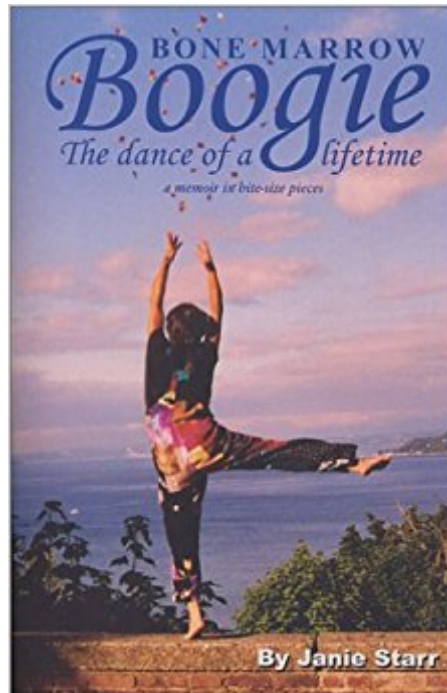




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Bone Marrow Boogie: The Dance Of A Lifetime



Synopsis

We all hit a brick wall at some time in our lives. Starr's rose up inside her body in the form of a cancerous tumor lurking behind her chest wall and growing fast. With rare honesty, humor, and shine, Starr recounts her early terror and ultimate triumph as she scaled that wall and danced her jig on top. Cancer has crept into most peoples lives one way or another, but we don't have to be a member of the tribe in order to resonate with Bone Marrow Boogie. It is as much about love, family, and community, and about staying full present and alive during a mid-life crisis as it is a story of illness and recovery. It could have been divorce, remarriage, building a home, or even winning the lottery. Big events call for a big response, and for Starr that included walking the talk and living to tell her story. She wrote because it satisfied her, it brought her into relationship with others, and because she thought it might make a difference to the rest of us. She got that right.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"An inspiring story from a special and inspiring person." -- Bernie Siegel, MD, Author, *Love, Medicine, and Miracles*, and *Prescriptions for Living*"Starr has a rare gift of story-telling...her stories stay with us, gentle teachers to guide us." -- Margaret J. Wheatley, Author, *Leadership and the New Science*, and *Turning To One Another*

Janie Starr holds master's degrees in public health and clinical psychology. In the mid '80's she left her private practice to work for issues related to peace, justice, and community building. She has

been a passionate speaker and writer on topics ranging from adolescent development and human sexuality to the nuclear threat, environmental sustainability, diversity, and more recently, cancer. She lives on an island in the Pacific Northwest with her family and dog, Wendal.

Janie Starr energetically describes her experience with cancer in her memoir, *Bone Marrow Boogie*. It was clear she did not let this traumatic event bring her down. If anything, it made her even more positive about her life. Janie Starr tells us every part of her thought process, even the most intimate details, as she is diagnosed with lymphoma, treated, and goes on through the next few years. We first meet Janie Starr as an in-shape vegetarian. She is highly involved with her family, including her teenage son, her son in college, and her physician husband. She is in-tune with her body and the Earth. Then she begins to feel strange and weak. That's when she learns she has lymphoma. At first she is in shock, sad, and depressed, as is the rest of her family. With encouragement that her cancer should be easily treated and killed, she surged along hopefully. Even though the chemotherapy and radiation made her feel sick and tired, she continued to be positive. Not only did she take the regular treatment path, she also saw a naturopath and did some sort of meditation. She made it her personal goal to connect with as many people as possible, including all of her friends, those being treated with her, and the doctors, nurses, and technicians that took care of her. Really it seemed that this cancer was a great experience for her. In the years after her treatment, she still had to go back for check-ups. She continued to try to bring positivity to those who treated her and those also being treated. She kept in contact with everyone who had supported her while she underwent treatment. She even tried to help others who contracted cancer. Coupled with her strong, positive outlook is the fact that Janie Starr is a writer. She wrote to all her friends, family, and acquaintances to keep them updated and thank them for their interest and support. As a reader, I was able to connect with Janie as well. It was especially easy to empathize with her because she did not complain about the fact that she had cancer and the treatments were difficult on her body, but rather she celebrated her life and continued to live life to the fullest. Even during the hardest times when she just wanted to sleep and felt completely horrible, she still made herself find the connection with everyone she encountered. I can apply this to struggles in my life by trying to stay positive and celebrating the fact that I have a decent life rather than complaining about the small things that go away after a week. Society can do the same--rather than make a huge deal out of everything, being positive about everything could create more harmony and less conflict. This book can be an inspiration to anyone with any type of struggle because she found the upside to everything life threw at her. Cancer could have killed her. Instead she held strong to her values and

beliefs to overcome it with attitude as well as medicine. In all the discussion about her outlook on her situation, she is very informative about cancer in general. She asked those treating her to explain everything that was going on, so she relayed the information to the reader. We learned about the typical medical side and the more natural side that she took part in as well. Altogether this book was very informative and inspiring as we embarked on Janie Starr's experience with lymphoma right along with her.

Being a senior in high school I was assigned the job of reading an autobiography for my AP Biology class, and I couldn't have picked a better book. I was truly fascinated by the Jane Starr's story about her battle for survival with cancer and how she didn't let the cancer overtake her and define who she was. Through her story, she gives encouraging ideas and tips for others who may be dealing with cancer or other serious health issues. Seeing how much of a positive attitude she had on the entire situation should inspire others to look at such a life-altering experience from a new perspective. Of all things that Starr could have written about, she chose one of the hardest times in her life which ultimately shows the strength this woman has. Along the way, Jane kept her friends and family close, kept in contact and kept them updated on how she was doing. If anyone has not read this book, I highly suggest it. Once you open the book, the wonderfulness of the knowledge you're about the encounter will flow off the pages.

In her inspiring and beautifully written book, Janie Starr takes us along on the journey that began when she found out she had lymphoma. Not only does she do battle with this very grave form of cancer, she also learns how to boogie, or rather, to boogie even better. This memoir gives some attention to the multiple and excruciating therapies that currently constitute cancer treatment, but much more attention is given to her search for self-knowledge through a variety of alternative strategies that can be as essential as radiation and chemotherapy for restoring health. She exposes a medical profession where some practice compassion, but many more project omnipotence and omniscience for lack of the words or feelings to deal with potentially terminal illness. Relations with those from her various communities (her parents, her family, her neighbors, her exercise and activist groups) are essential to her story. Her finely turned vignettes reveal the different ways men and women deal with cancer, as well as the variety of responses one can expect from friends, acquaintances and children. When the medical treatments end, the self-exploration continues. Ms. Starr writes eloquently about the relief of having survived, living with the fear of recurrence, and the continual questioning that facing cancer inevitably brings. Finally, this book is perhaps above all

about becoming a writer, a sort of portrait of the artist as a middle-aged woman confronting cancer. This should raise a question for everyone who reads this book: Why wait for illness before learning to live life fully? Janie Starr clearly emerged from her illness as a dancer and an artist.

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