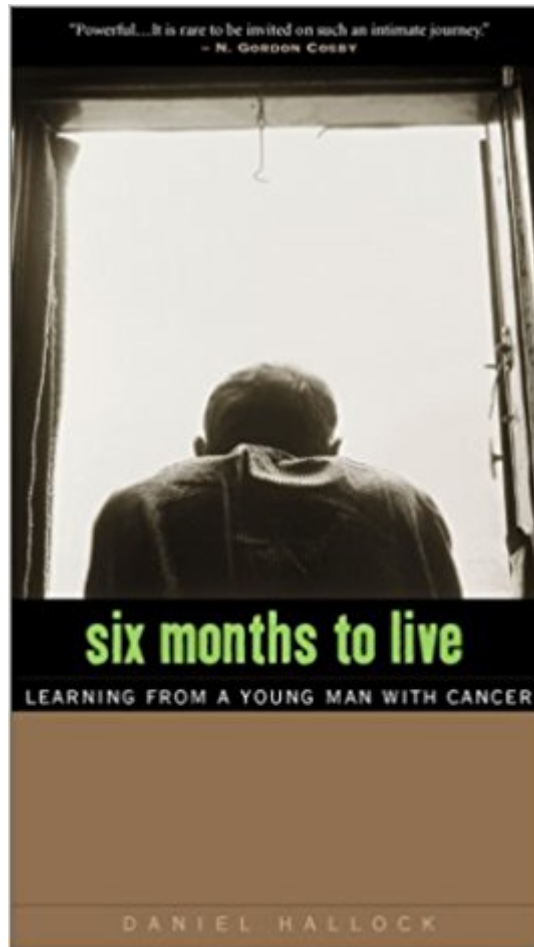




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Six Months To Live : Learning From A Young Man With Cancer



Synopsis

There are plenty of books on dying, most of them treatises by experts or tributes by family members written mainly for their own catharsis. But until now there has been precious little the average young person would want to read. Now, through a true story that has already profoundly affected thousands, author Daniel Hallock engages the generation least prepared for life's inevitable end. *Six Months to Live* really isn't about dying at all, it's about how our lives can take on new meaning when we live in the awareness that our days here are numbered. All of us, whatever our age, are touched by death, whether that of a friend or family member, old or too young, sudden or painfully drawn-out. Each death reminds us of the frailty of our own existence, so we avoid these unsettling speed bumps on our road to success and longevity. How different it could be if we realized how much the dying can teach us about how to live. When Matt Gauger was diagnosed with terminal cancer a month before his wedding, he fought back with everything from chemo to prayer. But more importantly, he let cancer transform his approach to life, far beyond the necessary 'coming to terms,' 'learning to cope,' and 'letting go.' By the time the disease destroyed his body, he had found such certainty of meaning and purpose that death held no terror for him. *Six Months to Live* isn't just Matt's story, though, but that of the friends and family that surrounded him during his final struggle, and how the experience changed each of them. In intimate detail, Matt's wife, parents, brother, doctor, pastor and peers tell how they struggled to accept his impending death. Daniel Hallock's candid account will encourage readers to face (rather than avoid) life's most important questions, and help them to live their own lives to the full.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Matt Gauger, the subject of this slim, poignant book, suddenly found himself dying of cancer at age 22. Hallock gives readers an intimate account of events, beginning with the robust, athletic young man's descent into unmanageable pain, followed by a serious diagnosis and months of reckoning with end-of-life issues. The text features long quotations from interviews with and diaries of those closest to Gauger among them his wife, parents, brother and doctor and in doing so paints the emotional, spiritual and physical landscape within which this drama unfolded. Hallock admirably avoids hagiography, as do Gauger's loved ones, and instead reveals the ennobling effect dying had on Gauger. As Gauger's pastor says, "Matt's death... brought him and all of us around him back to the essentials; to the things of eternity to the childlike spirit each of us needs in order to be part of the kingdom of God." This book features life in the Pennsylvania Bruderhof, which is one of a handful of Anabaptist communes worldwide that preach and practice pacifism and simplicity. Hallock and his interviewees repeatedly emphasize the love with which this community enveloped the Gaugers, detailing the practical and spiritual ways they both supported and learned from Gauger's struggle. As such, the book becomes as much a testament to the Bruderhof way of life as it is the story of one person. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

An extraordinary account – simple and profound. Matt’s struggle is one we will all eventually have to go through. -- Francis S. MacNutt, author, *Healing It* is a tragedy when a life is cut this short, though in being compressed it becomes like a diamond. -- Frederica Mathewes-Green
Too many books are written about physical healing and not enough about triumph at the spiritual level. -- Paul Brand

Very nice book, very sad, but extremely uplifting. Would definitely recommend.

for me, not particularly engaging or insightful.

Good story but not that well written.

Thought provoking easy read!

Imagine being twenty-two year old Matt Gauger and learning that you have six months to live. Now, imagine how your family and friends would respond to that news. That is the story of *Six Months To Live*. Author Daniel Hallock does not spend a lot of time talking about the cancer or its treatments but, rather, the emotional impact of the terminal diagnosis on Matt, his family and friends.

It's a remarkable story, really, of enduring love, ultimate acceptance of pain and suffering, and growing in faith through the dying and death of a loved one. Through lengthy quotes, we are granted insight to the emotions of one facing death; there is amazing strength and deep doubt, love and anger, conflict and peace. I wish the author had provided a little more background about the Bruderhof community. That insight would have helped me better understand the approach to life that Matt and his family and friends shared. In turn, that knowledge would also help understand their approach to death. Although the short story of Matt Gauger is a sad one, it is simultaneously an uplifting one. Would that we were all so brave, loving and at peace when facing our final days. This very intimate story will not take you long to read, but its impact will be long-lasting. Note: A copy of this book was provided by the publisher at no cost to me. In no other way was the content of this review influenced. The thoughts expressed above are entirely my own. -EB

This was a difficult book to read in many ways. You knew before you started that the main character of the book Matt is going to die from lymphoma. I went with him through his early pain, doctor's tests, prescriptions, and diagnoses. I went with him when he decided to see if Cynthia, a girl with whom he got along well, would marry him, even with all the things going against him. She did, and the story continues up to his death and burial. It is heartwarming, yet painful to read. I would not have missed it. J. Robert Ewbank author "John Wesley, Natural Man, and the Isms" "Wesley's Wars" "To Whom It May Concern" and soon, "Tell Me About the United Methodist Church"

Book was perfect. It came at a time that a good friend was losing his best friend to cancer. It helped prepare him for the end. Book arrived quickly. Thanks

A 22-year-old's battle against cancer might seem an unlikely topic for an uplifting book -- but *Six Months to Live* is certainly that. It's the story of Matt, a young man who, faced with death, refused to quit living. Matt wasn't a hero, and the writer of his story doesn't make him out to be one. *Six Months to Live* steers clear of the cliches and catch-phrases we often use to help us "make sense" of terminal illness. Instead, the book is realistic: it shows us Matt's darkest hours as well as his

triumphs; his doubts as well as his faith. That's why, at the end, the reader is not left feeling Matt's life was "wasted"

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