

American Cancer Society Book Offers More than 100 Ways to Support a Friend or Loved One with Cancer

Practical advice on how to deal with the difficult issue of cancer

ATLANTA — A cancer diagnosis can be one of the scariest moments of a person's life. Friends and loved ones want to help, but they may not know what to say or do. In fact, they may be afraid to say or do anything for fear of doing the *wrong* thing.

The latest book by the American Cancer Society, ***How to Help Your Friend with Cancer*** provides practical advice for friends and family on how to deal with this difficult issue. Author Colleen Dolan Fullbright says friends can have a significant impact on a cancer patient's experience. She writes from personal experience as a breast cancer survivor and from her extensive research on the psychological consequences of cancer.

"It became very apparent to me how important friends are after I read the results of a study, which showed that those who were married fared much better with diagnosis and treatment," said Fullbright. "The study's author also noted that whatever 'it' is about a marriage that's beneficial might be something that any friend or loved one can do for a patient."

Fullbright begins each chapter with an anecdote from her cancer experience or someone else's, then lists practical ideas for helping. Fullbright says she hopes that after reading the book, people will be more attuned to their friend with cancer, understand it's a vulnerable time, and recognize that the experience will affect their friend's life forever.

"A primary message of the book is that family members become 'second-order patients.' The family is suffering, too," said Fullbright. "Friends may be so focused on the cancer patient they don't realize how much it will help if they assist the family in practical or other ways."

The book also includes a helpful resource guide on available support programs and services, cancer information, practical household and financial assistance, and caregiving resources, as well as resources for children, adolescents, and young adults.

How to Help Your Friend with Cancer

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Also available in ebook format.

Available for purchase at cancer.org/bookstore or at any online or retail bookseller.

About the Author

Colleen Dolan Fullbright is a writer, journalist, educator, and breast cancer survivor. After her diagnosis in 2000, she realized what a vital and uplifting part friends and family could play in a person's cancer journey. A lifelong resident of Colorado, she lives in Fort Collins with her husband, Jim. They have two children, six grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society is a global grassroots force of more than 2.5 million volunteers saving lives and fighting for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. As the largest voluntary health organization, the Society's efforts have contributed to a 22 percent decline in cancer death rates in the U.S. during the past two decades, and a 50 percent drop in smoking rates. Thanks in part to our progress nearly 14.5 million Americans who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will celebrate more birthdays this year. We're determined to finish the fight against cancer. We're finding cures as the nation's largest private, not-for-profit investor in cancer research, ensuring people facing cancer have the help they need and continuing the fight for access to quality health care, lifesaving screenings, clean air, and more. For more information, to get help, or to join the fight, visit cancer.org or call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345.
