

## Your Journey beyond Breast Cancer: Tools for the Road

**Louise B. Lubin**

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*This spirited and spiritual self-help book offers empowering guidance to people facing breast cancer diagnoses.*

Clinical psychologist Louise B. Lubin's supportive self-help text *Your Journey beyond Breast Cancer* encourages whole-person health, even in the midst of cancer.

Though there are many commonalities in the experiences of those diagnosed with breast cancer, this book suggests that perhaps the biggest one is the overwhelming bewilderment of facing all that the diagnosis entails. Aiming to offer wise support at every step, it provides tools for handling the uncertainty and grief that come with breast cancer. Universal but also personalized, its work meets each person right where they are, helping to orient them within the challenges that breast cancer brings. Its work begins within, addressing fear and loss, but then moves outward to address relationships and focus on the present.

The book's dozens of tools include breathing and visualization exercises, tips for handling conflict with others, and prompts to help people to ask for the assistance that they need. Many address ideas so overwhelming that it seems like there could be no tool to help: "Your Five Wishes" is a clear, vital tool for facing and planning for death; the book also anticipates challenges around sexual expression and intimacy in the midst of breast cancer. Each such topic is handled in a clear, calm manner, helping to diffuse feelings of panic and stress. Nonetheless, a sense of personal accountability also marks the book, which includes a "Committed Action Contract" to help with implementing individual decisions.

A mind, body, and spirit tone dominates, and is ably illustrated in the book's beautiful circular pattern. A push toward holistic unity suggests that people can, and should, craft their own paths, conscientious of embracing all parts of their being. The book encourages people to engage with the process, even during painful times. The result is a positive and empowering text that imparts a realistic sense of control, and that makes it seem as though a return to calm is possible.

While the book's most particular focus is on women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer, its methodical and supportive approach may make it a good resource for the caregivers and partners of those who have been diagnosed, too—not to prescribe tools to their loved ones, but to grow in empathy and awareness. All in all, this makes *Your Journey beyond Breast Cancer* a spirited self-help book that offers empowering guidance to people facing breast cancer diagnoses.

MELISSA WUSKE (January 7, 2022)

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