walking your blues away” session: Define the issue, bring up the story (or issue), walk with the issue, notice how the issue changes, and anchor the new state. A brief description of each of the steps is

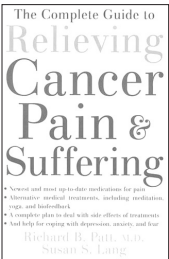
provided. A therapist helps facilitate the steps in a chapter on walking for individuals who may have difficulty maintaining their focus. The last three chapters discuss walking for creativity and problem solving, to create a motivational state, and to improve health. The chapter on walking to improve health is essentially a recap of the physiologic benefits of exercise on cardiovascular health and other disease states.

Patients may find this book entertaining because it provides a different interpretation of walking and what occurs in the brain during the process. The steps to “walking your blues away” are almost intuitive for those who walk as a method of stress relief; however, they may benefit patients who have not been introduced to the potential psychological benefits of walking. This book could be enhanced by providing more depth and breadth on the psychological effects of walking and condensing the information on bilateral therapies.

Barbara D. Powe, PhD, RN  
Associate Editor  
Oncology Nursing Forum

**The Complete Guide to Relieving Cancer Pain and Suffering.** Richard B. Patt and Susan S. Lang. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004, 464 pages, \$18.95.

    Softcover



Patients with cancer often fear the pain and suffering associated with the disease and its treatments. *The Complete Guide to Relieving Cancer Pain and Suffering* offers a wealth of information for patients, caregivers, and health-care professionals to help them understand and manage often distressing symptoms. The book provides a comprehensive discussion on cancer pain, including etiology,

assessment, and management. Detailed information is given on the management of cancer pain, as well as nausea, weight loss, fatigue, breathing problems, and numerous other symptoms associated with disease and treatment. Management strategies include pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic interventions.
















The important message conveyed is that *cancer pain and suffering can be relieved*. Information is provided to empower patients with cancer and caregivers to effectively participate in the management of symptoms associated with cancer. The authors also offer insight into barriers that lead to the undertreatment of pain, with suggestions for overcoming obstacles.

*The Complete Guide to Relieving Cancer Pain and Suffering* is an excellent resource for patients and caregivers who are struggling with managing pain or other symptoms associated with cancer. Reading the book cover to cover might be overwhelming for some individuals. I recommend that readers take the time to look at the preface to review the purpose and content of the book, which may guide them in locating specific information of interest. The boxes and tables throughout the text highlight information. The appendixes also provide more detailed information on available resources, relaxation exercises, and advance directives.

The one caution to note when using this reference guide is that new drugs have become available commercially since publication in 2004, which is a challenge for any published text because of the dynamic nature of health care. Hopefully the authors will consider revised editions or a password-protected Web site providing updated information on a regular basis for those who purchase the book.

Overall, *The Complete Guide to Relieving Cancer Pain and Suffering* is a wonderful reference to include in a patient library and recommend to patients suffering from cancer pain or other associated symptoms. The book also may serve as a resource for healthcare professionals, particularly those new to oncology or hospice care.

Dori Greene, RN, MS, AOCN®  
Medical Writer  
Apex, NC

Ease of Reference and Usability	Content Level	Media Size
 Quick, on-the-spot resource	 Basic	 Pocket size
 Moderate time requirement	  Intermediate	  Intermediate
 In-depth study	   Advanced and complex, prerequisite reading required	   Desk reference

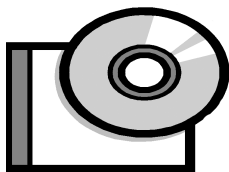
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# V I D E O

**At My Mother's Breast.** Heather Watson-Burgess and National Film Board of Canada. Boston: Fanlight Productions, DVD, 2005, \$249.



DVD



The young filmmaker of *At My Mother's Breast* has lovingly and bravely created a personal, important, and honest documentary. The film essentially is about relationships sewn together, on the one hand by the filmmaker's drive to analyze her family's experience of breast cancer and, on the other, by her public search for her own identity as a daughter. Beautifully filmed in western Canada and narrated by Watson-Burgess, *At My Mother's Breast* tells the story of five generations, starting with the death of her great-grandmother at age 46 and reaching forward in Watson-Burgess's genetic legacy to her six-year-old daughter. Thus, the film focuses on a family living with a history of breast cancer. How Watson-Burgess and especially her mother, Linda, who is a seven-year survivor, face the challenge and relate to their siblings and cousins make up the essence of the 56-minute film. The end result is insight into how any genetic or even chronic life-threatening illness affects an entire family. The women deny, accept, exhibit anger and fear, and share and break down barriers. In the cinematic journey, Watson-Burgess learns a lot about herself.

