

Telling It Like It Is – 23 Breast Cancer Journeys

Anne-Marie White

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Telling It Like It Is is an inspiring and emotional read, exploring 23 individual breast cancer journeys. Written by Anne-Marie White, a breast cancer survivor herself, the book conveys the breast cancer experiences of a range of 22 women, including Anne-Marie's, and with a remarkable account of one man's breast cancer journey.

These stories are captured and told by the author from interviews with people who have had a breast cancer diagnosis and includes thoughts and experiences from their families and friends. Throughout the book, the author shares her own story, drawing on her memories and emails to close friends during the time she had cancer. She shares with her readers her personal and confronting insights into her cancer experience, by relaying her fears, frustrations, achievements and the emotional rollercoaster ride of her cancer journey.

The book highlights how different each person's cancer experience can be. Factors influencing the individual's cancer journey include the age of diagnosis, how they were diagnosed, the type of breast cancer and the varying cancer treatments they had to endure. Each story touches on these factors in relation to the emotional stress of a cancer diagnosis and the physical and psychological ability to cope with the treatment.

If there is a common message coming from this inspirational account of breast cancer journeys, it is one of bravery, showing that individuals can seek and find unrevealed strength and can battle through a cancer diagnosis with the great support of family, friends and medical professionals.

"The cancer unleashed what was always there, but I guess it gave me the courage to be genuine. I realised that I was more resilient than I thought and that was the gift this diagnosis gave me – the discovery of my own inner power." - Dawn Leicester

These first hand accounts come from a wide range of Australians, some well-known including athlete Kerryn McCann, retired politicians Ros Kelly and Jocelyn Newman, and Margaret Stewart, a member of the ABC news team at Toowong studios.

It is undoubtedly a genuinely compelling book, guaranteed to make you laugh, cry and develop a great respect and admiration for all people experiencing a cancer journey.

Jenny Treloar, McGrath Breast Nurse, Macarthur Cancer Centre, Campbelltown, NSW.

