

Chronic Illness and Zen

Books Reviewed in This Issue:

Chronically Happy: Joyful Living in Spite of Chronic Illness

Lori Hartwell

First Edition, 2002

Poetic Media Press

First, Do No Harm: Power, Oppression and Violence in Healthcare

Nancy L. Diekelmann, Editor

First Edition, 2002

The University of Wisconsin Press

Healing Zen: Awakening to a Life of Wholeness and Compassion While Caring for Yourself and Others

Ellen Birx

First Edition, 2002

Viking Compass

Chronically Happy: Joyful Living in Spite of Chronic Illness

Lori Hartwell

First Edition 2002

Poetic Media Press

San Francisco, CA

www.poeticpress.com

ISBN 0-9722783-0-3

Softcover, 250 pages, \$12.95 U.S., \$14.95 Canada

It is a pleasure and a privilege to review *Chronically Happy*. Once I started reading it I could not put it down. Lori used her own life experiences with kidney disease and those of others with chronic illnesses. She identified techniques that demonstrate successful methods of achieving life dreams in an organized, comfortable format and directed them to the chronically ill person.

She divides the book into manageable sections that are easy to read and provide support and guidance one step at a time. The first five chapters deal with acknowledgment, adjustment, and connecting with life activities for achieving life dreams. She covers diagnosis, gaining a knowledge base about the disease process, controlling the areas of your life that you can, and moving toward rewarding and productive actions in work and life.

Interspersed throughout the book are the contents of Lori's "Toolbox," filled with activities that helped her as she fought to find that space where she was in charge of her life and moving in a positive direction. There are also helpful hints that Lori found useful in overcoming multiple challenges of daily living activities.

The last four chapters are Lori's "Four Principals of Chronically Happy Living." This section of the book provides techniques that focus on developing a "healthy inner will" for going over the edge and beyond chronic illness

to a chronically happy place.

This book is a must have in every dialysis facility. Anyone involved in the care of the chronically ill could benefit from Lori's work.

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First, Do No Harm: Power, Oppression and Violence in Healthcare

Nancy L. Diekelmann, Editor

First Edition, 2002

The University of Wisconsin Press

1930 Monroe Street

Madison, Wisconsin 53711

777-568-1550

www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/

ISBN 0-299-17784-X

Softcover, 256 pages, \$22.95

First, Do No Harm shows how health care professionals, with the best intentions of providing excellent care, can nonetheless inflict injury to vulnerable patients. The essays investigate the need to rethink contemporary health care practices in ways that can bring the art of medicine into balance. These studies by noted scholars question commonly held assumptions in contemporary health care that underlie oppressive power dynamics and violence for patients and their families. The contributors topics include women and violence, life-support technologies (e.g., dialysis), and health care professionals' own experiences as patients (e.g., dialysis and transplantation). This approach gives the opportunity for new understanding, assessing the real meaning of "quality of life" and even questioning the language used by health care professionals.

The chapter on "Living a Life-Sustained-by-Medical-Technology, Dialysis is Killing Me" is a must read for nephrology nurses. In-depth interviews were conducted with 70 participants who described their experiences with end stage renal disease (ESRD) and its treatment. The researchers interpreted the stories for common practices and shared meanings of living with ESRD and its treat-

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