The film is interspersed with family videos, sepia photos of relatives, and honest and up-close narratives. The reality of the separation of the filmmaker from her subjects, yet their intimate emotional connection, is a constant. The viewer can nod in agreement as Watson-Burgess verbalizes her multiple roles: daughter, who feels the need to mother her own mother; mother, who is fearful of scaring and scarring her own daughter; and objective filmmaker, who also is a vulnerable, affected person. The insights are poignant, sensitive, and ultimately much more significant than any details about breast cancer.

If an oncology nurse had been privileged to have any input into the film, it would have been to ask a lot of questions. The film is not a discussion about modern breast cancer care, the role of genetic testing, or even an analysis of how one might approach a strong family lineage. At one point, Linda, described as a breast cancer activist, visits her oncologist and wonders after the appointment why certain scans are not done. The family includes Linda's three sisters, whose mother and grandmother died of breast cancer, and three of whom have invasive cancer. Linda had surgery and radiation, but no more testing



was discussed even though, with her family history, it seemed obvious that it was needed. As a nurse, I raised several questions when viewing the film, such as, "What about genetic testing?" In the video, the five daughters of the four women do not talk about genetics. The women meet at a family cabin, talk about their parents' cancer, play with their kids, cook and laugh, and have a brief discussion about breast self-examinations. As a reviewer, I was saddened when the filmmaker said, "When my mother was diagnosed, she showed me her lump. . . . I will know when I have breast cancer when I feel the same lump." Again, the nurse in me asked, "What about mammograms, ultrasounds, magnetic resonance imaging, and regular checkups for daughters of women with such a strong history?"

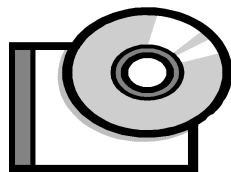
The film contains a subtext about the death of one of Linda's brave sisters from the familial disease and about how a family experiences the profound loss, which they also fear for themselves. Again, the tragedy is beautifully portrayed but without any discussion of the possible role of hospice care. I wondered, "Would that have made it any different for Aunt Dorothy or her family?"

To know the women in this film would be wonderful (and fun)—they have love, anger, fear, humor, and intergenerational support. In commenting about their history, one sister said, "You can laugh or cry or talk it to death." For the oncology community, the film would have been more helpful if it explored the facts of breast cancer and genetics as well as how we need our mothers and families.

Janet M. Hooper, RN, BSN, OCN®  
Oncology Case Manager  
Charlotte Hungerford Hospital  
Goshen, CT

**Managing Aggressive Behavior for Volunteers: Helping Volunteers to Understand Patient Needs.** Sherborn, MA: Aquarius Health Care Media, 2006, 17 minutes, \$145.



DVD



Volunteers are vital members of the healthcare team. To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience, volunteers need to understand patient needs. This orientation video, one in a series, aims to help volunteers do just that. The narrator takes the audience through the following key points.

- A definition of violence, as well as sources of violence and triggers to violent behavior
  - A description of communication, including verbal, nonverbal, and paraverbal cues
  - A description of zones of interaction, including public, social, and personal space
  - A discussion of reporting aggressive behavior and follow-up for volunteers
- Four scenarios are used to dramatize poten-

tial violent situations in different healthcare settings and how volunteers can abate and manage aggressive behavior. In each situation, aggressive behavior is exhibited when a volunteer reacts inappropriately. The scenario is repeated with the volunteer exhibiting different behavior that changes the outcome of the situation. It may be helpful to pause the video to elicit audience critique and suggestions for improvement prior to reviewing the scenario.

Canadian elements in the video may be a distraction but not enough to deter of the impact of the content. A typographical error on the DVD package (incorrect spelling of aggressive) also is noted. Overall, this brief video can be useful for volunteers as well as professionals who work in any healthcare settings, because personal safety is paramount for all.

Nancy J. Michela, DA, C, MS, RN  
Associate Professor  
Department of Nursing  
The Sage Colleges  
Troy, NY

## WORTH A LOOK

**100 Questions and Answers About Liver Cancer.** Ghassan Abou-Alfa and Ronald DeMatteo. Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett, 2006, 208 pages, \$16.95.

Although mortality rates for liver cancer are high, the average person is not inundated by media coverage of liver cancer, nor does a screening test exist for its early detection. Therefore, when liver cancer is diagnosed, patients initially may want a quick, simple source to reinforce information obtained from providers or to answer other questions. This handy guide would be useful for that purpose. The book contains 100 questions and answers and is divided into sections focused on basics (e.g., What is the liver?), risk factors, screening, diagnosis and staging, coping with the diagnosis, and treatment. Sections also focus on cancer-related practical issues, cirrhosis-related concerns, and social and end-of-life issues. The book has a glossary, and selected words are defined in text boxes throughout the question-and-answer sections. At the back of the book is a place for notes as well as an index. The book is easy to read and produced in a slightly larger font than most books of this type, which would benefit those with visual difficulties.

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